

*Message from the Director*

*Dear Friends of the CJRC,*

*I am very honored and excited to take the reins as Director of the Criminal Justice Research Center. I feel as though I have been involved in the activities at the center of the*

*CJRC's mission since the beginning of my career, when I was a postdoc with the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing from 1993-1994 under the directorship of Dr. John Kramer, who would later be vitally instrumental in creating the CJRC. Later, as an assistant professor at Purdue University, I enjoyed a rewarding research collaboration with the Indiana DOC and county community corrections agencies. Since coming back to Penn State in 2000, I have been involved in research projects collaborating with the PCS, the Pennsylvania Interbranch Commission on Gender, Racial, and Ethnic Fairness, and several federally funded projects.*

*What are those activities at the center of the CJRC's mission that I spoke of? The way I see it, they are the bridging of academic criminology research and the worlds of criminal justice policy and practice. As a perusal of the CJRC's impressive portfolio of current and completed projects shows, this takes many important forms: [Research – Criminal Justice Research Center \(psu.edu\)](#).*

*Thanks to the excellent leadership of Dr. Derek Kreager and Dr. Gary Zajac, the CJRC is on a strong foundation and an upward trajectory. I want to maintain and expand on that foundation and growth. I hope that the CJRC can expand the already extensive external research funding portfolio via our seed grant program. I want to maintain and strengthen our relationships with PCS, PA Department of Corrections, and perhaps seek new outreach with other agencies. In addition, our CJRC Postdoctoral Scholars have been the source of much of the dynamism in the CJRC's research endeavors, and I want to keep the energy going with our postdoctoral programs. At the same time, I want to build on the CJRC's outreach to undergraduate and graduate students, providing access to research opportunities and resources. Through all these efforts, I think we will also continue to gain greater visibility as an essential contributor to the College of the Liberal Arts.*

*Jeffery Ulmer  
CJRC Director*

**PENN STATE**

*CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH CENTER*

Jeffery Ulmer, Director  
Gary Zajac, Managing Director  
Megan Kurlychek, Associate Director  
Elaine Arsenault, Docket Editor

## CJRC Mourns Passing of Dean Susan Welch

The CJRC mourns the passing of Dean Susan Welch. Dean Welch was instrumental in the establishment of the CJRC and was a strong supporter of our mission and operations since then. Her vision directed the creation of a center that could bring together the scholarly and applied criminal justice communities in furtherance of the mission of an engaged university. We are grateful for her strong and insightful leadership, and extend our condolences to her loved ones.

Read more about Dean Susan Welch's legacy [here](#).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### Criminal Justice Research Center Welcomes New Personnel

**Stacey Lyons** is the Criminal Justice Research Center Administrative Support Coordinator. Stacey started with the University in 2011 as an Admin Support Assistant in the College of the Liberal Arts Psychological Clinic. From there Stacey worked in various departments with the last being an Admin Support Assistant for the women's basketball coach and now Stacey is excited to be back in the College of the Liberal Arts. In her free time, Stacey likes to spend time in the outdoors camping, hiking and enjoying family.



## Criminal Justice Research Center Departure

**Rebecca Reitz** left the CJRC in November for a new position in the Smeal College of Business at Penn State. Rebecca had served since 2018 as the Outreach and Enrichment Coordinator for both the CJRC and the Department of Sociology and Criminology. She was the first incumbent in the then newly created position. Rebecca's work in this role over three years served to establish a very strong foundation for the success of CJRC/Department efforts to engage students in research, place them in internships with agency partners and to assist them in their subsequent search for professional positions. This is now an established component of the CJRC portfolio. She also worked closely on alumni outreach and advisory board matters, among other things. We wish Rebecca the best in her new position and the search is underway for her replacement.

## Yiwen Zhang, CJRC Graduate Student Assistant, Awarded the 2021 ADPCCJ Fall Student Research Award and the 2021 APPAM Equity & Inclusion Student Fellowship

Yiwen Zhang, Doctoral Candidate in Criminology and CJRC Graduate Student Assistant, won the 2021 Fall Student Research Award by the Association of Doctoral Programs in Criminology and Criminal Justice (ADPCCJ) in the United States.

Yiwen was also recognized as a 2021 Equity & Inclusion Student Fellow by the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM). She will present her research on prison expansion and employment in rural America at APPAM's 2021 Fall Research Conference (postponed from November 2021 to March 2022 due to COVID-19). Congratulations Yiwen!



## Julia Dillavou, CJRC Graduate Student Assistant, wins ASC Division of Women and Crime Student Paper Competition and Criminology Graduate Student Publication Award

Congratulations to Julia Dillavou, CJRC Graduate Student Assistant, for winning the ASC Division of Women and Crime student paper competition with her paper “Solidarity or Solitude? How Correlates of Incarceration Impact Friendship among Imprisoned Women”. This project was supported by the [Criminal Justice Research Center Graduate Student Research Award](#).

