

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### November 17 – 18, 2016

2016 Status Offense Reform  
Policy Academy, Vera Institute

### November 17, 2016

JJPOC Meeting

### December 15, 2016

JJPOC Meeting

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Sara Jeffries	Carissa Silva	Chloe Williams

## Emily Tow Jackson, 2016 Bartels Fellow

### The Power of Philanthropy to Impact System Change



The University of New Haven welcomed Emily Tow Jackson as the Spring 2016 Bartels Fellow on April 12, 2016. She presented on The Power of Philanthropy to Impact System Change to an audience of students, faculty, administrators, and staff as well as community members as part of the Bartels Lecture Series. The Bartels Fellowship was established by the University to bring successful individuals from public

service and business to campus to meet with students. Ms. Tow Jackson serves as the Executive Director and Board president of The Tow Foundation, which is the primary funder for the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI). The Tow Foundation is a charitable organization that supports work in the areas of justice reform, medical research, higher education, and the arts.

As one of many distinguished fellows, Ms. Tow Jackson visited classes, presented to the community, and had lunch with student leaders, many of whom work at the Tow Youth Justice Institute.

During her lecture, she shared her personal and family story of The Tow Foundation and efforts in juvenile justice reform in Connecticut, including the calculations of cost and benefit to society. Comparing the annual expenditure of \$3.8 million for one child in the juvenile justice system and the annual investment of \$1 million for one child on the road to success, there is no question as to which option is more cost effective. These numbers have benefits beyond finances and can be the hopeful solution to the futures of our youth. "I can only hope that I am able to be as committed and graceful in my work as Emily Tow Jackson is in hers. She consistently embodies hope and exudes unwavering dedication to the multitude of projects The Tow Foundation seeks to nurture," Sara R. Jeffries, Ph.D. Fellow at the University of New Haven and researcher at the Tow Youth Justice Institute, commented.

After Ms. Tow Jackson's presentation concluded, a luncheon was provided where students were able to ask her questions, receive advice,

cover story continued...

and discuss current events. Students found her to be inspiring and relatable. “I hope to be able to impact my community in the same way her philanthropy has impacted the world,” said Chloe Williams, former Graduate Intern for the TYJI.

The Foundation’s focus on juvenile justice developed because youth in the system were receiving little attention and poor outcomes were being produced. The Foundation saw an opportunity to make a significant impact for large numbers of youth and took it. “The Tow Foundation is always looking to be on the cutting edge and took a stand to help a group of children and young adults in need. Emily’s compassion and understanding toward them is rare,” said Kelly Tea, Graduate Assistant in the TYJI. The Tow Foundation remains committed to youth justice reform in its continued funding support of the Tow Youth Justice Institute at the University of New Haven.

[www.towfoundation.org](http://www.towfoundation.org)



Photo credit: Joe Adams.

Emily Tow Jackson speaks with a student after her speech.

## JJPOC Update

As the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) celebrates its two-year anniversary, it also joins the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) in celebrating the official signing of PA 16-147, “An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee.” This legislation is comprehensive and provides the path for changes in the way judges order a juvenile to be detained and placed into detention. The bill also eliminates truancy cases from being processed through the juvenile court and establishes plans to address recidivism reduction and data tracking, statewide diversion efforts, educational needs for juvenile re-entry, and police training on juvenile matters.

“I am proud that Connecticut is taking this step,” Governor Malloy said at the bill signing ceremony on July 7, 2016 at the Capitol. “For too long, we have jumped the gun when arresting and detaining juveniles.”

The bill is a great example of how the TYJI is meeting its mission to serve and support youth justice reform efforts in Connecticut through education, legislation, and policy and system reform.

Governor Malloy had also appointed the JJPOC to research the 18-21 age group as part of his effort to reform and improve how the Connecticut criminal justice system processes these youths. The JJPOC has partnered with the Harvard Kennedy School’s Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management (PCJ) to analyze and provide recommendations for developmentally appropriate and effective community-based services for offenders under the age of 21. The PCJ researcher facilitated eight focus groups that targeted multiple state agencies, legislators, and the community partners from July to September 2016. Participants in the focus groups provided their thoughts and ideas around challenges and opportunities to the state and offenders/clients in order to develop and implement an effective system. The results of the Harvard Kennedy School “Raise the Age 2 Report” will be released sometime this year.

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The JJPOC work groups have also been hard at work creating timelines, project plans, and subcommittees in order to focus on their respective goals.

