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JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

FALL 2019



DIVE IN

John Jay's new pool will open up swimming opportunities for underrepresented populations.

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Karol V. Mason
with Meek Mill



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President
Karol V. Mason

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Laura Ginns

Chief Communications Officer
Rama Sudhakar

Senior Editor/Writer
Editorial Director
Andrea Dawn Clark

Writer/Editor
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Sam Anderson
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Laura DeVries

Designer
Stephanie Birdsong

Copy Editor
Carey Ostergard

Photography
Denis Gostev
Amber Gray

Illustration
Sandy Bandes

**JOHN
JAY** COLLEGE
OF
CRIMINAL
JUSTICE



President Mason takes a selfie with a student before commencement.

Creative Problem Solving

AT JOHN JAY COLLEGE WE'RE used to taking on tough challenges. Our student body knows how to juggle jobs, academics, and all of life's demands, while still finding time to help others. Our faculty and staff have mastered a "make it work" attitude when time and resources are not always ideal. Essentially, when it comes to creative problem solving, our community is thinking outside the box on a regular basis. That's why you'll be impressed with—but not surprised by—the innovative strategies our community is taking to tackle some of our biggest challenges.

In "Dive In" (page 4) we're not only looking forward to the opening of our newly renovated pool, we're also addressing the unsettling swimming gap that impacts folks from underrepresented populations and low-income households. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that black children between the ages of five and 19 were five and a half times more likely to drown in pools than white children. Research has also shown that 79 percent of children in families with household incomes less than

\$50,000 had little to no swimming ability. With the help of two fellowships generously donated to John Jay College from Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, we're hoping to advance water safety in our community, and make sure everyone will enjoy our beautiful new pool.

Today, almost half of our country's large police departments are using body cameras. Are they helping to build community trust and decrease civilian complaints? Are they supporting police officers or are they reducing their ability to use discretion? John Jay's faculty and alumni in law enforcement weigh in to help us better understand the research and their experiences in "Camera Ready" (page 8).

Learning that a number of John Jay students with 90-plus credits were either stopping out or dropping out motivated Dara Byrne, Ph.D., Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Retention, to find a creative solution that could help remove obstacles blocking our seniors' paths to success. By collaborating with the MasterCard Foundation, the Robin Hood Foundation, and DataKind, a custom, open source predictive analytics tool was created, identifying seniors that might need more support. With a substantial grant donated

from the Price Family Foundation, CUSP, or the Completion for Upper-division Students Program, was created and the results are already impressive. Read more about this innovative program and the positive effect it's having on our students in "On the Edge of Glory" (page 12).

Food insecurity amongst college students is a national crisis. At CUNY, 48 percent of students responding to a survey reported that they recently experienced food insecurity. As you'll read in "Food for Thought" (page 16), we're confronting the problem head-on with everything from food pantry options and free food vouchers, to fresh produce giveaways and SNAP guidance. As a community, we're on a mission to make sure that all of our students are nourished both mentally and physically.

We all know that textbooks can be quite expensive. That's why the Open Educational Resources Justice e-Reader initiative, written about in "Read All About It" (page 20), is so exciting. This new online hub of justice-focused materials takes the financial burden of textbooks off a student's plate, and it gives our community an ever-evolving resource that can be shared by all.

Dismantling mass incarceration and racial disparities within the criminal justice system would be impossible without uniting prosecutors and the communities they serve. That's why it's so inspiring to see the collaborative work (page 23) done at John Jay's Institute for Innovation in Prosecution (IIP), led by Executive Director Lucy Lang. Through their research, courses, workshops, and publications, the IIP is fostering positive change within the criminal justice system.

To conquer some of our communities' greatest struggles, we must use the ingenuity, empathy, and passion for justice that lies at the heart of our institution. These problems won't be resolved overnight, but I'm proud of how we're responding to them. As Albert Einstein so deftly noted, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." Let's keep up the creativity.

Thank you,

Karol V. Mason
Karol V. Mason

 @JohnJayPres

THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION AWARDS A \$1.5 MILLION GRANT TO THE PRISONER REENTRY INSTITUTE



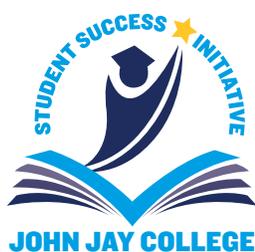
The Prisoner Reentry Institute (PRI) at John Jay College has helped hundreds of criminal justice-involved individuals get a new lease on life. And, thanks to a \$1.5 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, PRI will continue to help hundreds more. The grant will support the expansion of PRI's education and reentry initiatives for current and formerly incarcerated students. PRI helps them successfully reenter communities, the workforce, and institutions of higher education, after contact with the criminal justice system.

"I am honored that The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation continues to believe in our mission and support this work," said PRI Executive Director, Ann Jacobs. "This grant will enable PRI to expand its college-in-prison program, the Prison-to-College Pipeline (P2CP); work within CUNY on a university-wide strategy for supporting students after justice involvement; and contribute toward a coordinated, statewide approach for providing higher education in correctional facilities."

John Jay's Vision for Student Success

>>> Nationally, there is a crisis in college completion, particularly for students from low-income households and students of color. However, research shows that institutions committed to improving graduation rates can achieve this goal when their leaders are intentional. With a singular focus on student success, John Jay is just such an institution. "It's a place where everyone—first-generation students, working students, immigrants, parents, and veterans—can transform their lives with a justice-focused education," said President Karol V. Mason.

John Jay is leading the way in providing its diverse and historically underrepresented students—nearly 75 percent of students are from minority backgrounds and more than half come from low-income households—with an education that cements the foundation for not only their college graduation, but also their post-graduate and career success, as well as civic participation, leadership, and lifelong learning. To achieve this, John Jay is building on and expanding the approaches that are working at the College, such as the proven cohort-based support programs. These programs have higher retention, faster credit accumulation, and better graduation rates among participating students. The College is also testing new technologies and strategies to help scale and more strategically target support for at-risk students. To learn more about John Jay's Vision for Student Success, visit the president's page on the College website.



PRI's education and reentry initiatives help criminal justice-involved individuals reenter communities, the workforce, and institutions of higher learning.

John Jay Launches New Cohort Program LEAP

>>> Seeing the positive impact cohorts have on student success, this fall 2019, John Jay College launched Linking Experience, Academics, and Practice (LEAP). The new cohort-based program, funded by the generous support of the Booth Ferris Foundation, marks the first time all incoming freshmen at the College will have access to multi-year cohort program support. Cohort-based models have proven to be effective in providing students with a greater sense of belonging, self-confidence, and leadership skills, while also enabling students to learn to network within their cohort and other groups, and to stay competitive when pursuing graduate and career opportunities.

LEAP applies the most effective tools and practices from already existing programs at the College—such as Accelerate, Complete, Engage (ACE)—that have demonstrated success at increasing student retention and graduation rates. Students in LEAP won't have to meet any eligibility requirements, other than not being in another cohort-based program, making it more inclusive and available to a larger group of scholars that is representative of the College's population. LEAP will provide students with tailored major and career exploration, intensive academic advisement, and access to experiential learning opportunities.



John Jay's new pool will open up swimming opportunities for underrepresented populations.

Dive In

FOR MANY PEOPLE, THE UPCOMING opening of John Jay's new pool is cause for celebration—as it should be. But, for a number of students of color, and grown-up “city kids” who never learned how to swim, diving into the deep end sounds incredibly daunting. At the heart of this swimming disparity lies a justice issue based on a history of segregated pools, lack of access to public pools and swimming instructors, poverty, racial stereotypes, and even cultural fears about water that can be linked back to slavery. The future opening of our new pool ought to be a joyous occasion for everyone in our community. And, being a school focused on creating a fairer, more just society, it presents an opportunity to bridge the swimming gap.

By **Andrea Dawn Clark**





PHOTOGRAPHY: DENIS GOSTEV

Stott-Hodge (left) checking the form of John Jay students Samara Pettie '20 (center) and Hansel Felix '21 (right).

CONFRONTING THE PROBLEM

In 2017, the U.S.A. Swimming Foundation published a study that found that 64 percent of black children, 45 percent of Latinx children, and 40 percent of white children had little to no swimming ability. The survey also revealed that socioeconomic factors played a huge role in the swim gap—79 percent of children in families with household incomes less than \$50,000 had little to no swimming ability. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, black children between the ages of five and 19 were five and a half times more likely to drown in a pool than white children.

The numbers are alarming; the problem is pervasive in African-American, Latinx, and low-income communities, and the reasons are rooted in history. Within families of color, long-held fears about swimming are passed down through generations as a sad legacy of slavery. Before the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Africans living on coastal shores were strong swimmers, but once enslavers saw swimming as a route to freedom, they went to great lengths to associate swimming with terror. During the 20th

century, segregated pools were a potent symbol of Jim Crow's discriminatory power, while very few public pools were built within communities of color. And, the cost of swimming lessons was, and still can be, prohibitive for low-income households. "For decades, racial stereotypes have compounded the swimming gap for communities of color. To truly combat the problem, we need to address the reasons—from racist misperceptions that people of color are less buoyant and therefore sink, to a lack of parental swimming ability and access, and even concerns about black hair care after swimming," says Maritza McClendon, 2004 Olympic Silver Medalist in swimming and a Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority member.

In an effort to tackle the problem and increase swimming participation in communities of color, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority created the Swim 1922 program, named after the year the sorority was founded. The program has yielded 117 swim clinics across the country and over 2,500 swim lessons. This semester, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority donated \$25,000 to John Jay College for two

fellowships. These fellowships will support swimming instruction and clinics for our neighboring community, while also offering supplemental swim instruction for John Jay students.

"Establishing the Swim 1922 Fellowship at John Jay College creates a partnership that will forever transform families and communities," says Deborah Catchings-Smith, International President of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority. "Learning to swim is a gateway to many sports and leisure activities rarely pursued in African-American communities. We don't see this gift as a donation, but as an investment in the progress and success of the students at John Jay College who then become advocates for water safety and swim lessons."

TRAILBLAZING A PATHWAY

Marian Wright Edelman, President Emerita of the Children's Defense Fund, once famously said, "You can't be what you can't see." Fortunately, our students can see Jenell Stott-Hodge '15, John Jay's new Aquatics Director and Head Swim Coach—a Bloodhound Swim Team alumna and an African-American woman. "My mother is from Anguilla and St. Kitts. She grew up with basic island girl swimming skills, and when she immigrated to the United States, she made sure that I had access to that life skill," says Stott-Hodge.