Julia was also one of the co-winners of the Criminology Graduate Student Publication Awards this year for her paper with Derek Kreager, CJRC Faculty Affiliate, Ted Greenfelder, and Yiwen Zhang, CJRC Graduate Student Assistant, titled “Mothers Inside and Out? Pseudo-Families and Motherhood in a Women’s Prison.” Forthcoming at *Crime & Delinquency*.



## CJRC Graduate Student Research Award Winners Present

The Criminal Justice Research Center Graduate Student Research Award Winners presented their work on December 3 at the Criminology Speaker Series. The CJRC Student Research Award Winners include Julia Dillavou, Brittany Freelin, and Christopher Seto.



*Brittany Freelin, Julia Dillavou, and Christopher Seto*

## Researcher Appreciation

Members of the CJRC leadership were recognized at the College of the Liberal Arts 2022 Annual Researcher Appreciation Reception on April 5. Megan Kurlychek - Associate Director - was recognized for receiving her first grant as Principal Investigator at Penn State, having just recently joined the faculty here. Gary Zajac - Managing Director - was recognized for receiving his 10<sup>th</sup> grant as Principal Investigator at Penn State. Congratulations to Megan and Gary! Their accomplishments reflect well not only on their own scholarship, but on the work of the CJRC.

## CJRC Announces Resource Library

The CJRC is pleased to announce a new Resource Library our partners and affiliates can access. The Resource Library will provide literature reviews and reports on projects that CJRC researchers have prepared, often in collaboration with community partners. We hope you enjoy the CJRC Resource Library and continue to utilize the Resource Library as it continues to grow. Visit the Resource Library [here](#).

## Center For Justice Research (CJR) at Bowling Green State University Newly Launched Center

The Center For Justice Research (CJR) at Bowling Green State University is a newly launched center funded by the Office of the Ohio Attorney General (OAG), led by Professor John Boman. The mission of the CJR is to promote data-driven, effective and fair policy solutions within the Ohio criminal justice system. JCR will make grant awards to researchers to undertake studies requested by the OAG. PIs must be based in Ohio, but collaborators can be outside of the state. CJRC Director Jeff Ulmer and Managing Director Gary Zajac have provided advice and guidance to the CJR on its start-up, drawing from the extensive experience of the CJRC with conducting policy relevant research in Pennsylvania and nationally. The following is the link to the CJR's website: <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/cjr>

## 2022 NIJ Funding Opportunities Overview

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) presented an overview of the 2022 NIJ Funding Opportunities in a webinar on February 16. The following document details the upcoming solicitations NIJ expects to announce over the course of the next month and a summary of the audience question and answer session. View the document and recently announced funding opportunities [here](#).

## Spring Speaker Series

The following speakers presented as part of the Spring Speaker Series:

**Presented by** Criminal Justice Research Center and the Department of Sociology and Criminology.

### **Friday, February 25**

Jeffery Ulmer – CJRC Director

“Defendants, Victims, and Court Communities: What We’ve Learned from Studying Murder Cases for Ten Years”

### **Thursday, March 3**

Giza Lopes - New York State Youth Justice Institute

Janine Zweig - Justice Policy Center, Urban Institute

“Nonacademic Career Panel”

### **Wednesday, March 23**

Sam Quinones, Author Of *Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic*

“True Tales of America and Hope in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth”

Co-sponsored by the Consortium on Substance Use and Addiction

### **Friday, March 25**

CJRC Postdoctoral Scholars

Clare Strange

“Individual-level Race and Ethnicity Reporting in Administrative Sentencing Data: Issues, Impacts, and Solutions”

Constanza Silva Gallardo

"Nicotine Exposure and Development: Implications in Substance Use Behaviors in Late Adolescence"

### **Friday, April 8**

John MacDonald - University Of Pennsylvania

*Changing Places: How the Science of Urban Planning Can Make Our Cities Healthier, Safer, and More Livable*

### **Friday, April 15**

William Pridemore - University At Albany, SUNY

*The Criminological Transition Model: A New Theory of Societal Development and the Nature of Violence*

## Annual American Society of Criminology Meeting Conference Presentations

The following is a list of the presentations given by the Criminal Justice Research Center researchers at the Annual American Society of Criminology Meeting in Chicago, Illinois in November.

