

The Tow Youth Justice Institute is a university, state and private partnership established to lead the way in juvenile justice reform through collaborative planning, training, research and advocacy.

Upcoming JJPOC Meetings:

JJPOC Meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 2 p.m., via Zoom and can be viewed on ct-n.com.

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- Thank you to our Spring '21 Students
- IOYouth Task Force Wrapping Up
- 2021 Juvenile Justice Legislation
- Dr. Jamaal Bowman speaks our language!

Looking forward:

It's been over a year and while we have missed two spring seasons at the Tow Youth Justice Institute building on campus, we are looking forward to the fall when we can greet our student interns in person.



Fact vs. Fiction Webinar Series

As the JJPOC presented their recommendations for legislation, we took on two new projects to educate legislators and the general public about the issues supporting the recommendations, the reasons why the change is necessary and other factors in the community that affect youth. The first was the development of a Legislative Package delivered to all legislators prior to the beginning of the session. The second was our Fact vs. Fiction webinar series. They were panel discussions with experts in the field, and youth and families who have had direct contact with the juvenile justice system. The goal was to demonstrate through data the facts around juvenile crimes and alternatives strategies for appropriately addressing the needs and risk of the youth involved.

Fact **v**s. **F**iction *A Series on Connecticut Juvenile Justice Reform*

The first of the three part series, Hearing The Truth About Car Theft In Connecticut on March 25th, presented the data that tells the true story of youth and car theft activity, the programs that exist to address it and suggestions of programs that will work with youth. Opening remarks were provided by Senator Gary Winfield and it was facilitated by Michael Lawlor, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, University of New Haven. The panelists included:

- Ken Barone, Project Manager, Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy, Central Connecticut State University
- Susan I. Hamilton, MSW, JD, Division of Public Defender Services, Director of Delinquency Defense & Child Protection
- Chief Joshua Bernegger, Watertown Police Department, CT Police Chiefs Association
- Larell Smith-Bacon, Executive Director, Restorative Response Baltimore
- Christina Quaranta, Executive Director, Connecticut Justice Alliance

The second webinar, entitled Shaping A Service Approach In JJ Facilities, focused on improving juvenile justice programming, education and services in juvenile justice facilities that will provide youth the best opportunity to be successful and not recidivate. On April 6th, Representative Robyn Porter provided opening remarks and the panel was facilitated by Dr. Danielle Cooper. Panelists included:

- Jessica Feerman, Senior Managing Director, Juvenile Law Center
- Malik Pickett, Staff Attorney, Juvenile Law Center

continued...

- Catherine Foley-Geib, Deputy Director, Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division
- Warden Trina Sexton, Warden Derrick Molden, District Administrator Eulalia Garcia, Department of Correction
- Michael Williams, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Children and Families
- Sarah Eagan, Child Advocate of the State of Connecticut

The final webinar on April 7th, Raising Up Our Youth, focused on raising the minimum age of juvenile jurisdiction, decriminalization of lower offenses and promoting Community Based Diversion and Children's Behavioral Health will be demonstrated as ways to reduce trauma and recidivism. Representative Anthony Nolan and the panel was facilitated by Dr. Lorenzo Boyd, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer, University of New Haven. The panelists included:

- Jaqueline Swagerty, Youth Voice, Center for Children's Advocacy
- Brian Casinghino, Senior Assistant State's Attorney, Hartford Juvenile Matters
- Tasha Hunt, Deputy Director of Juvenile Probation Services, Judicial Branch Court Support Service Division/Judicial Branch
- Erica Bromley, Juvenile Justice Liaison for the CT Youth Services Association
- Melissa Threadgill, Director of Juvenile Justice Initiatives at the Office of the Child Advocate, Massachusetts
- Melissa Coretz Goemann, Esq., Senior Policy Counsel, National Juvenile Justice Network

You can watch the recordings of all three webinars and view the presentations on our website at <https://towyouth.newhaven.edu/2021-events/>.



Transforming Youth Justice Program Cohort #6 Applications Being Accepted!

We are pleased to invite you to join us for the 6th cohort of the Transforming Youth Justice Program being facilitated by the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) at the University of New Haven. Transforming Youth Justice runs monthly from September 2021 through June 2022 and will be provided at no cost to participants.