Growing up in the Manhattan neighborhood of Inwood, there were no pools available to Stott-Hodge within her community. Luckily, her family regularly went upstate during summer breaks and she could take advantage of the convenient swim lessons there. "The access was easier outside of the city, and the prices were cheaper," she says. To continue her swim lessons during the fall, Stott-Hodge had to take two trains to Harlem. "But it was all worth it for me because I fell in love with the water and I immediately felt comfortable in the pool," says Stott-Hodge. "Swimming also opened up job opportunities for me. I got my first job lifeguarding at a Children's Aid Society center."

In 2012, when Stott-Hodge enrolled at John Jay, she was excited to see that there



John Jay student
Natalie Rizo '21
demonstrating
her backstroke.



The renovated pool with sustainably harvested teak wood, LED lighting, and wave-pattern tiling (above), and the pool during construction (right)



was a pool. “The swim coach encouraged me to join the team, even though I didn’t have any competitive experience, and it just clicked for me,” she says.

Throughout her three years on the team, Stott-Hodge was the only African-American team member. “When we would go to competitions, sometimes I could tell that people were surprised to see me there—especially with my big, curly afro—and often times they would underestimate me,” says Stott-Hodge. “It can make you feel out of place, but it wasn’t going to stop me. As a student, I joined the lifeguard pool staff. Then after graduation I started coaching and instructing. There was a whole aquatics world that I wanted to be a part of.”

Now, as Aquatics Director and Head Swim Coach, Stott-Hodge is on a mission: She’s focused on making basic swim-safety skills available to everyone in our community. “I would really like to offer workshops that help everyone feel

comfortable being in the water. That means teaching basic skills, building up swimming techniques, and most importantly addressing trauma around water,” she says. “It’s one thing to be comfortable in the water, but it’s another thing to be entirely uncomfortable to the point of fear. I would absolutely like to take that fear element out of swimming.”

Stott-Hodge’s success story holds a lot of meaning for one person in particular, Director of Athletics, Recreation, and Intramurals, Carol Kashow, who saw Stott-Hodge’s potential from the start. “She came here as someone who knew how to swim but hadn’t swum competitively. We had a great coach at the time, and Jenell fell in love with the program,” says Kashow, detailing Stott-Hodge’s stellar climb from Assistant Coach and part-time Head Coach, to Aquatics Director and Head Swim Coach. “When we hired Jenell to lead our aquatics program, we were very excited not only to have a former John Jay

64 percent of black children, **45** percent of Latinx children, and **40** percent of white children had little to no swimming ability.

— U.S.A. SWIMMING FOUNDATION

student in the position, but also a young woman of color. She’s an excellent role model for our students and a leader for our community outreach.”

BUILDING AN AQUATIC DREAM

As anyone who’s ever embarked on “simple” home renovations can attest to, undertaking a large-scale project like renovating a college pool involves many hands and many details. But in the end it’s all worth it. “It’s been a complete renovation of the pool shell, all the materials on the outside, new filtration system, new controls, and new locker rooms,” says Anthony Bracco, John Jay’s Director of Facilities Management. “The construction started in January 2018, and because of an amazing partnership with DASNY [Dormitory Authority of the State of New York], CUNY [the City University of New York], and our contractor, Infinity, the project has gone very smoothly.”

Everything in the new pool feels modern and smart. The ceiling is made from sustainably harvested teak wood designed to accommodate new energy-efficient LED lighting. The new air-conditioning system lifts and wicks the air off the surface of the pool, eliminating a strong chlorine smell so often associated with pools. The new locker rooms are bright and airy with all new showers and lockers. And, the tiles on the walls have a subtle wave pattern to give the space a soothing atmosphere. According to Bracco, the pool will be a CUNY centerpiece for athletics, providing our community with a special place to swim. Happily, we’re all ready to dive in. **JM**



Camera READY

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT WEARING BODY CAMERAS.

Unpacking the goals, practices, and outcomes of police officers using body worn cameras (BWCs) is a complicated issue. Currently, there's limited—yet ongoing—research focusing on the impact these videos have on law enforcement and the communities they serve. But, by looking at the current research, acknowledging the historical context, delving into the real-life experiences of officers wearing BWCs, and thinking ahead to the questions that need answers, we get a snapshot of where we are on the subject and how we can move forward. We're learning now that for law enforcement, BWCs can improve officer safety and reduce agency liability, and we have an eye on the developing body of research that could increase community trust and promote healing for families.

We can trace the impetus for BWCs to a specific sequence of events that put deadly force in the headlines. Five years ago in Ferguson, Missouri, when an unarmed African-American man named Michael Brown was shot and killed by a white police officer, a wave of protests and a national conversation begun about possible excessive use of force by police. That same year, Tamir Rice, a black child from Ohio, suffered the same fate. The following year in New York City, Eric Garner was killed by an officer using an illegal chokehold. Over the succeeding months and years, civilians with cell phone cameras continued to capture incidents of police officers using force, largely against people of color. The videos went viral, protests continued, and advocates began to include calls for more BWCs in their broader appeals for policing reforms. This was the backdrop against which police BWCs were deployed.

BY SAM ANDERSON



Eric Piza

Today, about half of large police departments use body cameras. A 2019 George Mason University study that reviewed existing research found some evidence for a slight decrease in civilian complaints among officers who wore body cameras. But, they also noted that, “The decline in complaints seen may indicate a reporting effect or a change in citizen reporting behavior rather than an effect on officer behavior or even on the quality of police-citizen interactions.” These findings could indicate that the way body cameras are deployed and utilized may have to be adjusted before they are able to achieve significant results.

“The research is very mixed,” says John Jay Associate Professor, Eric Piza, Ph.D. “Certain studies have found a sizable positive effect, but others have found no effect.” According to Piza, the next step is to look specifically at how officers are using the cameras, and the particular situations during which they are used. His current research focuses on identifying the situational determinants of police use of force through a systematic social observation of body camera footage and usage. Comparing body cameras to traditional closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras for security, he explains, “A CCTV camera is not going to be effective if police don’t have the manpower to respond to events caught on camera, and an investigation won’t be helped unless the detectives have the ability to mine through body camera

footage to identify certain elements. It’s all these human factors that determine if the technology will work.”

Piza’s current work revolves around studying those human factors. Specifically, he is combing through hours of bodycam footage from the Newark, New Jersey Police Department seeking to catalogue situational factors that result in use of force—for instance whether an officer announced their camera was recording, or whether they gave a suspect a chance to answer questions. This emphasis on the process of how cameras are used and the situational factors surrounding encounters with civilians may prove to shed further light on how to get the best results out of body cameras. “The jury is still out on how to best leverage the benefits, and currently we have very little guidance to give police on how to best deploy and release the footage. So I would hope that the insight of research catches up with the cameras’ level of use,” he says.

Gloria Browne-Marshall, John Jay Professor of Constitutional Law, who is currently working on a book about policing in America that explores the vestiges of race-based behavior in law enforcement, believes that there are two areas of research that are greatly needed to move the needle forward on the topic of BWCs. The first being analysis of the timing in which the videos are released correlated to the level of distrust from the public. “On an anecdotal level, we’ve seen that if there’s a long protracted amount of time before the release of the video footage, it undermines police-community relations and the credibility of the police department,” says Browne-Marshall. “It can also heighten a community’s misgivings about law enforcement and stifle any type of trust.” Conversely, one can assume—and research is needed to test and confirm—that reducing the time to public release of BWC footage can increase community trust.

The second area of research that Browne-Marshall feels is critical to study involves leveraging the wealth of information captured through BWCs

“The most expensive part of the program is not the cameras, but storing the video.”

—ANTHONY TASSO

showing real-life interactions between police and community members in order to develop our understanding of the legal standard for when a “reasonable” officer fears for his or her life. “That research needs to be done based on an archive of BWC videos,” says Browne-Marshall. “Under the law there is a reasonable-person standard for everything. Looking at a body of police video footage, we need to ask, would a reasonable officer fear for his or her life under those circumstances? There are reasonable standards for other aspects of policing, but right now, there’s no reasonable standard for fearing for one’s life.” In Browne-Marshall’s view, this research could act not only as a training opportunity for officers, but it



Peter Moskos

could also provide sound parameters for the use of deadly force.

In New York City, where 24,000 officers wear body cameras—exactly two thirds of the force—the decision to release bodycam footage to the public rests with the Police Commissioner. According to Anthony Tasso, '19, Commanding Officer of the New York City Police Department's Information Technology Bureau, there are other methods of accessing the footage. The department generally releases footage in response to requests under the state's open records law, and there's a civilian complaint board that also can access the footage. When it comes to use of force, Tasso says that police work, even when done properly, can seem excessively violent to an outside viewer. "Force is hard to watch even when it's necessary," he says. "In the law enforcement community, there's a saying called 'lawful but awful.' It's not easy to watch, and it never looks pretty, even when it's appropriate."

In New York City, 24,000 officers wear body cameras.

Some of the police officers who were initially resistant to body cameras have come to embrace them for the primary reason that they often vindicate officers in the event of a lawsuit. Many times, "it backs up the cops," says Peter Moskos, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Law, Police Science, and Criminal Justice Administration, and a former police officer himself. "What I gained from my police experience, and what people don't understand, is how crazy and irrational some people can be. Cops get falsely accused all the time," he adds. With body cameras, Moskos says it's possible to have a full account of an incident, rather

than just civilian cell phone footage, which often covers only part of an incident.

According to a United States Department of Justice report, "The main reasons that local police and sheriffs' offices had acquired BWCs were to improve officer safety, increase evidence quality, reduce civilian complaints, and reduce agency liability."

With body cameras offering reams of data, Browne-Marshall sees the potential for mountains of footage to serve as a research resource, while Tasso says one of the biggest challenges with body cameras is the enormous amount of footage they generate. "The most expensive part of the program is not the cameras, but storing the video," he says. It would be unrealistic for the NYPD, or other large departments, to hold onto every police-civilian encounter that's captured. So most departments set a time window—usually 60 days, but it varies among departments—during which all body camera footage is stored. After that, unless an incident is tagged as critical or flagged by the civilian complaint board, it disappears.