- Murder Prosecution and Sentencing: Racial and Locational Disparities, Jeffrey T. Ulmer, CJRC Director, and Gary Zajac, CJRC Managing Director
- The Cost of Consecutive Sentences in Pennsylvania, Miranda A. Galvin, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar, and Jeffrey T. Ulmer, CJRC Director
- Racial Bias and the Effects of Parole Agent Assignment on Recidivism and Employment, Michael LaForest, PA Department of Corrections Postdoctoral Scholar
- Hardship and Friendship Among Imprisoned Women, Julia Dillavou, CJRC Graduate Student
- Random Drug Testing in Prisons: Does a Little Testing Go a Long Way? Yiwen Zhang, CJRC Graduate Student, Holly Nguyen, CJRC Faculty Affiliate, Greg Midgette, University of Maryland, and Thomas Antony Loughran, Penn State, Professor of Sociology, Criminology, and Public Policy
- Bridge Over Troubled Waters? Certified Recovery Specialists and the Reentry of Prisoners with Opioid Use Disorders, Derek Kreager, CJRC Faculty Affiliate, Gary Zajac, CJRC Managing Director, and Yiwen Zhang, CJRC Graduate Student
- Moral Intuitions, Punishment Ideology, and Judicial Sentencing, Jasmine Silver, Rutgers University – Newark, and Jeffrey T. Ulmer, CJRC Director
- Examining Illicit Opioid Activity and Networks in Local Communities: A Novel Approach for Community Intelligence, Glenn Sterner, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Penn State Abington and C3N Faculty Affiliate, Ashton Verdery, Associate Professor of Sociology & Demography, University Park Faculty Affiliate, Shannon Monnat, Syracuse University, Scott Yabiku, Professor of Sociology and Demography, and Gary Zajac, CJRC Managing Director
- Comparing COVID-19 Mortality Rates Between Prisons and the Community, Bret Bucklen, CJRC Advisory Board member and PADOX agency partner and Michael LaForest, PA Department of Corrections Postdoctoral Scholar
- Opioid-Specific Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) and Impact on Criminal Justice Outcomes: A Systematic Review, Clare Strange, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC, Sarah M. Manchak, University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice, Jordan M. Hyatt, Department of Criminology and Justice Studies, Drexel University, Cory P. Haberman, University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice, and Alisha Desai, Department of Psychology, Drexel University
- Findings from a Qualitative Meta-Analysis of Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIPs) Research, Michelle L.T. Wojcik, William Paterson University, Christine Neudecker, Rutgers University – Newark, Clare Strange, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC, Kate Stillman, William Paterson University, Sheetal Ranjan, William Paterson University, and Aakash Shah, Jersey Shore University Medical Center.
- Hospital-based Violence Intervention: Strategies for Cultivating Community Partnerships and Strengthening Practitioner Engagement. *Sheetal Ranjan*, William Paterson University, *Aakash Shah*, Jersey Shore University Medical Center, *Christine Neudecker*, Rutgers University – Newark, Clare Strange, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC, Michelle L.T. Wojcik, William Paterson University, and Kate Stillman, William Paterson University
- Trends in Violent Victimization Rates: The Impact of Violence across New Jersey, *Christine Neudecker*, Rutgers University – Newark, *Sheetal Ranjan*, William Paterson University, *Aakash Shah*, Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Clare Strange, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC, *Kate Stillman*, William Paterson University, and Michelle L.T. Wojcik, William Paterson University

## **CORRECTIONS AND RE-ENTRY**

### **Iman Said, Bunton-Waller Fellow and Doctoral Candidate in Criminology, publishes in Justice Quarterly**

A new article was recently published in *Justice Quarterly* titled “A Mixed Method Evaluation of the Role of Religion in Desistance and Reentry.” The authors include Iman Said, Bunton-Waller Fellow and Doctoral Candidate in Criminology, and Kimberly Davidson, Florida State University. This article stems from the Therapeutic Community Prison Inmate Networks Study (TC-PINS) that has been a major project for the CJRC over the years. Read the article [here](#).

### **NIJ releases CJRC Advisory Board member and PADO agency partner Dr. Bret Bucklen’s paper on “Desistance-Focused Criminal Justice Practice”**

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) recently released CJRC Advisory Board member and PADO agency partner Dr. Bret Bucklen’s paper on “Desistance-Focused Criminal Justice Practice”. Read the report [here](#).

## **TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION**

### **Seed Grant Award: Assessing Police Officers’ Knowledge and Training about Drug Addiction**

Dr. Jennifer Murphy (Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and C3N Faculty Affiliate at Penn State Berks) and Co-Investigator Dr. Brenda Russell (Professor of Applied Psychology and C3N Faculty Affiliate at Penn State Berks) will investigate what current educational materials and trainings are offered to police officers in Berks County about issues of substance use and to determine what is needed to improve police officer knowledge about addiction and reduce stigma. This was an enhanced seed grant award thanks to support to the CJRC from the Penn State Social Science Research Institute.



