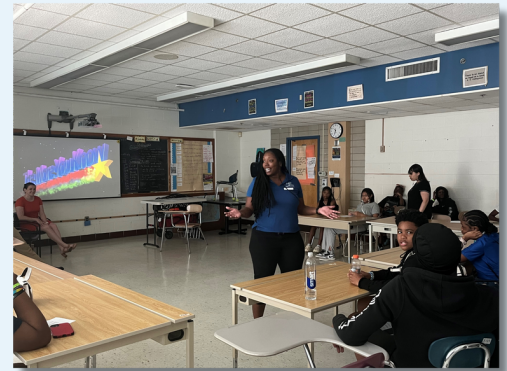




## SOCIAL JUSTICE SCHOOL WRAPS UP YEAR 5!

The Summer Social Justice School Program is a unique opportunity for New Haven middle and high school students to learn about social justice issues and how they can advocate for themselves and make a difference in their communities. This year, TYJI hosted 6 classes from July 11-July 27th during the Summer of Fun program held at Hillhouse High School. The Social Justice School program curricula consisted of social justice topics and issues, as well as some fun activities.



TYJI's Dr. Danielle Cooper presented on The CROWN Act, which stands for "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair," and is a law that prohibits race-based hair discrimination, which is the denial of employment and educational opportunities because of hair texture or protective hairstyles.



TYJI interns, Hunter Clarke and Sydney de Lannoy, held 3 activities and taught students how to create Zines, which is a small-batch, DIY, "magazine-like" publication. Historically, zines have served as a powerful outlet for content considered to be too niche, risqué, or outside of the mainstream. They are a mash-up of art, letters, stories, and information and come in all shapes and forms. Zines provide a safe, independent platform of expression for underrepresented and marginalized voices: Black, Indigenous & People of Color, young people, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ(+) community, persecuted religious groups, and people with limited economic resources.



- Social Justice School
- TYJP Graduation
- Announcement of New Legislative Committee on Children's Behavioral Health

- Meet our New Staff
- TYJI's JJPOC Senior Project Manager Brittany LaMarr Visits Germany

- Meet our Fall Interns
- Brittany LaMarr receives Distinguished Services award

Amy Vatner, the Director of Legal Services at the Children's Community Programs of CT presented on Educational Advocacy, talking about classroom removal, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion and student rights. Amy informed students that they have the right to an informal hearing before receiving a suspension, where they will be informed of reasons for suspension and given the opportunity to explain.

"Students must also have the opportunity to complete work, homework, and assigned assignments missed during their suspension period. Students facing expulsion have the right to a formal hearing, students must be given a 5-day written notice, be informed of parental ability to seek counsel, have legal rights to postpone, view relevant materials and records before the hearing, see witness list, have the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses, present evidence, be given access to alternative educational opportunities, and the right to petition for early readmission." Amy communicated in a written description of her presentation.

TYJI's non-faculty Researcher, Paul Kleel, spoke on Active Listening and willingness to hear different perspectives, which was based on a DEIAB course - The UNCommon Course - which he teaches at the University of New Haven. This course is designed to engage students in critical thought about Traits, Values, and Behaviors, which has been coined the TVB Model.

Restorative Justice practitioner LaToya Fernandez wrapped up the last session of the summer with a presentation on Restorative Justice. She states that "Restorative Justice" is born out of Indigenous wisdom and practices and views harm as a violation of community and relationships, rather than rules and laws.



TYJI intern Hunter Clark had the following to say at the completion of the program, "We don't want to force them into having the same interest as us and we wanted to give them the space to kind of find their passion." "The fact that participants were able to see four speakers talk about four different topics like this gives them the opportunity to find their own interests."

# TRANSFORMING YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM GRADUATION

On Friday, June 1st members of the 7th cohort of the Transforming Youth Justice Program graduated from the nine-month program which ran monthly from September 2022 through June 2023 on our Orange Campus. . They heard from keynote speaker Janai Kemp, Student Program Manager at NXTHVN, and two of our graduates, Samuel Saylor, and Jessica Blake. We also had a special visit from the University of New Haven, Intermin President, Dr. Sheahon Zenger.