This becomes problematic given the fact that lawsuits, "open records" requests, and other means of obtaining footage can take far longer than 60 days to process. Piza explains, "By the time a request goes through, the piece of evidence may not exist anymore on the server. The obvious pushback is, 'let's make storage indefinite.' But we have to be mindful that we're making an incredibly expensive technology even more cost prohibitive for police." Responding to the discrepancy over who controls the footage, Browne-Marshall says, "Until the Supreme Court rules in a case requiring the release of camera footage, there's not going to be a consistent policy across the country."

Unsurprisingly, the group that seems to be benefiting the most from body cameras are the companies that make them. According to the *New York Times*, "Axon [formerly known as Taser International] has sold more than 300,000 police cameras worldwide." Given the mixed bag of results, the question regarding body cameras is what do we do next? According to Piza, "The next

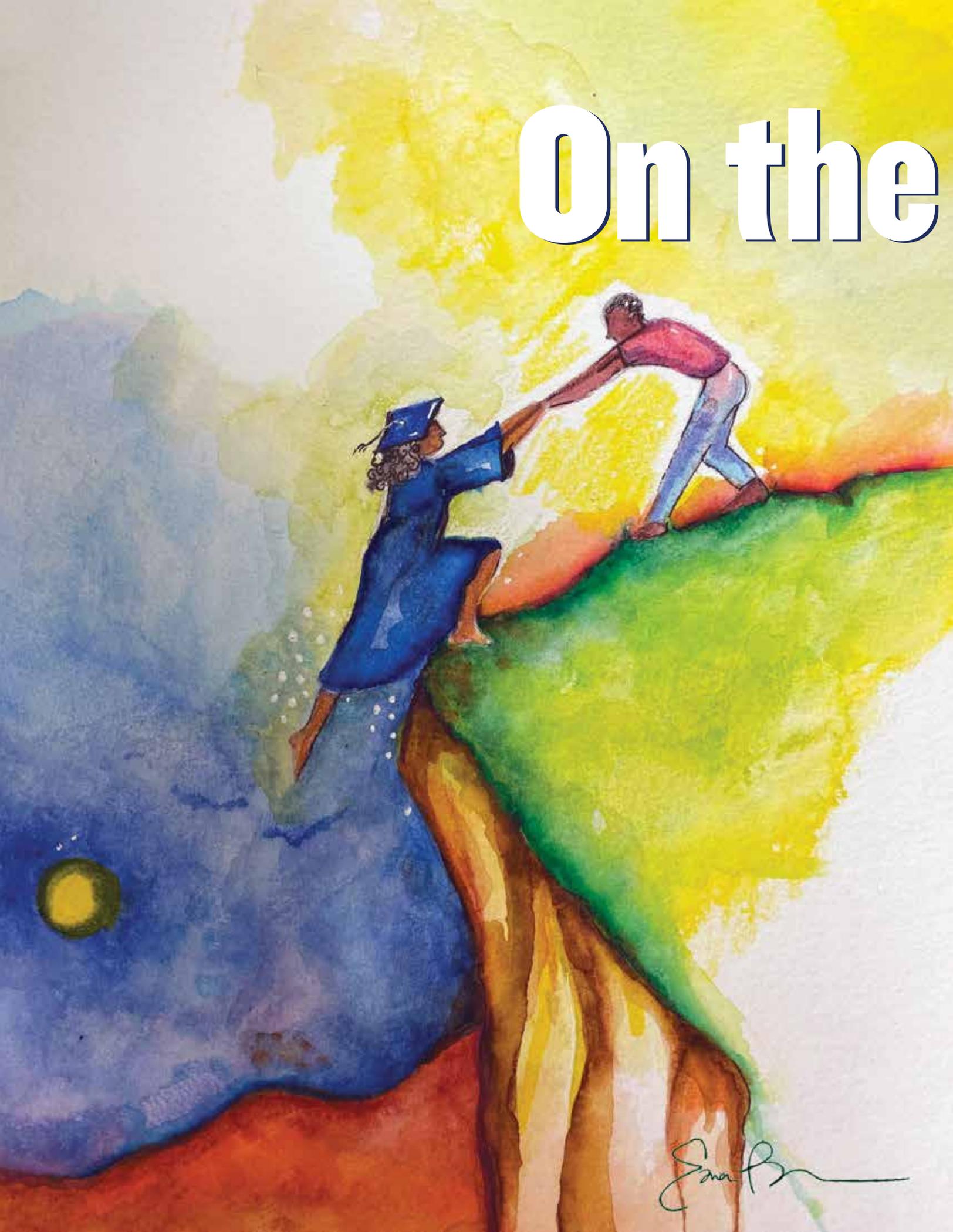


“Looking at a body of police video footage, we need to ask, would a reasonable officer fear for his or her life under those circumstances?”

— GLORIA BROWNE-MARSHALL

step is for the research community to start digging deeper into the process and ask, what is it about successful applications of body camera technology that make them successful, and vice versa? Despite the fact that we get caught up in tech solutions to crime, and despite the promise those tools have, what largely determines if video surveillance or other technology is going to work is the human factor behind it.” **JM**

On the



Janet B.

Edge of Glory

The new Completion for Upper-division Students Program (CUSP) supports seniors with 90 credits, removing any obstacles blocking their pathway to success.

By Mary Anderson

SHE DIDN'T KNOW IT AS SHE stood in line at Starbucks in the summer of 2018, but Rosemarie Siri was about to get meaningful help to graduate. A then-senior, with 90-plus credits, Siri had managed to register for fall courses but was pondering how she was going to afford the tuition for winter registration. "My TAP [Tuition Assistance Program grant] money had run out, and I was trying to figure out how to pay out of pocket," recalls Siri. Waiting for her coffee order, she bumped into Sumaya Villanueva, Ph.D., the College's Assistant Provost of Academic Engagement—one of the key people who would be assisting Siri and hundreds of her fellow classmates as part of a new initiative they would soon know as CUSP, or the Completion for Upper-division Students Program.

But this story begins some two and half years earlier in the office of Dean of Undergraduate Studies Dara Byrne, Ph.D., who was looking over data on completion rates at the College. Byrne also serves as the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Retention and was taken by the fact that a number of students with 90-plus credits were leaving the College before earning the 120 credits needed to graduate. "There was no easy way to tell the difference between a stop out [temporary withdrawal] or a drop out, and none of our available data showed whether students ever return to complete their degree," she says. That was the issue that would launch Byrne to seek funding for a systematic way to the answer. And so, the College—thanks to sponsorship by the MasterCard Center for Inclusive Growth and support from the Robin Hood Foundation—put the inquiry to DataKind, a mission-driven network of data scientists which takes on projects with social impact. By Spring 2017, DataKind had analyzed more than 10 years of student data to paint a picture of which factors make those at the crucial 90-credit tipping point more apt to drop out. "The collaboration between MasterCard and Robin Hood allowed us to work closely with DataKind, an incredible data analytics firm. They introduced us

to new methods of statistical analysis, developing the custom, open source predictive analytics tool that is at the center of the CUSP intervention," says Byrne. The tool would allow Ric Anzaldúa, Ph.D., John Jay's Director of Institutional Research, to generate completion risk scores for the 2018-2019 class of rising seniors. A generous multi-year grant of nearly \$800,000 from the Price Family Foundation meant the College could fund a core team of staff and faculty to work intensively with at-risk seniors to move them closer to graduating. CUSP was officially under way.

"The question was, what common thread is there, if any?" says Cassandra Evans, Ph.D., the Program Manager for CUSP who was recruited by Villanueva to help lead the student outreach when the results came in. "They found that a number of factors can impact graduation and it was not just whether a student ran out of money." For instance, there was what Evans calls "inconsistent credit accumulation": If a student took a full 15 or 18 credits in one semester and then took an entire semester off, the DataKind algorithm showed they were more likely to stop or drop out. All told, of the 1,115 students who the algorithm identified as having some risk, about 201 students were deemed to be at the highest levels of risk. "By identifying these high-risk students, the predictive tool made it possible to direct our resources to where they would be most impactful," says Villanueva. It was that shortlist—along with those students who had not yet enrolled for the fall—that Evans and Villanueva dug into during the summer of 2018. "That's who we were calling actively prior to classes starting because we thought, this is where we can make an immediate impact," says Villanueva.

Even as the two worked the phones, along with CUSP Senior Academic Advisor Dana Prieto, to counsel those students, the College placed an advisement hold on their accounts. It meant that there was no way around it: If you wanted to register for classes, you had to first talk to a CUSP advisor. "They were somewhat annoyed at us for placing a hold on their accounts," Villanueva concedes. "But once we got them, whether in

person or by phone, they were all really grateful for having the opportunity to sit with somebody and have a specific plan on how to complete their degree.”

The meetings were just as illuminating for the advisors. “A lot of the feedback we’re getting from students is, ‘I never knew that anyone was there to celebrate me as a senior,’” says Evans. There was the Honors student-turned-firefighter who left just shy of his degree to start his career at the FDNY; he was convinced to wrap up his remaining credits and graduated this past spring. There were the Computer Science majors who thought they had it all figured out but learned from their advisor that the two computer classes they needed were only available in the fall. Catching their mistake meant they could graduate in the spring as planned rather than having to wait to make up those credits the following fall.

And then there’s Rosemarie Siri. That day at the Starbucks, Villanueva warmly greeted her former student from freshman year and asked how she was doing. At the time, Siri was commuting to John Jay’s Midtown West campus from Yonkers and also working a job at night to pay her expenses. Villanueva told her about the CUSP program and even offered her a part-time position in the CUSP office as an assistant. But more than the extra paycheck, CUSP made a big difference by helping Siri with a grant to defray the cost of that winter session she was working to afford.

“What’s been nice about the Price Family Foundation funding is that they also gave us resources so that we could offer students help to pay their balances,” says Evans. “If a student hasn’t paid their bill after a while, they can’t register for any classes. Let’s say they owe \$3,000 or even \$1,000 and that balance has stood in the way of them just taking three to six credits to finish their bachelor’s degree. That’s powerful to be able to reach out to them and say, ‘We have this onetime opportunity to pay your bill in full.’” Considering the earning power that having a college degree confers, that \$1,000 can be the pivotal factor in lifetime success.

“Given the time and effort these students have already put into their college education and the overall cost of college, paying off a final bill in order to allow

“By identifying these high-risk students, the predictive tool made it possible to direct our resources to where they would be most impactful.”

—SUMAYA VILLANUEVA

students to graduate is a relatively small financial investment. But probably more important and impactful is the personal attention that helps them navigate a complex system that often doesn’t take personal challenges into account,” says Joanne Duhl, Executive Director of the Price Family Foundation. “We hope that John Jay, and the entire CUNY system, can use CUSP to understand how important it is to develop and implement systems that support their students to get to the finish line.”