A small team of stakeholders from the JJPOC Diversion Workgroup attended the Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform Diversion Certificate Program



**From left to right:** Laura Downs, Consultant; Erika Nowakowski, Director of Youth Justice Initiatives; Kitty Tyrol, Director of Education & Training; Danielle Cooper, Ph.D., CPP, Assistant Professor of the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of New Haven and Director of Research - all with the Tow Youth Justice Institute; and members of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee, including Co-Chairs Rep. Toni Walker and OPM Secretary, Ben Barnes, with Governor Dannel P. Malloy of the State of Connecticut.

in November 2015. As a result, these fellows developed a capstone proposal focusing on: (1) creation and implementation of a formalized manual for the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) system, (2) procurement and implementation of a universal screening tool for JRBs, and (3) infusion of restorative practices into the JRB system. The capstone seeks to reduce youth contact with the juvenile justice system on the front end, particularly for those youth with mental and/or behavioral health needs, through the enhancement of the JRB system.

In addition, many research projects are underway since the Memorandum of Agreement among the University of New Haven/TYJI, CSSD, DCF, and DOC was executed in June. These projects include the pre- and post-assessment of community-based programs and recidivism outcomes, the study of youth in confinement in Connecticut juvenile correctional facilities, and study of the network of residential programs for juvenile offenders in state-funded, privately-operated congregate care. The Vocational Education and Training Education Study is also currently in progress as part of the Recidivism Work Group.

In March 2016, the “State of the System Report” for the Connecticut Juvenile Justice System was published. The report includes a summary of the TYJI, JJPOC, work groups, charges and recommendations. For the most current JJPOC information, please refer to the TYJI website.

DCF has also submitted its draft plan to close CJTS, which includes six goals informed by national best practices and consultation with national juvenile justice experts. There have been focus meetings conducted for various stakeholders across Connecticut to provide feedback. The JJPOC work group has reviewed and provided recommendations to DCF to take into account, and revisions to the draft are to be expected.



**Left to right:** Georgetown CJJR Fellows, Erica Bromley from the Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA), Yecenia Casiano from the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) and School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI), Kitty Tyrol from the University of New Haven/Tow Youth Justice Institute (University of New Haven/TYJI), Steve Smith from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Daisy Ortiz of the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch (CSSD), and Sara Jeffries (University of New Haven/TYJI).



## Survey Shows Support for Prevention and Rehabilitation in Connecticut

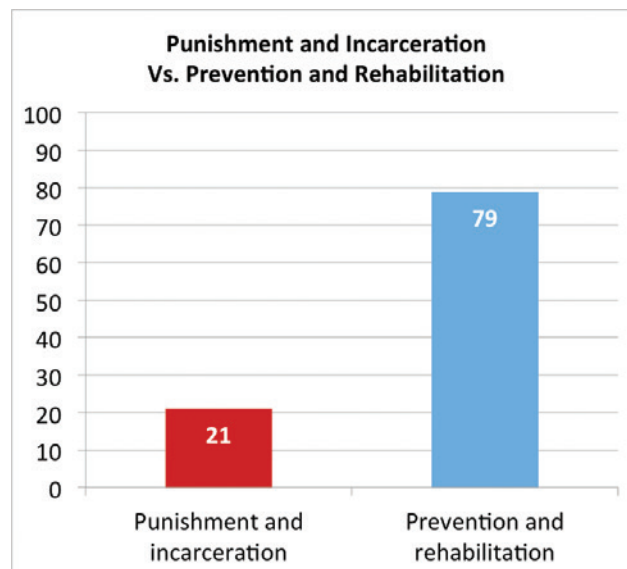
An overwhelming majority of adults in Connecticut support youth justice reform in the state, a new survey has found.

The survey, conducted by the GBA Strategies Group, found that 79% of all adults who participated support the change from incarceration and punishment to prevention and rehabilitation. According to the findings, 86% of women and 72% of men who were surveyed support the proposed reform for the juvenile justice system. The survey also found that 83% of residents in the east and northwest sections of the state support reform within the juvenile justice system.

In addition to asking the participants about the overall change from incarceration and punishment to a prevention and rehabilitation approach, participants were asked if they supported certain specific proposals that are aimed to address problems in the juvenile justice system. Over 90% of the participants indicated that they were in favor of designing treatment and rehabilitation plans that include a youth's family in planning and services.

Ninety-five percent of those who participated agreed that it's most important that the juvenile justice system does a better job of making sure that youth offenders get back on track and are less likely to commit another offense. Eighty-five percent of those who participated believe that states and municipalities should be provided financial incentives to help with the investment in alternatives to incarceration, such as education, job training, and other methods.