The Transforming Youth Justice Program is facilitated by the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) at the University of New Haven.



TYJP was 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 changes for young people in Connecticut. Completion of the program involved a capstone proposal detailing ways participants planned to improve the youth justice system.

This year, we hosted a SPECIAL “Cap-Tail” reception for participants to share their capstone projects: Click on the images below to read more about the participants and their projects.

### The Upstream Project-Connecticut

Prevention is the Intervention

Marcellina Ortiz, Juvenile Probation Supervisor, State of CT Judicial Branch CSSD  
Marva Romero, Juvenile Probation Supervisor, State of CT Judicial Branch CSSD  
Matthew Hay, Educator, Hartford Public Schools  
Samuel Saylor, Criminal Member, State of CT Judicial Branch CSSD  
Jessica Blake, Behind the Walls Navigator, Our Place of the Pie

**What is the Problem?**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

**Goals/Changes & Desired outcomes**

- Reduce the number of youth justice reformers who are incarcerated.
- Increase the number of youth justice reformers who are employed.
- Increase the number of youth justice reformers who are in the community.
- Increase the number of youth justice reformers who are in the workforce.
- Increase the number of youth justice reformers who are in the community.

**What's the impact on the community?**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

**Barriers/Supporters**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

**Best Practices & Models used**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

**Support & Resources Needed**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

### Graduation Requirements in REGIONS

Julie Dougherty, Special Education Teacher & Team Leader, ACES REGIONS

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**Best Practices & Models used**

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**Support & Resources Needed**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

### Family Violence Prevention Program

Lindsey Guerrero, Senior Assistant Public Defender, Division of Public Defender Services

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**Goals/Changes & Desired outcomes**

- Reduce the number of youth justice reformers who are incarcerated.
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**Best Practices & Models used**

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**Support & Resources Needed**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

### Creating a K-12 Equity Entry Plan

Marissa Acampora, Instructional Supervisor for Equity and Engagement, Milford Public Schools

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**Goals/Changes & Desired outcomes**

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**Best Practices & Models used**

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**Support & Resources Needed**

Address the upstream factors contributing to the criminal justice system, including the role of the family, community, and social structures in the development of youth justice reformers.

Cohort 8 kicked off on September 15, so stay tuned as we announce the members soon.



## ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



The Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee held a kick-off meeting on Monday, July 10th at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford with State Representative Tammy Exum (D-West Hartford, Avon), State Senator Ceci Maher (D-Wilton) and Claudio Gualtieri, Senior Policy Advisor from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) who serve as tri-chairs of the committee.

The committee was established by landmark legislation in 2022, and further refined and renamed during the recent legislative session. The committee is tasked with evaluating the availability and efficacy of prevention, early intervention, and behavioral health treatment services and options for children from birth to 18 years of age.

The day began with a press conference at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. "I am excited to have this committee be the vehicle for formalizing best practices for the children's behavioral health system in Connecticut," said Rep. Exum, who was a co-author of the original legislation that established the committee. "I am committed to ensuring transparency and accountability with respect to state-funded services for children and youth with an emphasis on goals for community-based programs and facility-based interventions and to promoting the efficient sharing of information by state and state-funded agencies."





Speaker of the House Matt Ritter added, "This an opportunity to bring committed people together, who will collectively work on addressing long-standing needs across the children's behavioral health system in an equitable and sustainable way." Tri-Chair Gualtieri said that "The pandemic brought the need to address children's behavioral health into sharp focus, this is a key priority for the administration to ensure our children and families have the support they need. OPM looks forward to supporting the engagement of all state agencies in this collaborative work." In addition, Sen. Maher expressed her gratitude to everyone for their involvement and excitement that, "Through the work of this committee, we will continue to address and improve children's behavioral health in Connecticut. We made great strides with Senate Bill 2 this past legislative session, and I am optimistic about the path forward due to the good work we will accomplish together."