Indeed, the effect of this targeted approach has been immediately evident: By May 2019, 66 percent of the 200-plus students identified as high risk had graduated; by September, that preliminary number increased to 72 percent.

Now in its second year, the CUSP program is expanding its approach, leveraging more existing resources at the College to step up its touch points. “This year we hosted a ‘Welcome to your senior year’ event,” says Villanueva. “We had representatives from various offices such as Alumni Relations, The Center for Career and Professional Development, and The Office for Transitions—they’re the ones who organize all the events related to graduation itself—all share information with our seniors about things that would be important for them to be aware of as they prepare for this last year.” More than 60 CUSP Cohort Two seniors short-listed by the DataKind algorithm attended the event.

One of those seniors who showed up for the event was Stephan Howell, who is majoring in International Criminal Justice. Howell was a transfer student from the New York College of Technology and admittedly had been wondering about how to map out his remaining credits. “When CUSP reached out to me I was excited because they offer advisement and resources to help seniors successfully finish their degrees and then go onto their careers,” says Howell. “I’m currently a Police Cadet and once I graduate from John Jay, I’ll be in the Police Academy. It’s because of the direction and support that I’ve received during my time at the College that I feel prepared to go into law enforcement.”

CUSP has also strategically partnered with these offices and others to reserve seats for its seniors at existing events such as internship preparation, resume and cover letter reviews, and interviewing skills. It was a range of messaging tools to get the word out and remind them of important deadlines. Results show that a much higher number of students are booking appointments with CUSP advisors at an earlier time.

These interventions have had a potent ripple effect, especially considering that it was achieved with just three dedicated full-time CUSP advisors—Evans, Prieto, and financial aid advisor Bryan Wells—and one part-time student worker. “In addition to the predictive data analysis tool, my take,” says Villanueva, “is that the secret sauce to CUSP’s success is also having staff members who are looking after particular groups of students on a consistent basis.”

Rosemarie Siri would agree. “The CUSP office definitely led me in the right direction,” says Siri, who graduated with a degree in Criminal Justice. “I would go to Cassandra and Dana for advice and they encouraged me, since I had fulfilled the requirements of my major, to try electives outside my field.” One such elective centered on women and the law. “I ended up loving it and thinking I wouldn’t mind doing something like this after I graduated,” she says. Siri now works at a law firm in downtown Manhattan as a medical case manager and is considering doing just that. **JM**

Program Bragging Rights

In 2019, John Jay College graduated the largest class in its history: **3,144** bachelor's degrees and **698** master's degrees. A big reason for that is the success of several of its multi-year cohort programs that have proven to increase graduation rates.

PRISM

120+

GRADUATES ADMITTED TO POST-GRAD DEGREE PROGRAMS

APPLE CORPS

59%

OF THE INAUGURAL COHORT GRADUATED IN FOUR YEARS OR LESS

SEEK

110

SEEK STUDENTS GRADUATED IN 2019

PRE-LAW INSTITUTE

STUDENTS HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO

99

LAW SCHOOLS, INCLUDING THE TOP 20 INSTITUTIONS IN THE COUNTRY

AGE

NEARLY **60%** FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE FOR THE FIRST COHORT



DeLandra Hunter, Director of the ACE Program at John Jay, (bottom row, second from left) with members of ACE's 2019 graduating class

CUSP

72%

GRADUATED IN 2019

MCNAIR

86%

OF MCNAIR 2019 GRADUATES WENT ON TO PURSUE POST-GRADUATE DEGREES

▶ The proven success of its cohort-based programs has led John Jay College to launch **Linking Experience, Academics, and Practice (LEAP)**. The new cohort-based program marks the first time all incoming freshman students at the College will have access to multi-year cohort program support. LEAP will use the best and most effective strategies from existing cohorts at the College, such as intensive advisement, and apply them to its broader range of students in the hopes of increasing retention, momentum, and graduation rates.



FOOD



for

THOUGHT

Tackling the growing food-insecurity problem, making sure that John Jay students are nourished both mentally and physically.

W

HEN ANTHONY, a John Jay undergraduate student, walked into the Wellness Center he had one goal in mind: apply to the MetroCard program. His Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP) benefits were cut off, and he was struggling to make ends meet. He wrote down on the form, “At this point, it’s either buy a MetroCard and don’t eat, or eat and don’t come to school.” Luckily, his form fell into the hands of Malaine Clarke, Health Services Director and Food Bank Manager.

Clarke tapped her pen on the MetroCard area of the form and said, “Anthony, I’m not worried about this, we can get you a MetroCard. I’m worried about you not eating.” After a long heart-to-heart, she learned that Anthony hadn’t eaten all day, and that he wasn’t eating so that his sick mother at home would have food. Clarke went out to her “comfort station”—a food table of her own making where students can pick up breakfast, lunch, and snacks—and brought him a bagel with cream cheese. “He started crying and explaining how his family was cut off SNAP. I took him into the food pantry and he just sat on the floor and wept. He called his mother and said, ‘Mom I got food! There’s a lady at school who gave me food.’ His mother started crying on the phone,” says Clarke.

“When Anthony walked out with his bags of food, he asked me if he could take a bagel home to his mom so she could have breakfast too.”

According to the #RealCollege Survey Report, created by the Hope Center, out of nearly 22,000 student respondents from all of the undergraduate campuses in the City University of New York (CUNY) system, 48 percent had recently experienced food insecurity. It’s affecting their grades, their experiences, and their families. Understanding the depths of the problem at John Jay, our community is tackling food insecurity through the Wellness Center’s food pantry and comfort station, donated MJB Food Services meal vouchers, the Community Outreach and Service Learning’s (COSL) Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) food donation program, and Single Stop services and resources.

THE FOOD PANTRY

In March 2010, Clarke started to notice students coming into the Wellness Center complaining of headaches. After asking a few questions, she figured out that most of them hadn’t eaten anything all day. To combat the problem, Clarke and her staff pooled together their own money and created a “comfort station” with tea, coffee, crackers, cookies, fruit, and



Clarke (near right) helping a student at the Wellness Center Food Pantry

PHOTOGRAPHY: AMBER GRAY

By Andrea Dawn Clark



“Last year the food pantry served **675** students and **1,762** household members.”



COSL students passing out fresh produce

snacks. “Students were coming in who didn’t have illnesses. They didn’t need the health services. They were coming for the food,” says Clarke. She went to her vice president and received \$250 for a comfort station program. In the first semester, 237 students visited it. This past academic year, 1,740 students came to the comfort station for food, with a total of 4,142 visits.

Clarke’s food pantry had a similar necessity-meets-tenacity inception. Impressed with the success of Clarke’s comfort station, her vice president approved Clarke’s food pantry idea—provided that she could find the space and resources for it. Clarke wrote a proposal to The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation to use a portion of their generous emergency fund donation for a food pantry. It was approved to receive \$7,500 for the academic year, and Clarke was determined to make it a reality. She reached out to other CUNY schools to find out how they worked with food banks,

and she found a space on campus. “It started out in 2016 in the Wellness Center hallway with just two cabinets of food,” says Clarke. Then the pantry moved into a storage room, and it grew even further with new shelving and two refrigerators acquired through generous donations to the College. Over the past three years, the food pantry has grown closer and closer to Clarke’s vision of an on-campus grocery store for people facing food insecurity, with the help of additional funds from The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation. Last year the food pantry served 675 students and 1,762 household members.

And, Clarke’s impact hasn’t gone unnoticed. One day, Senior Adjunct Professor Anthony Gentile walked into the Wellness Center and asked about the food pantry program. “Right then and there, he pledged \$5,000 of his own personal money to help us feed our students,” says Clarke. “With that money we extended our comfort station to serve

breakfast items, like oatmeal, eggs, and bagels. And, at lunch we’re offering salad, soup, and mac and cheese.”

THE FOOD VOUCHERS

There’s a reason why Joaquin “Johnny” Vasques, the owner and founder of MBJ Food Services, started a food voucher program for the John Jay community. “When he first immigrated to America from Argentina, he was 18 years old, he didn’t speak English, and he often went hungry,” says his daughter Aldana M. Vasques Williams, who oversees MBJ alongside him. “If my dad saw that someone couldn’t pay for the food, he’d take them aside and hand them a sandwich. He had these little coins made up and he’d hand them out to students, telling them to use them to buy a hot meal or sandwich. And the cashiers know that the coin would be worth whatever their meal cost.”

Taking Johnny’s coin initiative to a whole new level, MBJ donated \$60,000

worth of food vouchers—a ticket version of Johnny’s coins—during last year’s Annual Day of Giving. “The pledged amount we committed to is 10,000, six-dollar vouchers per academic year that students can receive from the Wellness Center to purchase food at the cafeteria,” says Vasques Williams. The vouchers were purposely made to look identical to their gift certificates—reducing any stigma attached to using them—and they cover the cost of a nourishing meal prepared by MBJ. So far, 14,120 vouchers have been given out to students, but that hasn’t stopped Johnny from passing out the coins jangling around in his pockets. “He loves doing that. It’s harder on our record keeping, but we know he’ll never stop.”

THE COSL/CSA FOOD PROGRAM

Every Tuesday, members of CSA come to John Jay to pick up their fresh produce. Members of the profit-sharing initiative pay farmers approximately \$300 in advance for a 22-week share of their crops. Inevitably,



a hefty portion of the produce never gets picked up. That’s where COSL comes in. They pack up the leftover bounty, store it in MBJ’s kitchen, and pass it out in the atrium the following Wednesday. “I think it illustrates the amount of waste in our food system,” says Declan Walsh, COSL Director. “At the same time that you have this horrible food insecurity problem, you have 40 percent of the food that goes from the land to the garbage.”

His COSL students handle all the logistics of the program, from packing up the veggies to inviting their fellow students to take home the produce. One Tuesday, Walsh started chatting with a COSL volunteer and learned that he worked as a chef and he loved to cook. Looking down at the produce, Walsh asked the student, “What would you do with these vegetables?” The student suggested a squash soup. “MBJ worked with us, supervising him, and we got little cups, and the following day we handed hot squash soup instead of produce. The students loved it, and our ‘COSL chef’ was really proud.”