"Connecticut has been working on juvenile justice reforms for about a decade. Whenever we made the system more fair, less punitive, and



Source: Youth First Initiative

more rehabilitative, youth crime dropped," said Abby Anderson, Executive Director of the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance. "The system got smaller, we stopped spending money to keep kids in the system who didn't need to be there," Anderson added.

The survey was conducted in January 2016, using a web-based panel of 500 adults ages 18+ on behalf of Youth First. GBA ensured that those who participated were of the adult population in Connecticut.

## The Tow Youth Justice Institute Welcomes Susan Cusano as Office Manager



The Tow Youth Justice Institute welcomes Office Manager Susan Cusano, a long-time employee for 30+ years of the University of New Haven. Sue was Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Student Affairs for many years. She enjoyed working with the students and is a mentor to several students to this day. Her recent work as Administrative Assistant to the Dean in the Henry C. Lee College makes her a tremendous asset as Office Manager for the Tow Youth Justice Institute. Sue can be reached at 203.932.7083 or by email at [scusano@newhaven.edu](mailto:scusano@newhaven.edu).

## Student Spotlight: Sara Jeffries, Ph.D. Fellow

Sara Jeffries, third-year Ph.D. Fellow at the University of New Haven, joined the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) in January 2015 as part of the research staff for projects pertaining to Connecticut's juvenile justice system. Her work with TYJI includes evaluating conditions of confinement in secure juvenile facilities in Connecticut, student mentorship, development of a Capstone Proposal for Diversion in the State of Connecticut, and being a team member on the Restorative Justice Practices Project in collaboration with Suffolk University and CHDI.

Before joining the TYJI, Sara decided to make some changes in her life. After working for several years in the legal field, she decided she wanted to make a career change. She received her bachelor's degree in Criminology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2001 and worked as a legal secretary/paralegal after graduation.

While she liked her job, she realized she didn't want to go to law school. "I didn't want to become a lawyer. I went for my Masters in Criminology, and wanted to take that further and get my doctorate and hopefully get hired as a professor and researcher," Sara said.

As part of her Graduate Fellowship, Sara was asked to teach the Juvenile Justice System course. She found that teaching a class while working on her doctorate is actually beneficial: "I'm learning from students. When I'm coming up with exercises, it helps me review what I've already learned. It's helped me become more well-rounded."

Sara recently finished working with Dr. Tracy Tamborra and Dr. Richard Spano on manuscripts in progress for publication. These areas of



Sara Jeffries, Ph.D. Fellow, presenting at the 2016 Graduate Student Showcase

interest include: victimization while studying abroad and child abuse and neglect in the household. On top of teaching, research and coursework, Sara is aiming to make an impact on the juvenile justice system during her time with the TYJI.

## The Restorative Justice Practices Project (RJPP)

The Restorative Justice Practices Project (RJPP), established by the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) at the University of New Haven, will provide unique support for the School Based Diversion Initiative of the Child Health and Development Institute in the State of Connecticut over the coming year. Project goals are to develop, plan, support and deliver the Restorative Justice Practices component in six school districts, including Waterbury, Bridgeport, Windham, New Haven, West Haven and three state technical high schools. TYJI is partnering with the Center for Restorative Justice at Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts to provide training and has hired a part-time RJPP Project Coordinator, Devon McCormick, who will coordinate training, coaching and technical assistance.



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**Connecticut School-Based  
Diversion Initiative**

## Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Danielle Cooper, Ph.D., C.P.P.

Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice

Interim Director of Research, Tow Youth Justice Institute

For Dr. Danielle Cooper, Ph.D., C.P.P., the path toward her doctorate and becoming a researcher for the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) had many different paths. She began her undergraduate studies in chemistry as a Ronald E. McNair Scholar, which program is aimed at helping minorities achieve their Ph.D., in hopes of working as a forensic scientist. By her third year, she was struggling with the core classes, decided to leave Truman State University to regroup, and enrolled the next semester in a nearby junior college for the spring semester.



“If I couldn’t do chemistry, what could I do that would allow me to be critical and involved?” Dr. Cooper asked herself. A friend, who had the same struggles, told her she may be interested in criminology. After taking one course, she decided to re-enroll at Truman State University the following fall semester, this time to receive her degree in Justice Systems with a minor in Business Administration.

