



FALL 2022 NEWSLETTER

TRUANCY MATTERS- VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENT



The Truancy subgroup of the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) Diversion Workgroup was concerned about chronic absenteeism and what parents are and aren't signing off on at the beginning of the school year. Given the change in the Truancy laws and removing them from status offenses, there was conversation around what is happening with youth who are chronically absent and whether they are being referred to community-based services.

In discussing the process of referring a child to a Youth Service Bureau (YSB) for community-based programs, they were concerned that if the parent hadn't signed off on referrals, there was a significant delay in the child getting the support they needed.

The Hartford school system volunteered to pilot a potential sign-off form to be implemented for the 2022 – 2023 school year and receive feedback on the process to determine its success and expansion into other school districts. It was emphasized that for the project to be successful it must be in support from the top down to combat chronic absenteeism. It is critical that schools and districts provide parents and youth the correct information, and the handbooks schools give out are up to date. They felt that education and outreach is important to building a trust relationship and getting parents to understand why signing a referral form at the beginning of the year is paramount.

There was an idea to incorporate a QR code that people can scan, and watch a short informational video that can explain what a YSB is and what they do. The discussion led to updating the referral form and providing it in several languages and creating an explainer video, also in several languages. The Tow Youth Justice Institute was happy to assist the subgroup with the development of the video and referral forms.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile Justice Club Youth Trauma Event | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIYPR Listening Sessions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women of Justice Networking Rounds |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort 7 Transforming Youth Justice Program (TYJP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Staff Announcement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the Interns |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TYJI Staff head to ASC | |



JUVENILE JUSTICE CLUB YOUTH TRAUMA EVENT

On Tuesday, November 1st, the University of New Haven's Juvenile Justice Club held a panel discussion for members of the University community. Youth Trauma and its Effects on Offending was discussed by several professionals in the Alumni Lounge during the evening, providing students with an opportunity to learn from a diverse range of speakers.

Speakers included William H. Carbone, Executive Director of Justice Programs and Senior Lecturer at the University of New Haven. He also serves as the Executive Director of the Tow Youth Justice Institute. Carbone has directed numerous projects that successfully reduced recidivism and reformed Connecticut's state Juvenile Justice system through his former role as Executive Director of the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division.

Also on the panel was Dr. Danielle Cooper, Ph.D., CPP., Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and the Director of Research at Tow Youth Justice Institute. As a Certified Prevention Professional, she works as an evaluation consultant and brings her expertise on juvenile policy, sexual offenses, and police-authority dynamics in marginalized communities.

Dr. Melissa Whitson, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, and licensed Clinical Psychologist joined the discussion. Whitson is an expert on childhood trauma with clinical work focused on children and families. Her research explores interventions for children exposed to trauma, and she conducts program evaluations across Connecticut for youth-serving organizations.

Lastly, Alice M. Forrester, Ph.D., spoke as the Chief Executive Officer at Clifford Beers Clinic. The agency provides services addressing mental and physical health and sees recovery as a "whole"-istic practice under her leadership. Forrester has served on councils including the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the State of Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council.

The panel discussed topics surrounding juvenile justice and youth trauma interrelation, including cycles of abuse, the biological and neurological impacts of impactful events at an early age, and intergenerational trauma that can impact a child years after an event occurs.



COHORT 7 TRANSFORMING YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM (TYJP)



On the second Friday of every month, the 7th cohort of the Tow Youth Justice Institute's Transforming Youth Justice Program meets at the University of New Haven's Orange Campus. Fifteen (15) professionals are participating in this year's nine-month program which kicked off in September, hearing from guest speakers and learning collaboratively with one another. The TYJP cohort has an opportunity to build their capacities as leaders and agents of change for their communities, with the program culminating with individual capstone projects.

On Friday, October 14th, the group had a session with guest speakers William H. Carbone, Executive Director and Erika Nowakowski, Associate Director of the Tow Youth Justice Institute. The 15 youth justice and community leaders learned about Connecticut's juvenile justice system, legislative reform that has taken place and Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC).