THE SINGLE STOP SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The situation that Anthony faced, losing his SNAP benefits, is incredibly common. The supplemental nutrition benefits are based on household income and are provided by the federal government for a certified period. “In one academic year over 300 students come into Single Stop to apply

for SNAP benefits, and about 300 to 600 students need assistance with reapplying and mediation to keep their benefits,” says Nichole Acevedo, Single Stop Program Manager. Her main mission is to help students navigate the tools, resources, and services that they need to alleviate socioeconomic struggles and financial emergencies that could negatively impact them. “Right now, one of the biggest hurdles is a federal law within SNAP benefits that makes it much more difficult for a full-time college student, who may not have a job, to get benefits,” says Acevedo.

To expand healthy options for food-insecure students, Single Stop is working with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to promote farmer’s markets. “We tell our students that if they use their SNAP EBT card at a farmer’s market, and they spend five dollars, they get a two-dollar voucher back,” says Acevedo. “It’s another incentive for students to purchase more fruits and vegetables for their families.”

Along with Clarke, Acevedo worked with Anthony when he first came to the Wellness Center. “This was a student who was doing everything on his own, and he was brave enough to ask for help. There are so many ways that we can help the ‘Anthonys’ in our community,” says Acevedo. “We can find a way to make sure they get to school. We can find a way to make sure their family has healthy food. And, we can find ways to help them flourish.” **JM**



“48 percent of CUNY #RealCollege survey respondents experienced food insecurity in the prior 30 days .”



“Our America”

“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”

“Struggles for Justice in Latin America”

“Are Prisons Obsolete?”

“Community Policing and Community Justice”

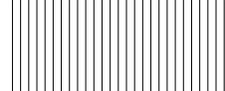
“Reimagining Justice”

“The Central Five”

“RACISM”

READ ALL ABOUT IT

How the new Justice e-Reader is bringing together a collection of justice-focused texts, creating an intellectual hub for our community and classrooms.





STUDENT SUCCESS has always been the driving force for faculty and staff at John Jay College. So, when the City University of New York (CUNY) awarded funds to the College for its Open Educational Resources (OER) initiative—under which courses are converted from textbook-centric to free-educational materials—Raymond Patton, former Director of Educational Partnerships and General Education and current Director of the Honors Program, guided faculty through the creation of zero-text-cost courses and the John Jay Justice e-Reader. The two OER programs ease the financial burden for students, allowing them to fully engage in coursework, and increase academic success. With more than half of John Jay students coming from low-income households, zero-text-cost courses and the Justice e-Reader are an ideal way to remove a cost barrier, clearing the path to their academic dreams.

During her undergraduate and graduate experience at John Jay, Karen Argueta '19 saw first-hand the struggle classmates faced when it came to textbook costs. "I've seen classmates take pictures of another student's textbook after every class just so they had the reading for the following week. I've witnessed peers spending money photocopying a textbook and then realizing they didn't have enough to copy everything they needed. While some praise these acts as creative or resourceful, they're missing the fact that it is an act of academic survival," says Argueta, noting that course material is the backbone of a college education. "The

text is what keeps students interested and engaged with the coursework. And high textbook costs are keeping many students from having that experience." Helping to mitigate costs, John Jay faculty have taken on the challenging task of creating zero-text-cost courses, leading them to rethink and redesign their courses using free and accessible materials.

The new Justice e-Reader—an online hub of ever-evolving, justice-focused articles and resources, that launched this fall semester—takes the zero-text-cost course concept to a different level. The information is stored all in one place, creating an intellectual "Grand Central Station" for faculty and students to engage in teaching and learning about justice at no cost. "We know our students struggle to afford textbooks and that affects their success in courses," says Patton. "OER like zero-cost textbooks and the Justice e-Reader make it so the financial burden of textbooks is not affecting a student's ability to succeed here at John Jay." The Justice e-Reader is loaded with open and alternative education resources—"open" meaning the material has no copyright and can be freely used and shared; and "alternative" meaning the material is licensed by the library, so students have complete and free access to it.

Beyond meeting OER's mission of making education accessible to underrepresented communities, Patton explains that the Justice e-Reader was inspired by several factors, including John Jay's role as an institution focused on justice, the need for a resource faculty could use to build courses and expand their knowledge base, and the College's identity as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Minority-Serving Institution (MSI).

BUILDING THE JUSTICE E-READER

With OER funding in place, an editorial board was formed, comprised of faculty from different disciplines and backgrounds.

“I’ve seen classmates take pictures of another student’s textbook after every class just so they had the reading for the following week.”

—KAREN ARGUETA

Members of the editorial board include: Jessica Gordon-Nembhard, Professor, Department of Africana Studies; Olivera Jokic, Associate Professor, English and Gender Studies; Jamie Longazel, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science; Suzanne Oboler, Professor, Latin American and Latinx Studies; Matthew Perry, Associate Professor, Department of History; and Maria Julia Rossi, Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages and Literature. Together, with guidance from Patton, Gina Rae Foster, Director of the Teaching and Learning Center, and Verlene "Vee" Herrington, OER Librarian, the board came up with the Justice e-Reader's tone and look.

"The Justice e-Reader is organized into three parts," explains Herrington, providing insight on the e-Reader's website design. "Part one, Texts for Teaching and Learning about Justice, is a small, curated collection of key texts that will lead users to think about justice and its meaning. Part two, Subjects and Topics in Justice, is a larger collection of texts and resources that are organized chronologically and by global region. And part three, Resources for Teaching, is specifically for faculty." She adds, "Each reading is also tagged with keywords, so it's accessible via a digital cloud."



Members of the editorial board discuss the Justice e-Reader

ENGAGING FACULTY INTERESTS

The content of the Justice e-Reader consists of materials recommended by John Jay faculty and vetted by the editorial board. The plan is to share the Justice e-Reader for use in general-education Justice Core classes and to give faculty the option of using the readings to shape their courses. “The Justice e-Reader puts a whole set of resources for teaching students about justice in the hands of the faculty teaching those classes. This is especially helpful for professors that are new to the topic, or looking for new materials to expand or innovate their course,” says Patton. “They’ll be able to assign content from the Justice e-Reader, and students will have easy, free access to it.”

So far, the Justice e-Reader is in use in a small number of classes this fall. But, the idea is to expand outreach to more faculty this academic year, in the hopes of gaining user interest, and getting submissions for the Justice e-Reader.

Wynne Ferdinand, who is now leading the Justice e-Reader project after she was named Patton’s successor as Director of Educational Partnerships and General Education, sees the opportunity to submit texts and other resources as the best way to get additional faculty interested in the Justice e-Reader. “It’s a great tool for building community among faculty. We want to encourage them to submit readings and other resources, so they can learn how to use the Justice e-Reader, and they can test how it could help in their classroom.”

CUNY Awards Additional OER Funds to John Jay

In its continued effort to make education affordable and accessible to students, the City University of New York’s (CUNY) Office of Academic Affairs has awarded John Jay College \$174,750 in funding to convert courses to Open Educational Resources (OER) under its CUNY-wide OER initiative. This is the third consecutive year John Jay has received funding for course conversion and OER offerings. Through the initiative, John Jay faculty will redesign courses by replacing proprietary textbooks with open-educational resources, such as zero-cost textbooks and the Justice e-Reader, which gives users access to justice-focused material for free. Under the funding, John Jay faculty will develop, enhance, and institutionalize new and ongoing OER initiatives.

REPRESENTING STUDENT DIVERSITY

One thing that has been of the utmost importance from the start is ensuring that the readings are representative of John Jay’s diverse student body. “Diversity of readings and media is vital to the Justice e-Reader’s purpose,” says Ferdinand. “For our students to be able to see themselves in these works and in these accomplished scholars is crucial.”

To that end, the editorial board made sure to draw texts from black and Latin history, studies, and culture. “The Justice e-Reader is a work in progress, but we made a real effort to make sure the texts were coming from a variety of different backgrounds, speaking to students from different backgrounds,” says Patton. “There are currently texts on the Justice e-Reader available in Spanish. The next steps are to figure out what additional areas of the Justice e-Reader should be available in

languages other than English.”

An important connection to OER is the practice of open pedagogy, explains Ferdinand. “Students work together to critically analyze, interpret, and ‘remix’ resources, taking an active role in learning,” she says, noting the important role peer-to-peer collaboration has in student success. “Part of what we hope students can do is identify the way their background, interests, and expertise contribute to these explorations of justice issues highlighted in the Justice e-Reader. Because they are joining an academic conversation that’s already in progress, and we know they have a lot to contribute, we want them to be creators of information. By making connections with the readings, they become creators of knowledge.” **JM**

To view the new Justice e-Reader, visit: jjereader.commonsgc.cuny.edu

The Institute for Innovation in Prosecution Reimagines the Role of Prosecutors

Seeking to create a fairer, more equitable criminal justice system, the IIP is dedicated to transforming prosecutors' roles in the criminal justice system.

BY JOCELYN KEY

SINCE THE INCEPTION OF JOHN Jay's Institute for Innovation in Prosecution (IIP) in 2016, through a partnership with the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, its goal has been to improve the criminal justice system by uniting prosecutors and communities. And since Lucy Lang, Executive Director of the IIP, joined the team, the Center has been at the forefront of reimagining the role of prosecution. "For many years, prosecutors have served only in the courthouse function and have been unintentionally exacerbating the problems of mass incarceration and racial disparities in the criminal justice system," says Lang, noting that her understanding of this came during her time as Assistant



IIP Executive Director Lucy Lang speaking about the Center's work

District Attorney at the Manhattan DA's Office. "I was working on a homicide case and realized that I had become very detached from the people who had committed the murder," she says. "There was no question that there needed to be consequences for the crime, but this experience showed me that I needed to spend time in prisons to understand how to make better decisions where we are really holding people appropriately accountable and not just being punitive for the sake of punishment."