## Seed Grant Award: Cost-Effectiveness of Veterans Treatment Courts

Dr. Eileen Ahlin (Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and C3N Faculty Affiliate at Penn State Harrisburg) and other investigators including Dr. Cassandra Atkin-Plunk (Associate Professor, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Florida Atlantic University) and Dr. Daniel Mallinson (Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Administration, School of Public Affairs, C3N Faculty Affiliate at Penn State Harrisburg) will focus on enhancing investigators' statistical capabilities and practitioner/professional network to enhance their competitiveness to pursue external funding. Veterans treatment courts are one of the many problem-solving courts that process criminal cases through a dedicated court docket that blends therapeutic treatment and accountability. Many problem-solving courts (e.g., drug courts) have been shown to be cost-effective. As one of the newer courts in the problem-solving court movement, the cost-effectiveness of veterans treatment courts is not well established.

## Seed Grant Award: Organized Knowledge Production by People who Use Drugs: Ethical Collaborative Research in Theory and Practice During the Overdose Epidemic

Dr. Sarah Brothers (Assistant Professor of Sociology and Public Policy, University Park Faculty Affiliate) will develop and implement sustainable and ethical Community Driven Research (CDR) with drug-user-lead organizations in the United States. The findings will be used to develop materials for ethical research with vulnerable and criminalized groups, particularly those who use illicit drugs, disseminate through rapid research the risk-reduction information distributed through these networks, and contribute to theoretical work on expertise in vulnerable and criminalized groups.

## Penn State Today Features Article on Opioid Epidemic and Crime Data

Penn State Today recently featured the article, ["Examining the opioid epidemic through the lens of crime data."](#) The article discusses a recent paper published in the *International Journal of Drug Policy*, titled ["Trends in opioid-related crime incidents and comparison with opioid overdose outcomes in the United States."](#) The authors, all from Penn State, include Qiushi Chen, The Harold and Inge Marcus Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering, Glenn Sterner, Department of Criminal Justice and C3N Faculty Affiliate, Joel Segel, Department of Health Policy and Administration, and Zixuan Feng, The Harold and Inge Marcus Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering.

## Clare Strange, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC, publishes in Campbell Collaboration Systematic Reviews

A new article was recently published in *Campbell Collaboration Systematic Reviews*, titled "Opioid-specific medication-assisted therapy and its impact on criminal justice and overdose outcomes." The authors include Clare Strange, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC, Sarah M. Manchak, University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice, Jordan M. Hyatt, Department of Criminology and Justice Studies, Drexel University, Damon M. Petrich, University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice, Alisha Desai, Department of Psychology, Drexel University, and Cory P. Haberman, University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice. Read the article [here](#).

## **COURTS AND SENTENCING**

### **New Article Forthcoming in Federal Sentencing Report**

Miranda Galvin, PA Commission on Sentencing Postdoctoral Scholar, Matt Kleiman, Deputy Director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, and Megan Kurlychek, CJRC Associate Director, have a forthcoming piece in the *Federal Sentencing Reporter* this month titled “The Consequences of Counting Juvenile Adjudications in Adult Sentencing.”

The article considers the impact of utilizing juvenile adjudications are part of the “prior record score” in determining sentence lengths. In the article the authors contrast current Pennsylvania policy to policies used in other states as well as the prospect of not considering juvenile records at all since the juvenile system is drastically different than the adult system in purpose and process. The authors demonstrate how these policies impact type and length of sentence as well as differential impact across population groups. The authors conclude that what might seem like small policy decisions actually have large impacts on sentencing outcomes, and more importantly, individual lives.

*The article will be forthcoming shortly and the CJRC will link to the full article on the News section of the website.*

### **CJRC Associate Director, Megan Kurlychek, Featured on Evidence-to-Impact Podcast**

The Social Science Research Institute’s Evidence-to-Impact Podcast new episode features CJRC Associate Director, Megan Kurlychek, and Rick Steele, executive director of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission. The episode is titled “[Digging Deeper into the Juvenile Justice System.](#)” Listen to the episode to learn about the “their work in the juvenile justice field, the history of the juvenile justice system, prevention programs, recidivism, and other topics.”

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION**

**WPSU Conversation on Gambling in Pennsylvania**

WPSU recently released a conversation on [Gambling in Pennsylvania](#). Glenn Sterner, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Penn State Abington and C3N Faculty Affiliate, was a featured speaker on this topic and discussed the yearly assessment of interactive gaming in the Commonwealth in partnership with The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. Access the 2021 Pennsylvania Interactive Gaming Report [here](#).

**Michael LaForest, PA Department of Corrections Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC,  
publishes in Nature**

A new article was recently published in *Nature*, titled “Knowledge about others reduces one’s own sense of anonymity.” The authors include Anuj K. Shah, University of Chicago, and Michael LaForest, PA Department of Corrections Postdoctoral Scholar at the CJRC. Read the article [here](#).

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