She received her MA in Criminology, Law, and Society at the University of Florida in 2011. During her time in Florida, she worked on numerous research projects, including working on the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking (STOP) Act Grant as the Community/Campus Director for the Collegiate Success Initiative, aiming to strengthen the collaboration of community entities to reduce underage drinking. She also has numerous peer-reviewed publications, including “Stifling Social Capital: How Community Notification Alienates Registered Sex Offenders,” which can be found in the Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment.

Dr. Cooper began working with the TYJI during the fall 2015 semester as a Faculty Researcher to assist with TYJI sponsored research projects. She is now the Interim Director of Research, and is the Principal Investigator on a pre- and post-outcome study that focuses on how community-based services may have changed since Connecticut’s Raise the Age initiative to include 16 and 17 year olds in the juvenile justice system and its possible impact on recidivism.

“This study was one I was able to step back and redesign,” Dr. Cooper said. She designed three stages to the study, including taking an inventory to see where the majority of the youth are receiving services, reaching out to the services where the majority of juveniles are going, and limiting the final analysis based on those selected services.

Dr. Cooper said that working with the TYJI has helped her open more doors for her research. “I am getting a larger opportunity to research youth than before I joined the TYJI,” she said. “I am able to work in small group settings with practitioners and get to know more about other issues people are facing. The TYJI also has allowed me to promote the message about the reform of the juvenile justice system occurring in the state of Connecticut, especially to those who may not agree with the reform.”

Dr. Cooper enjoys discussing any and all issues and topics regarding the juvenile justice system, whether it’s with her students, or anyone else who is willing to have the discussion.

## Update on Transforming Youth Justice: A Leadership Development Program

Collaborative leadership models and essential competencies are discussed by the 2016 Leadership Cohort.

Since April, a cohort of 16 diverse individuals representing all aspects of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, as well as faith groups and community-based providers, has been meeting monthly as part of the Transforming Youth Justice: A Leadership Development Program, the TYJI's newest pilot program initiative.

Generous support from The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, along with core funding for the TYJI from The Tow Foundation, provided the impetus for the leadership program to become a reality. Seasoned TYJI facilitator, Kitty Tyrol, and co-facilitator and evaluator, Frank Olive, Ph.D., lead each carefully structured session that combines self-assessment with full and small group dialogue focused on critical aspects of youth justice reform and leadership competencies. Guest speakers for selected segments elaborate on key topics such as adolescent development research or best practice strategies. The nine-month experience supports cohort members in assessing their capacity for collaborative leadership and in determining goals and action steps as part of their individual leadership skill development. The group is now engaged in a robust and thorough analysis of issues that will be formalized into capstone project plans to be



**The Community Foundation  
for Greater New Haven**

presented in December 2016. Two major issues are under discussion: truancy and police-community interaction, both of which echo the JJPOC legislative priorities and concerns expressed by parents and community leaders. Remaining sessions will focus on getting results, including a panel presentation on results-based accountability, as utilized by key juvenile justice agencies, as well as building an effective community-based practice and key elements of youth justice reform in terms of partnerships and collaboration. Participants will present their capstone plans and celebrate program completion in the final session in December.

## Tow Youth Justice Institute Hosts Police Chiefs Conference

This past spring, nearly 40 members of law enforcement from all different ranks and towns came together to learn about juvenile justice and child welfare. On April 7 and 8, law enforcement officers gathered at the "Connecticut Police Executive Juvenile Justice Conference," in association with the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council and the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association. The event, hosted by the Tow Youth Justice Institute and the Center for Advanced Policing, was held at the Saw Mill Campus of the University of New Haven and covered multiple topics, including adolescent brain development, juvenile justice reform in the State of Connecticut, and strategies for juvenile re-entry, among other topics.

The conference featured guest speakers who all are experts in the field of juvenile justice. Steven Marans, MSW, Ph.D., of the

Yale Child Study Center was the first speaker for the two-day conference. Marans explained how interaction between adolescents and law enforcement is dependent on how the adolescent has developed. Robert Haas, the police commissioner of Cambridge, Massachusetts, discussed the Cambridge Massachusetts Experiment, which touched upon effective interaction strategies between law enforcement and youth. At the time of this conference, Governor Dannel Malloy had recently proposed legislation in Connecticut to include 18- to 20-year-olds in the juvenile justice system, and OPM Undersecretary Michael Lawlor was able to present on this. Mr. Lawlor also discussed the potential effects the proposed legislation would have on law enforcement and further discussed juvenile crime. Other youth justice activists and experts presented valuable information about adolescents during the conference as well.





# University of New Haven

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