PARTNERING FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

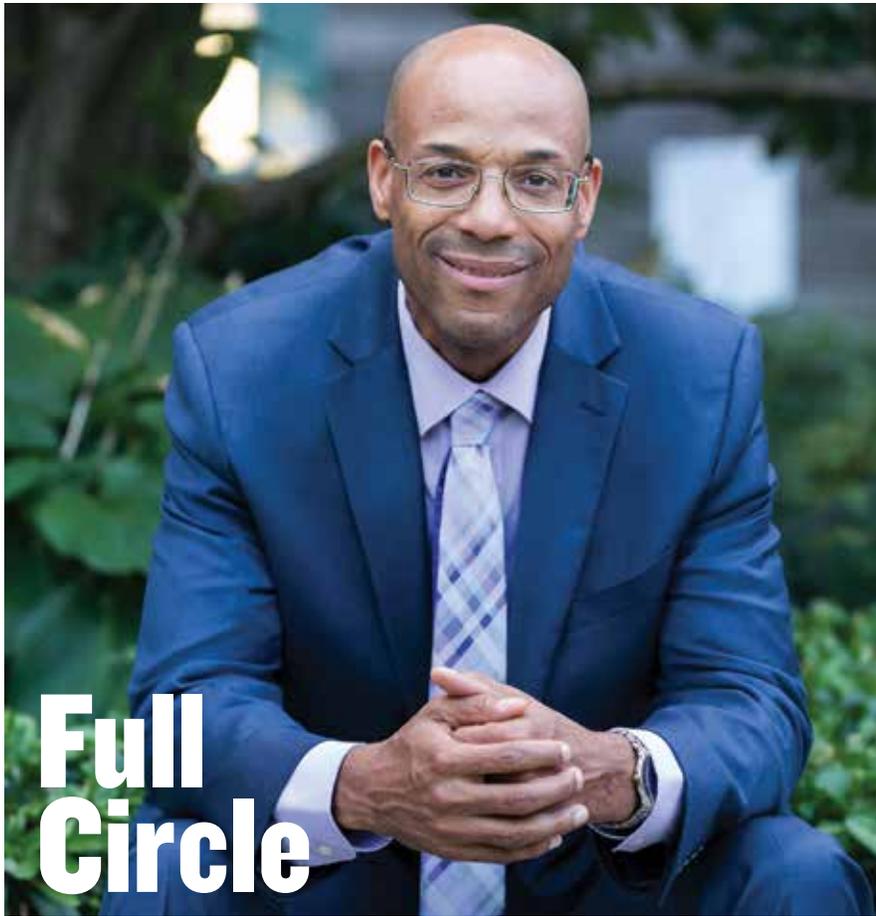
One of Lang's first projects at the IIP was "Inside Criminal Justice"—a semester-long course that expanded on her previous work of bringing prosecutors and criminal justice-involved students together to study the criminal justice system. "I created this class when I was at the Manhattan DA's Office, because I became increasingly aware of the importance of education in prison. These students, the community members, and the frontline prosecutors are the people closest to these problems. They are also the people who are most likely to be able to solve them," says Lang. Working with the Queensboro Correctional Facility, Columbia Center for Justice, and Manhattan DA's Office, participants take part in discussions and projects on the history of race and punishment in America. At the end of the semester, students present their project, receiving a certificate of completion and college credit.

As an advocate for bail reform, the IIP is working with the Data Collaborative for Justice to use data to improve policies that stem from the "War on Drugs" campaign.

"A lot of policies made in the '70s through the '90s, were in response to people's feelings about the climate of crime. They targeted those in minority communities creating barriers for housing, employment, and education upon release. Unfortunately, those consequences are still felt today," says Lang, adding that these policies led to our current mass incarceration issues. Looking at mass incarceration, one in three black men and one in six Latinx men face the likelihood of being incarcerated, when compared to one in 17 white men. And for women, this likelihood is one in 18 for black women and one in 34 for Latinx women, when compared to one in 111 for white women.

WORKING TOWARD A FAIRER FUTURE

To address the factors that contribute to police use of force, the IIP convened a Working Group comprised of family members of police brutality victims, policymakers, prosecutors, and law enforcement, and published a "Toolkit" to prevent officer-involved tragedies and ensure appropriate accountability. And, through a recent partnership with the Vera Institute for Justice, the IIP is looking forward to creating materials to educate prosecutors on the history of race and the criminal justice system. "All of these initiatives go towards encouraging prosecutors to really think about themselves as people who are serving their community," says Lang. "I hope that the IIP can play a critical role in beginning to dismantle the punishment bureaucracy of which prosecution is a critical part, without compromising public safety and the ability of criminal justice-involved individuals to thrive in their community upon reentry." **JM**



Full Circle

Ronald F. Day '19, Ph.D., proves what's possible when people have access to an education.

BY ANDREA DAWN CLARK

RONALD F. DAY '19, PH.D., GREW up in the South Bronx at the height of the hip-hop movement. His family was on public assistance, and Day ended up dropping out of high school in the ninth grade. But even without the structured setting of a classroom, teenage Ronald often found himself getting up early in the morning, buying a newspaper, and sitting on the front stoop reading it. "I was always very interested in learning," says Day. His mother, Lorene, got her G.E.D. and was working on her bachelor's degree. She appealed to her 17-year-old son to follow in her footsteps.

"I didn't study for the G.E.D. I just went and took the exam. By sheer luck I passed," says Day. Around the same time he found himself gravitating to the drug culture

surrounding him. "It was a drug-infested neighborhood. I had friends that were engaging in criminal behavior, selling drugs, and I followed in their footsteps. With a limited education, I felt like I had no future to earn money but to hustle." Like many other young men of color in his neighborhood, Day got caught up in the criminal justice system. He was sentenced to 15 to 45 years in prison, and started his "educational odyssey" in Sing Sing Correctional Facility.

The simple fact that Day had his G.E.D. made a world of difference in his life. It meant that while he was incarcerated, he could start taking college courses immediately. "It also made a difference because it connected me with a different crowd. They were more focused. These were the guys that were running the law library

and different organizations," says Day. It was the first time in his life that he was exposed to positive programming specifically for African-American men. They motivated and challenged each other as they analyzed what was happening in their communities. After 15 years of incarceration, Day came home with 51 college credits and 32 certificate credits. Before his release, Day reached out to the Prisoner Reentry Institute (PRI), and they helped him transition—connecting him to colleges that would accept his credits, getting him involved in a mentorship program, finding him paid internship opportunities, and supporting his academic goals.

In the 10 years that followed, Day earned his bachelor's degree, two master's degrees, and in December of 2018 he successfully defended his dissertation and received his doctorate degree from the CUNY Graduate Center and John Jay College. "Individuals like myself are living examples of the difference an education can make," says Day. "If a person gets involved in education, there's a greater likelihood that they're going to get a decent job and provide for their family. Education changes your outlook. We have to stop looking at the criminal justice system only through a punitive lens."

As the Vice President of Programs at The Fortune Society, Day passionately supports reentry programs, while tirelessly working to dismantle the stigma of incarceration. Through Columbia University, he's come full circle, teaching classes at Sing Sing, the same correctional facility he once inhabited himself. Day looks at these classes as the opportunity to fulfill the dreams of his mother.

While working on his Ph.D., Lorene told her son how proud she was that he was giving back to the community. She had championed him from the start, and she had three dresses picked out for his graduation celebrations. Sadly, Lorene passed away before she had the opportunity to wear them. "Whenever people ask me, what I'm most proud of, the answer is always making my mother proud before she passed away," says Day. "Now, I'm in a position to do something for that young man just sitting in the neighborhood, indulging in drug activity, and not getting an education. That young man is smart. That young man can have a bright future. And, his mother can be proud of him too." **JM**

Natural Born Advocate

Roshawn Boyce '95 shines a light on social injustices.

BY SHIRLEY DEL VALLE



“John Jay is where I discovered my passion for social justice. It’s where I learned that you have to fight for what’s right.”

—ROSHAWN BOYCE

ROSHAWN BOYCE '95 HAS always had a passion for social activism, and that passion ignited and flourished while she was at John Jay College. As a student, she joined her peers in protesting budget cuts and a tuition hike, taking part in student sit-ins and marches down 59th Street. “Protesting the tuition hike during the 1989-1990 academic year was one of my most memorable John Jay experiences. I was one of the students who took over North Hall and Haaren Hall,” explains Boyce. She credits the experience with kicking her advocacy gene into high gear. “John Jay is where I discovered my passion for social justice,” says Boyce. “It’s

where I learned that you have to fight for what’s right.”

During her time at John Jay, Boyce also faced battles on a personal front. Her Sickle Cell disease took a toll on her energy level and her desire to participate in activities led to disagreements at home. “I was kicked out of my house at 19 years old because my mother grew tired of my debating her rules. I wanted to participate in fundraisers and marches, and mobilize others for Mayor David Dinkins’ campaign. And, she wanted me to stay home and rest,” says Boyce. “For a short period of time I was homeless and had to figure out where to live and how I was going to pay rent and buy groceries.”

With help from a friend, Boyce found a place to live, and worked multiple jobs, all while pursuing her bachelor’s degree at John Jay. “I knew education was the key to getting the career I wanted. So I got myself together, and began to focus on completing my degree.” She’s now working in Human Resources for the New York City Department of Education and while that takes up much of her time, Boyce still finds ways to advocate on behalf of others.

Serving as a Member-at-Large at the NAACP’s Brooklyn branch, Boyce has helped train the group’s youngest members—teaching them how to engage with communities, and run their elections, committees, and education programs. She also had an integral role in mobilizing NAACP members after the death of Trayvon Martin.

As a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, one of the nine historically Black Greek Letter organizations that make up the national Pan-Hellenic Council, she works with communities on the ground level, assessing what their needs are and providing support. “Sigma Gamma Rho takes great pride in taking care of and uplifting communities. We want to help the next generation.”

When Sandra Bland, a Sigma Gamma Rho sorority sister, was found dead in a prison cell following a routine traffic stop in 2015, Boyce jumped into action. She helped raise funds for the investigation into Bland’s death, and spoke of Bland and the HBO documentary *Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland*, to every one she came across. “Soror Sandra Bland represented me. As black women, we understand our past and work hard to write our own futures. We are academically educated as well as historically educated. Yet horrific things continue to happen to us,” says Boyce. “Sandra Bland’s story is important to tell.”

Boyce, along with Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority—of which Bland’s mother and sister are also members—are working tirelessly to keep Bland’s story top of mind. “Our goal is to make sure everyone knows her name. At each meeting, in every discussion we have, to anyone we meet, we tell her story,” she says. “Sandra’s family still needs our support and I believe we still need to fight for justice in her case. If my years of advocacy work have taught me anything, it’s that you never give up—and I don’t plan to.” **JM**

HANNAH CHU

“After graduation, I spent two weeks traveling in Australia and New Zealand before starting my doctorate program. Now, I’m at the University of California-Riverside starting my Ph.D.”