Our Program Goals:

- To build the capacity of current and aspiring justice reformers to implement best practices in youth justice reform.
- To advance youth justice reformer's knowledge of how to lead reform within Connecticut.
- To cultivate a statewide network of youth justice reformers who serve as a resource to the community.

Who We Are Looking For:

- New, mid-level managers in youth serving organizations, including (but not limited to): state and local government, private agencies, non-profit service providers, secondary education settings, community and faith organizations, law enforcement, and advocates.
- Individuals interested in leading youth justice reform in their work setting and/or community through cultivating best practices, including (but not limited to): child and youth development, trauma, community advocacy, Restorative Justice, and Result Based Accountability (RBA).
- Goal orientated and innovative developing leaders in the field of youth justice who want to raise their awareness of the systems that touch the lives of young people.



The Transforming Youth Justice Program has been developed by the TYJI to ensure a network of current and future youth justice reformers who are passionate, motivated, and eager to make positive systemic change for young people in Connecticut. To forward this mission, your participation in Transforming Youth Justice will involve a capstone proposal detailing ways you plan to improve the youth justice system.

Do you believe you have the potential to be an effective youth justice reformer and are looking to deepen your work? Are you beginning to lead within your organization and want to know about the important reform efforts happening in Connecticut? Apply now! Do you know someone else who fits this description? Let us know!

Please click [HERE](#) for more information about the program, and [HERE](#) for the application. Any questions, please contact Sue Cusano at 203-932-7083 or scusano@newhaven.edu.

PLEASE NOTE: It is our intention for the program to run in-person for the 2021-2022 year. All decisions about location and gathering restrictions will be at the discretion of the University of New Haven, the State of Connecticut, and the CDC. Participants will be notified of any changes. We appreciate your patience as we all figure out how to navigate this new landscape together.

Thank you to our Spring '21 Student Interns!

Brooke Barbeau
B.S., Criminal Justice, Minor, Legal Studies

Cameron Basora
B.S. Psychology, Forensic Concentration
May 2021

Olivia Bissanti
B.S. Double Major in Political Science and Psychology
May 2021

Ethan Cardona
Communications – Public Relations major
Sports Communications & Marketing minors
December 2021

Stacey Clay
M.S. Community Psychology – Concentration in Forensics
May 2021

Richie Concepcion
M.A., Community Psychology, May 2022
B.S., Criminal Justice, Magna Cum Laude, May 2020

Killian Gruber
B.S. Political Science
May 2022

Isabelle Hajek
B.A. Forensic Psychology
Spring 2022

Martina Ibrahim
B.S. CJ Investigative Services
B.S. National Security: International Security and Justice
May 2021

Kevis Canales-Jenkins
B.A. Psychology, Forensic Psychology Minor Criminal Justice
May 2022

Manuel Cortes-Jimenez
National Security: International Security and Justice
December 2021

Kadeem Jordan
B.S. Criminal Justice
May, 2021

Paul Klee
Criminal Justice Ph.D.
2023-2024

Shane Lawler
M.A. Community Psychology
May 2021

Siannah Martius
M.S. Criminal Justice
Summer 2021

Aalyssa Mercing
B.S. Criminal Justice, Investigative Services
December 2021

Jasmia Molina
B.S. CJ Investigative Services
May 2021

Samantha Moul
Doctoral candidate, Criminal Justice

Nasia Norris
B.S. Psychology Concentration in Forensics
May 2021

Hannah Odom

Amanda Pappas
B.S. Criminal Justice and Legal Studies
May 2021

Ashely Price
B.S. Criminal Justice, May 2022

Hellen Vasquez
B.S. CJ Investigative Services
May 2021

Mariana Vasquez
B.S. Criminal Justice, investigative services
May 2022

The Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee recommendations have passed into legislation as follows:

DIVERSION WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATION

- Legislation for raising the minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction from seven years to ten years on July 1, 2021.