The Tow Youth Justice Institute is staffing and facilitating the committee's work, including other children's behavioral health stakeholders in the state, to ensure a solid process is in place for making the critical goals of this committee come to fruition. The committee is also charged with the establishment of an annual work plan, including specific recommendations to improve outcomes related to children's behavioral health and a timeline indicating dates by which specific tasks or outcomes should be achieved. Additionally, the development of a strategic plan will immediately begin, which integrates the recommendations in collaboration with any state agency with responsibilities relating to the behavioral health system. The committee will also make recommendations on the governance and administration of the children's behavioral health care system to the legislature and executive agencies to ensure equitable access to services.

## BRITTANY LAMARR RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED SERVICES AWARD



In the office of Tow Youth Justice Institute, a sense of excitement and pride filled the air!

Brittany Lamarr, was recently recognized for her exceptional achievement and for distinguished service as a member of the New England Commission on the Future of Higher Education (NEBHE) in Prison.

NEBHE plays a number of key leadership roles that make it unique in its ability to serve the New England states and contribute to higher education issues nationally.

They also draw attention to key issues related to higher education that are important to the region's stakeholders—catalyzing awareness, analysis, discussion, and policy change.



Lastly, NEBHE also engages policymakers at the highest levels in the six New England states, including governors and their education advisors; legislators; state P-12 and higher education commissioners; leaders at public and independent colleges and universities.

Throughout her tenure at NEBHE, Brittany had consistently exemplified dedication, passion, and a remarkable work ethic. This recognition stands as a testament to her exceptional contributions and commitment to her work in the NEBHE. Click here to read the report shared in June on the Future of Higher Education [New England Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Prison | New England Board of Higher Education \(nebhe.org\)](#).

NEW ENGLAND BOARD  
of HIGHER EDUCATION



TOW YOUTH JUSTICE INSTITUTE WELCOMED FOUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS TO OUR STAFF THIS SUMMER:



[CLICK HERE TO MEET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS](#)

MEET *our Fall Interns...*



HUNTER CLARK  
*Graduate Assistant*



NICOLE KESSLER  
*Research Assistant*



JORDAN EMILLE  
*Communications Intern*



JOSHUA LEVIN  
*UCONN SW Policy*



JEHZIEL MIRALLES  
*UCONN SW Policy*



TOW YOUTH JUSTICE INSTITUTE  
University of New Haven



## TYJI'S JJPOC SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER BRITTANY LAMARR VISITS GERMANY



During the week of June 18, 2023, JJPOC Manager Brittany LaMarr travelled to Germany as an extension of the International Justice Exchange (IJE) Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy ( UCONN) educational campaign to understand the criminal justice system across the globe.

Brittany's trip with IJE to Germany included members of the CT Sentencing Commission, the Chief States Prosecutor, Chief Public Defender, Executive Director of Judicial Branch Court Support Services , per Sigurd Vage - International Director of Norwegian Correctional System, Alex Tsarkov Executive Director of Ct Sentencing Commission, and Andrew Clark Executive Director of IMRP.

Representatives from the IJE as well as TYJI staff and faculty, also travelled to Norway in the Fall of last year. The IJE is focused on looking at other criminal legal system models that implement humane policies and practices. They visited many areas of the system and received many presentations, probation, correctional training facility, prison, youth facilities, NGOs, pre-trial services, sentencing.

*" My hope as a member of the IJE is to continue to learn how other places are implementing human rights standards in how they treat people throughout their entire experience with the criminal legal system from arrest to release," LaMarr stated.*

The goal of International Justice Exchange is to learn how to effectively share information from what was learned and received on both trips and use it towards their Fall educational campaign .

<https://imrp.dpp.uconn.edu/international-justice-exchange/>

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### Check out our past newsletters on our website : [towyouth.newhaven.edu/news-and-publications/](http://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](http://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.



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