JILL FROMETA

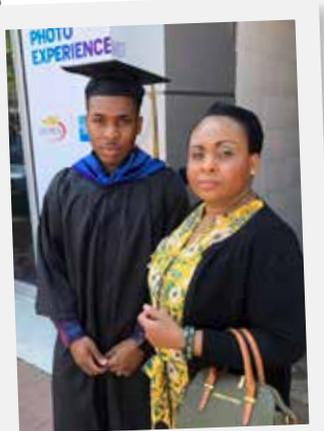
“I’m currently an Adjunct Professor in the Law and Police Science department here at John Jay. I am also a Junior Research Scientist at NYU and the Study Coordinator of the CDC-funded project called Opioids and Police Safety.”



Class of 2019

THEN & NOW

This past May, the class of 2019 graduated from John Jay College at Louis Armstrong Stadium for the 54th Annual Commencement Ceremonies. We checked in with a few of them to find out how they’re launching their careers, getting ready for graduate school, and fulfilling their dreams.



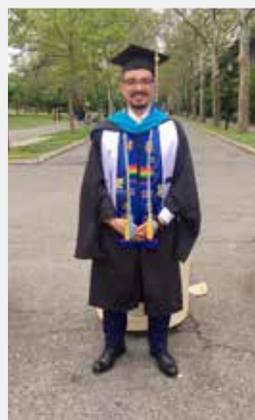
SHANE WORRELL-LOUIS

“As part of the NYPD leadership program, I am currently attending graduate school at John Jay. When I graduate I would like to become a professor to give back to my community in the same way that they have given to me.”



EDUARDO GARCIA

“Since graduating, I’ve been working as an Assistant Research Coordinator at Maimonides Medical Center. I’ve been tasked with building and implementing a participatory action research study to better understand immigrant community health. And in the fall, I will present my M.P.A. thesis at the Northeast Conference on Public Administration.”





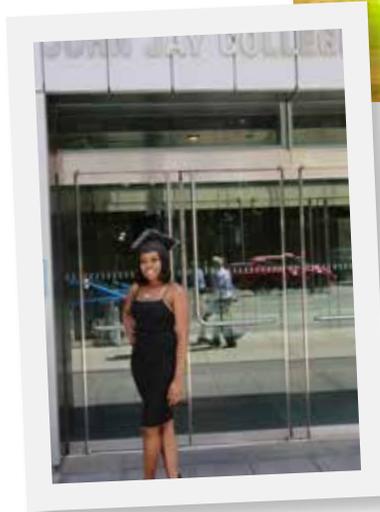
YASMIN DAMBLU

“I’m now at the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College working on getting my M.S.W. My goal is to help the next generation get a handle on life, give them the tools they need to succeed, and provide them with guidance every step of the way.”



QUARDEAR HARRIS

“I’m working for CAMBA Learning to Work Program as a Job Developer/ Internship Placement Specialist at a New York City Department of Education transfer school. I provide students with paid internship opportunities and develop partnerships between students and employers. In the future, I’m looking forward to attending graduate school, obtaining my master’s degree, and becoming either a probation or parole officer.”



DEANDRA SIMON

“Since graduation, I interned at the Administration of Children Services under the Finance/Legal Division. With the help of my mentors, I landed a fall internship with Atlantic Records, where I’ll be working while getting my master’s degree in Media Studies from Brooklyn College.”



The Real Nature of Sexual Violence

Professor Elizabeth Jeglic, Ph.D., uses research and straightforward approaches in her mission to advance the prevention of sexual violence.

BY MARY ANDERSON

FIRST THERE WERE THE bombshell headlines. Roger Ailes. Harvey Weinstein. Jeffrey Epstein. In short order, beginning with the 2018 lawsuit against the late Fox chairman Ailes, high-profile cases of sexual harassment and violence came to dominate front pages and news feeds. And with each new exposé, the phone rang in the office of Elizabeth Jeglic, Ph.D., at John Jay College. “Several times a week, I was getting calls about the Me Too movement, and Weinstein and Epstein,” says Jeglic, a Professor of Psychology who readily became a sought-after expert thanks to a career devoted to sexual violence prevention.

In doing the interviews, she saw her goal as outreach—an opportunity to give factually-based information to the media about the real nature of sexual violence. “It’s not the stranger in the white van,” says Jeglic. “We know that 93 percent of kids are offended against by someone known to them.”

What makes the work—of short-circuiting sex offenders before they strike—particularly daunting is that they’re

off the radar: 95 percent of sex crimes are committed by someone who is not on the sex offender registry or has no prior history. Jeglic came to the research as a doctoral student at Binghamton University through a government-run summer program in her native Canada. “I got matched with correctional services of Canada and the sex offender treatment program,” she recounts. “It was really a fortuitous moment because they were developing a national treatment program.” As a result, Jeglic was not only deeply involved in creating the program but also implementing and evaluating it. One of her clinical internship supervisors took notice of her expertise and suggested she apply for a faculty position at John Jay. In 2003, Jeglic joined John Jay as an Assistant Professor in the department of Psychology and has to date authored numerous papers and three books on sexual violence, trying to both solve for the five percent on the registry with best practices in treatment and for the 95 percent not on the registry with prevention.

With regard to the latter, she cites recent groundbreaking research, that came from John Jay’s Sex Offender Research Lab (SORL), which found that the majority of child sexual abuse happens during summers and after school, times when free or affordable childcare is difficult to obtain for underprivileged families. The study was authored by one of the many John Jay students that Jeglic, and other Psychology faculty members, helped mentor in clinical psychology. “We spend all this money on the sex offender registry, and if we just take some of that money and instead, have after-school programs and summer camps for kids from families who can’t afford it, we’d do so much more in terms of preventing sexual abuse.”

For her part, she’s hoping to help move the needle on public policy in this regard by contributing research to a project out of John Hopkins University that will make recommendations to Congress on legislation to help prevent sex crimes. In the meantime, Jeglic has lately pivoted to try to educate the public. Her recent book, *Protecting your Child from Sexual Abuse*, is meant for the everyday reader—moms like herself. That’s why she writes blog posts for *Psychology Today*. “I recently wrote about how to keep your kids safe online,” she says. And as for her three kids? “They joke that they are my guinea pigs.” **JM**



Mara on the field happily greeting service members.

Tackling Educational Inequality

John Mara, President, CEO, and co-owner of the **New York Giants**, explains his passion for improving educational access opportunities.

BY ANDREA DAWN CLARK

THIS YEAR MARKED A BIG milestone for the New York Giants and John Jay College. It's the first year of our New York Giants Touchdown Fellowship. The generous donation from the Giants speaks directly to John Jay's justice mission and our commitment to social mobility. The \$150,000 fellowship is payable over three years, and it supports a scholarship and paid internship for five undergraduate rising seniors from underrepresented populations, who are majoring in Criminal Justice. Students receive a scholarship of \$5,000 for tuition, fees, books and supplies, plus a paid internship of \$5,000, split over the academic year. Preference is given to students with justice-involved backgrounds or immediate family members currently or formerly

incarcerated. Sitting down with John Mara, President, CEO, and co-owner of the New York Giants, we learned why he and his team started the fellowship program at John Jay.

WHY WAS CREATING THE NEW YORK GIANTS TOUCHDOWN FELLOWSHIP SO IMPORTANT?

It started as a result of conversations with our players who wanted us to support their efforts to effect social change through social justice initiatives. One of their first thoughts was a scholarship program at John Jay. The idea behind it was to provide deserving students with an opportunity to get a degree, specifically students who are interested in criminal justice and social justice. The issue of mass incarceration in this country is certainly one that's on the minds of a lot of people, particularly a number of our players.

To be honest, it wasn't really something that I was focused on until they brought it to my attention and I started doing some research. Then I realized that the incarceration rates in this country compared to other countries is way out of whack. One of the tools you need to improve that situation is education.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE BIGGEST LESSONS YOU LEARNED IN COLLEGE AND LAW SCHOOL?

Right after I got out of law school, I went to work for a law firm that represented labor unions. I spent most of my time representing the union members—hotel, restaurant, and cleaning workers—trying to win their jobs back. I grew up in a family business where we always treated people with dignity, respect, and compassion. It was a real eye-opener to be out in a world where people weren't necessarily treated that way. There was nothing more gratifying for me professionally than winning somebody's job back.

WHY IS PHILANTHROPY SO IMPORTANT?

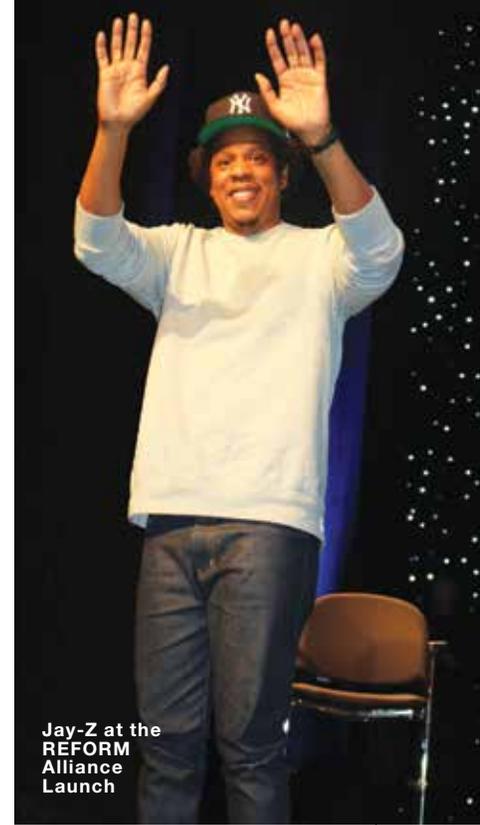
For me, it was just the way I was raised. I'm a big believer in the biblical verse, "to whom much has been given, much will be required." I've been given a lot in my life. I've led a very privileged life, and with that comes responsibilities. It's important to give back and to try to do what we can to give other people opportunities that maybe some of us have taken for granted. We have a lot of players who are very conscious of giving back and who do a remarkable job in their communities.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FUN GIANTS STORIES?

My family goes back with the Giants to 1925, when my grandfather purchased the franchise for the sum of \$500. I'm in the third generation. When I was in college taking business classes, I remember taking a class that was focused on family businesses. One of the main principles of that class was that family businesses rarely survive the third generation. It's usually the dope in the third generation that screws up the family business. I'm doing my best not to do that. I'm sure a number of our fans would say, "It's too late, you already are." We've had a tough stretch lately, but we're hoping to turn things around and get better. We've had a lot of great thrills in this business—winning some Super Bowls, meeting a lot of great players and people. It's all been a blessing. Hopefully it's something that's going to stay in our family for many, many years. **JM**

Look Who's Been on CAMPUS!