Carbone discussed the history of the juvenile justice system in Connecticut, what reform has looked like in the state, and lessons learned from its history. The most important driver of change that is robust and sustainable is passion for the population, something the 7th Cohort has in spades.



The Cohort also learned about the evolution of the JJPOC through their strategic goals. Upcoming topics include childhood trauma, restorative practices, LGBTQ+ and racial issues in the juvenile system, and victim advocacy skills.



CIYPR LISTENING SESSIONS



The Connecticut Institute for Youth and Police Relations, (CIYPR), was developed to promote a unified and consistently effective approach to policing youth across a jurisdiction in which police come to recognize their role as gatekeepers to the criminal justice system.

The CIYPR held 3 listening sessions in October and November to obtain feedback from the community ahead of finalizing plans for Cohort 2. Community members expressed a significant amount of interest in the project and offered ideas for future solutions during the discussions.

The sessions were open to people from across the community, and in attendance were individuals from nonprofits, police, elected officials, and others. All of these community members showed up to the listening sessions to represent themselves and self-identified as a person in a position of power when they were interested in pushing for a specific initiative or had resources that could support a workable solution presented in the session. Many of the groups represented at the sessions had the same observation that engaging with youth is critical, and they were glad it was a component of the CIYPR and hopeful that the program expands beyond Hartford.

Each of the three sessions began with community members voicing struggles and complaints, before shifting into a discussion about possible solutions and ways to move forward. CIYPR urged communication from the group and shared stories of connections between police and the community, with both parties working towards a common goal of improved relations.

Plans for the second cohort of 15 officers are being developed. The CIYPR is currently evaluating data collected from the sessions with officers and interviews across Connecticut to inform the design of the second cohort.



ANNOUNCING NEW STAFF PAUL KLEE



Paul Klee joined the Tow Youth Justice Institute in September 2022, as a non-Faculty Researcher. Paul will be assisting the Associate Director, JJPOC Project Manager and Director of Research, with research-related duties specific to the work of the JJPOC and achieving its goals as outlined in the strategic plan and identified through legislation.

He is responsible for developing a research plan, operationalizing the research activities, drafting, and presenting recommendations for legislative consideration, and producing reports that are released to specific identified legislative committees.

In addition, Paul is an Adjunct Instructor at the University of New Haven teaching The UNCommon Course (UNIV 1125) and Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice (CJST 2251). . As a Ph.D. student, Paul served as a Doctoral Research Fellow at the Tow Youth Justice Institute, conducted research as a Liberty Initiative Scholar. As a fourth-year Ph.D. student, Paul has completed coursework and is halfway through the completion of his comprehensive exams.

Paul obtained his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Criminal Justice with a minor in Social Justice at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut.



TYJI STAFF HEAD TO AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY 'S (ASC) NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Connecticut Institute for Youth and Police Relations (CIYPR) presented at the American Society of Criminology 's (ASC) National Conference on November 19th. The ASC Conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia, focusing on the 2022 theme of The Future of Criminology. The group presenting at the conference included the TYJI's Director of Research, Dr. Danielle Cooper, TYJI's Researcher Paul Klee, and Ph.D. Research Fellows Samantha Tosto and Jessica Morgan. The conference presentations covered several topic areas that came out of the CIYPR training, including "Monthly Evaluation of Officer Feedback and Observations While Developing Youth Partnerships", "From Piloting to Productive Partnerships among Seven Cities", and "Pre-Post-Post Tests of Participants' Knowledge and Experiences Improving Youth and Police Relations".



Women of Justice Networking Rounds



The University of New Haven hosted the first-ever Women of Justice Networking Rounds on November 1st, in the Bartels Student Center at the University of New Haven. Invited guests spanned from across the justice system, including Representative Robyn Porter, Toni Walker of Hamden and New Haven, Professor Lisa Dadio (Director of the Center for Advanced Policing), and Attorney Sarah Eagan (CT Office of the Child Advocate). These professionals discussed larger criminal justice system reforms as well as personal experiences as women working in the justice system. University faculty, staff, and students participated in four networking rounds where they engaged in a wide variety of topics discussed below.