EDUCATION WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- An implementation team shall assist the Department of Children and Families in the development of an operational plan to create an education unit.
- The Commissioner of Children and Families shall implement the operational plan...to establish an education unit within the Department of Children and Families, for the education of any child who resides in any juvenile justice facility and any incarcerated child, effective date October 1, 2022.
- Not later than August 1, 2021, the Department of Education shall assemble a list of persons who may perform the function of reentry coordinator.
- A local or regional board of education under whose jurisdiction a student would otherwise be attending school if such student were not educated under the oversight of the education unit of the Department of Children and Families established...shall award a diploma to any such student seventeen years of age or older who satisfactorily completes the minimum credits required, effective date October 1, 2022.
- The Commissioners of Education and Children and Families shall develop a system for standardized conversion of credits transferred.
- In the case of a student placed in any juvenile justice facility and any incarcerated student being educated under the oversight of the education unit...The school district in which the student previously attended school or the state charter school that the student previously attended shall, not later than five days after such placement or incarceration, transfer the student's education records to the education unit
- There is established a committee for the purpose of studying the effects of and possible alternatives to suspensions and expulsions of students in any grade... Not later than January 1, 2022, the committee shall complete a report concerning the effects of and alternatives to suspension and expulsion of students in preschool through second grade...Not later than January 1, 2023, the committee shall complete a report concerning the effects of and alternatives to suspension and expulsion of students in grades (A) three to eight, inclusive; and (B) nine to twelve, inclusive.

INCARCERATION WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Requires CSSD to provide written notice to the child upon discharge or the child's parents or guardians on the erasure of a child's police and court records, if certain conditions are met.
- The bill establishes a committee, with members appointed by the JJPOC chairpersons, to study telephone call rates and commissary needs for 18- to 21-year-olds incarcerated in DOC facilities. It allows the committee to recommend legislation based on the study and report it to the Department of Administrative Services and the Judiciary Committee by January 1, 2022.
- Requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) commissioner to review the department's use of chemical agents on anyone under age 18 in a juvenile detention center or correctional facility...DOC commissioner to report on the review to the Judiciary Committee by February 1, 2022.

IOYOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establishes an implementation team to develop two plans concerning mandatory prearrest diversion of low-risk children
- The first plan must cover automatic prearrest diversion of children to youth service bureaus or other services instead of arrest for Tier 1 offenses, including infractions for such things as simple trespass, creating a public disturbance, possessing less than one-half of an ounce of a cannabis-type substance, and using, possessing, or delivering drug paraphernalia related to less than onehalf of an ounce of a cannabis-type substance. The team must develop the plan by January 1, 2022, and provide, by that same date, a report on its findings and recommendations to JJPOC
- The second plan, which the team must develop by January 1, 2023, must address the diversion for Tier 2 offenses that include infractions such as 2nd degree breach of peace; disorderly conduct; 5th or 6th degree larceny; possessing at least one-half an ounce of a cannabis-type substance; and using, possessing, or delivering drug paraphernalia related to at least one-half an ounce of a cannabis-type substance.
- The Judicial Branch shall develop an implementation plan to securely house in the custody of the Judicial Branch any person under eighteen years of age who is arrested and detained prior to sentencing or disposition on or after January 1, 2023. The plan shall

- include cost estimates and recommendations for legislation as may be necessary or appropriate for implementation of such plan... Not later than January 1, 2022, the Judicial Branch shall submit the implementation plan,
- Under current law, information obtained about a child during a detention screening or assessment must be used only for planning and treatment purposes... The bill allows this information to also be disclosed to CSSD and its contracted quality assurance providers, for program evaluation purposes.

CSG IOYouth Task Force

After two years of work, the Council of State Governments made their final presentation at the May 2021 JJPOC meeting.

In the area of Juvenile Probation Services, they established the following goals:

- Ensure court diversion and case handling decisions are based on a youth's assessed risk of reoffending and needs, rather than the nature of the offense
- Increase family engagement and involvement throughout all phases of a youth's court involvement

In the area of Programs and Services, the following goals were established:

- Ensure that the JB CSSD's continuum of contracted services remains well aligned with the current needs of the youth it serves, and is achieving recidivism reduction and other goals
- Ensure that the procurement / contracting process is functioning optimally for the acquisition of juvenile programming
- Identify strengths as well as issues/barriers that exist for vendors working with the Judicial Branch CSSD to serve the juvenile population, with particular focus on treatment matching, client engagement / dosage, coordination of care, and the service array

Goals in the area of Residential Services are:

- Ensure that the Detention Risk Screening Instrument instituted in January 2017 is functioning correctly
- Limit the use of Detention and address RED
- Development of Detention Data Dashboards

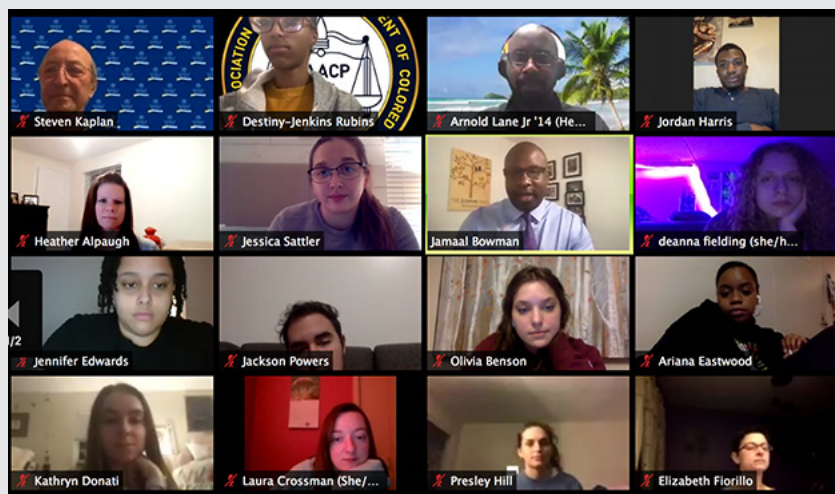
In support of these goals, the previously stated recommendations from the IOYouth Task Force were passed into legislation. The JJPOC and the TYJI are grateful for the hard work of the team from the Council of State Governments.

“While Connecticut has made much progress to reduce the number of youth who enter its juvenile justice system, the IOYouth Task Force gave the state an opportunity to examine the impact of recent reforms to its system and identify strategies for further improvement,” said Nina Salomon, Program Director at The Council of State Government Justice Center. “Effective, long-lasting policy requires input and buy-in from a variety of perspectives, and Connecticut’s IOYouth Task Force relied on a diverse array of stakeholders to develop its recommendations, which were used to craft legislation and administrative policy changes to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for youth in Connecticut’s juvenile justice system.”



US Representative Jamaal Bowman '99, Ed.D., Speaks to UNH Students about the School to Prison Pipeline

Speaking to the University community via Zoom, Dr. Jamaal Bowman shared his own story, discussing what he has learned throughout his career and the impact he hopes to make in the communities he now represents. A New York native, he lived in public housing and rent-controlled apartments as a child. He later studied sport management at the University of New Haven before beginning his career as a crisis intervention teacher in the Bronx. He worked in historically underfunded and underserved schools and was horrified that the students, who were mostly Black and Latinx, had to walk through metal detectors. He describes his own experience as “feeling more like a corrections officer than an educator,” saying it bothered him – especially since a nearby school with mostly white students did not have metal detectors.



In 2009, Dr. Bowman founded Cornerstone Academy for Social Action (CASA), a middle school in the Bronx, serving as principal for a decade. He was determined to make sure this school was different, and it focuses on, as he says, “unlocking the natural brilliance of students while fostering a sense of belonging and community.” Dr. Bowman believes every child is brilliant, and that it is the job of educators to unlock that brilliance.

“Kids – and adults – behave as they are treated,” said Dr. Bowman. “If you treat them like criminals, they will behave in that way.” He explained, “We take a different approach to how we introduce and engage in curricula with students. We are a school of social justice. Kids learn about their history and culture. We treat our kids as human beings. If

they made a mistake against the school community, we talked about it. We used restorative circles to gain a better understanding of what was going on, and we supported kids – we didn’t just suspend them.” Dr. Bowman concluded by urging students to be activists and not to accept no for an answer. He assured them that change is possible, and that they can play a critical role.

Read full story by By Renee Chmiel, University of New Haven, Office of Marketing and Communications at <https://www.newhaven.edu/news/blog/2021/jamaal-bowman.php>.

Please visit newhaven.edu/towyouth for more information about the Tow Youth Justice Institute. Please scan the image to read our other Issue Briefs and Quarterly Newsletters.



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