While Connecticut's juvenile justice system has experienced significant reform, it is still challenged by children having unmet needs that could prevent their interaction with the system in the first place. One setting where these needs can be seen is in school. Chronic absenteeism and low engagement can be indicators that school is no longer a place of safety and exploration for youth.

The attendees explored how conversations about equality, histories, and perspectives can be altered by placing the concept of "humanity" at their center every time. With a community-based focus on policing and protective factors, there can also be a shift in the way groups are evaluated. The age-old adage that raising a child "takes a village," holds true in educational settings, where a child ought to have strong support and guidance from all adult figures in their life.



Panelists considered community policing strategies as well, discussing community improvements that come about from a police force that resembles and understands the community they serve. When bodies of authority consider the historical trauma informing their interactions with a community, they can consider their actions and legacy. Also discussed was the general expectation that women ought to avoid rocking the boat in the workplace and must defer to their male colleagues is being challenged by strong women in the field across all positions, ages, and backgrounds. Women can look to those around them for inspiration by allying with other strong women in the workforce and refusing to be silent about the issues facing them, especially women who identify as part of other marginalized groups in addition to their gender identity and expression. By standing in solidarity, women can amplify one another's voices to influence reform in the justice system through practices and culture. **...continued**

The Women of Justice Networking Rounds were a true example of women standing in solidarity and amplifying each other's voices. It was a great opportunity to come together with such prestigious women in the field of justice to discuss ways to make change. It is through these types of conversations that influence future generations entering the field of justice.

Author: Nicole Kessler, MA Student in Community Psychology



Meet the Interns



Sudeshna Das
Research Fellow

"It is such an enriching experience to be part of the Research Team. The experience has not only honed my research skills but also allowed me to attend meetings and understand the ongoing process that results in policy change."



Sydney de Lannoy,
JJPOC, Graduate
Assistant

"So far, my experience interning with TYJI has been great. As a social work student focused in public policy, it has been exciting to have a hand in putting together recommendations for legislation on juvenile justice. I have learned a lot about how the legislative process works and gained powerful insights about the role of social work in policy. I am very thankful for the opportunity to intern with TYJI."



Nikki Crimmins,
TYJI Intern

"Being an intern with the Tow Youth Justice Institute has been a great experience. The opportunity to apply my skills and knowledge in a real-world setting is invaluable, especially with such a strong team supporting me."





Nicole Kessler,
Research Department

" Being on the TYJI research team has given me the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the importance of data-driven practices related to juvenile justice. So far, I have really enjoyed engaging with various programs and public agencies who are currently leading the way for youth justice reform in Connecticut. "



Faythe Bomba,
Marketing &
Communications Intern

" As a communications intern with the Tow Youth Justice Institute, I have had the opportunity to be involved in a variety of programs and events organized and supported by the Institute. Through the Transforming Youth Justice Program specifically, I have been able to apply what I have learned in the classroom to a professional setting, expanding my knowledge of the juvenile justice system and restorative justice practices. This internship has provided ample opportunities to learn from those in the field and be inspired by them as well!"



Hunter Clark
TYJI/JJPOC
Graduate Assistant

"I'm so grateful for the opportunity to work with TYJI and the JJPOC to gain a deeper understanding and new perspective of all the work and research that goes into making policy recommendations. It's very exciting to know that the work we are doing directly impacts the criminal justice system and the youths in our community. I've loved getting to expand my knowledge of the criminal justice system into the specifics of juvenile justice. I am so thankful for everyone at TYJI—I have learned so much already and they have welcomed me with open arms. I cannot wait for the next year and a half with this team!"

"I have had the opportunity to learn a great deal in regard to Juvenile Justice reform and the efforts that are being made. It has truly been a privilege to see everyone from an array of agencies collaborating to help better the future of the youth in our communities."--
-Victoria Sierra- TYJI Intern

Check out our past newsletters on our website :
towyouth.newhaven.edu/news-and-publications/

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.

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



FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