New York
Congresswoman
Alexandria
Ocasio-Cortez



Jay-Z at the
REFORM
Alliance
Launch

From politicians and government officials, to musicians and activists, John Jay saw many supporters, friends, and advocates for justice visit our community this year. Tackling issues surrounding prison reform, the criminal justice system, and education, each one provided insight on how to make our society safer, fairer, and more just.



▲ (left to right) Yi Li, Provost; Dara Byrne, Associate Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies; John B. King Jr., President and CEO of The Education Trust and former United States Secretary of Education; Karol V. Mason, John Jay President at the Academic Year Kickoff event.

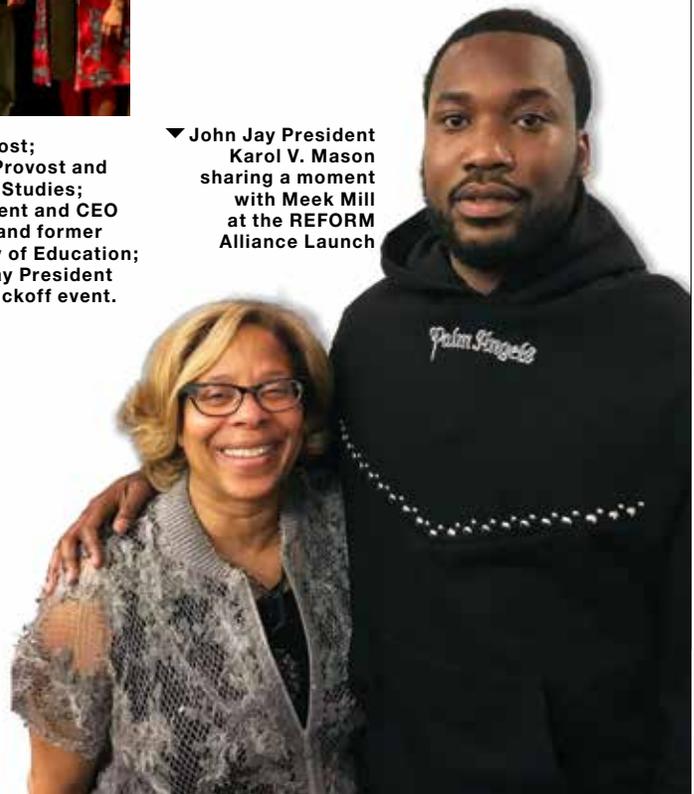


▲ (left to right) Vanita Gupta, President and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Human and Civil Rights; Nicholas Turner, President and Director, Vera Institute of Justice; and Amanda Alexander, Founding Executive Director, Detroit Justice Center at the Smart on Crime Innovations Conference



◀ (left to right) Letitia James, New York State Attorney General; Karol V. Mason, John Jay President; and Corey Johnson, New York City Council Speaker

▼ John Jay President Karol V. Mason sharing a moment with Meek Mill at the REFORM Alliance Launch



“The NYPD has done some great work here in the current years to implement community policing. One incident like this can undo that work.”

—PROFESSOR HENRY SMART III ON NYPD COMMISSIONER JAMES P. O'NEILL'S DECISION TO FIRE OFFICER DANIEL PANTALEO ON *CBSN NEW YORK*. ▼



“**FALSE CONFESSIONS DON'T JUST HAPPEN** to certain types of people. It can happen to anybody. I'm convinced that the presence of a video camera will make fact finders more accurate. The idea that I'd know a false confession if I saw one? No. Not if you're only watching the confession. But you stand a better chance if you're watching the whole process before that confession is taken.”

—SAUL KASSIN, PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, AND ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S LEADING EXPERTS ON FALSE CONFESSIONS SPEAKING TO LESTER HOLT ON *NBC NIGHTLY NEWS*.

“**THIS DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND** the experiences of people I had prosecuted, led me to create a college class that would allow prosecutors to study alongside incarcerated students. Now in its third year, this class is being replicated in other jurisdictions, and is significantly changing the relationship between prosecutors and the communities we are sworn to serve.”

—LUCY LANG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION IN PROSECUTION, DISCUSSING PROSECUTORS AND PRISON REFORM IN *THE ATLANTIC*.

“**ANTI-LATINX VIOLENCE** has increased about 24 percent during Trump's presidency. So yes, he is fueling that rhetoric, but there has been a history of hate against the Latinx community in the U.S. for more than a hundred years.”

—ISABEL MARTINEZ, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINX STUDIES COMMENTING ON THE RISE OF ANTI-LATINX SENTIMENT IN THE U.S. ON *NY1 NOTICIAS*.

“**WE'RE SEEING UNPRECEDENTED** persistence and graduation rates at John Jay. We're doubling the national average in the four-year public space, and we think we're really on to something.”

—DONNA LINDERMAN, CUNY'S ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, COMMENTING ON THE SUCCESS OF JOHN JAY'S ACE PROGRAM IN *INSIDE HIGHER EDUCATION*.

1970s

LABRENDA GARRETT-NELSON (B.A. '75) was elected President of the Board of Certification of Genealogists, the credentialing body on which she has served as a trustee since 2016.

PETER MCMAHON (B.A. '79) has retired from the New York City Police Department after serving the city for 38 years.

1990s

SEEMA IYER (B.A. '93) is the co-host of a brand-new podcast, *The Court TV Podcast*, which debuted in August.

MARLENE APONTE-MATHEWS (B.A. '95) has been appointed Principal of Dawes Elementary School in Evanston, Illinois.

2000s

KELLEY ZIENOWICZ (M.A. '03) has been named Chief Morris County Sheriff's Officer, the highest-level Officer position in the Sheriff's Office Bureau of Law Enforcement. The promotion makes her the highest-ranking woman in the Morris County Sheriff's Office and the sole female chief in Morris County.

JOHN MUELLER (M.S. '07) has been named the new Police Commissioner of Yonkers, New York. His appointment comes after serving 25 years with the Yonkers Police Department.

2010s

BENJAMIN BEIRO (B.A. '11) has been recognized for his heroism, after reviving a marathon runner in New York City's Central Park.

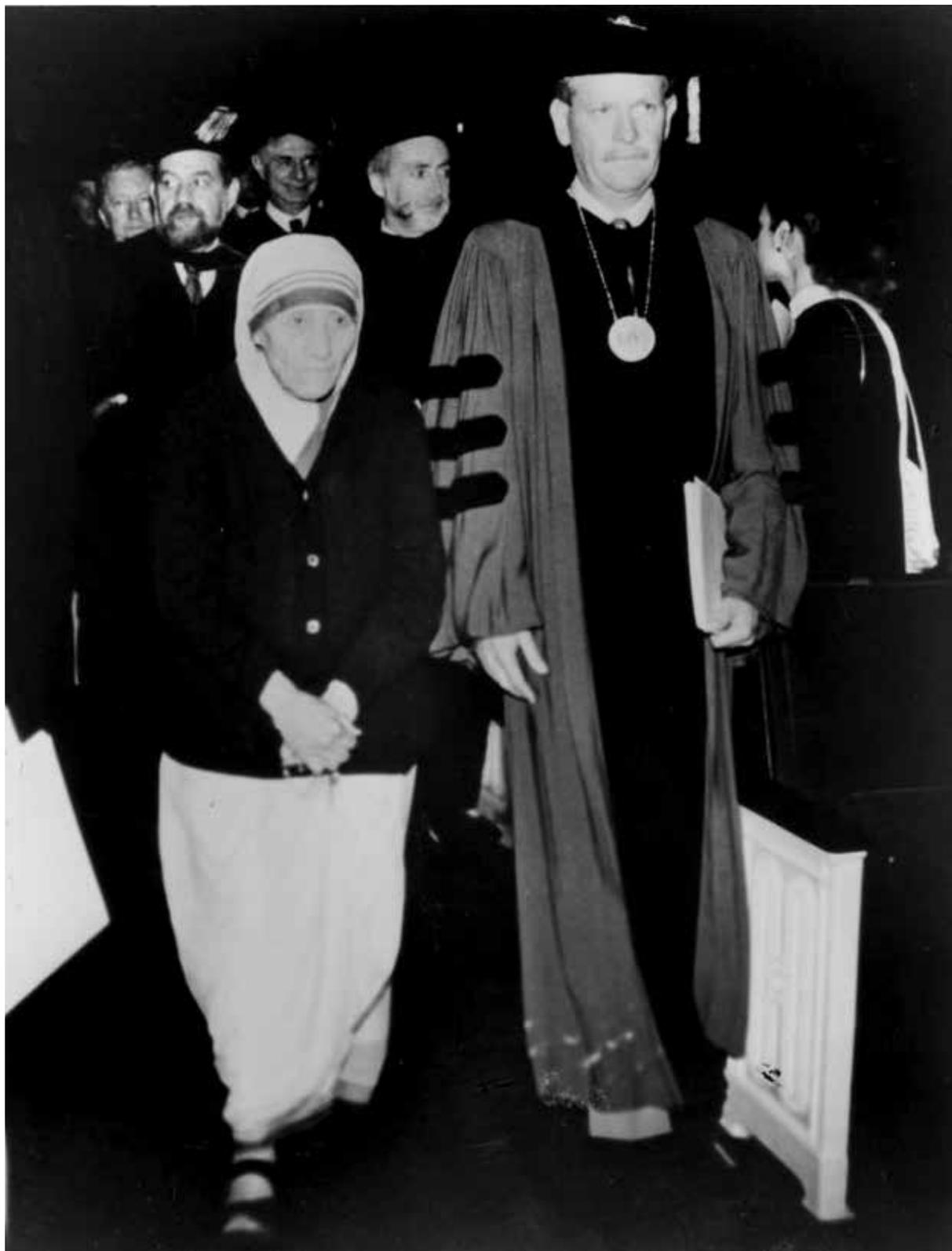
DAVID FISHER (M.S. '13) has been named the Director of the new Forensic Science Program at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.



SHARE YOUR STORY!

Our grads make us proud,
so please share
your story with our
community!

<http://giving.jjay.cuny.edu/share-your-stories/>



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**Mother Teresa at John Jay
College of Criminal Justice for the
23rd Commencement.**

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JAY** COLLEGE
OF
CRIMINAL
JUSTICE

Educating for Justice Gala | 2020

SAVE THE DATE | MAY 5, 2020

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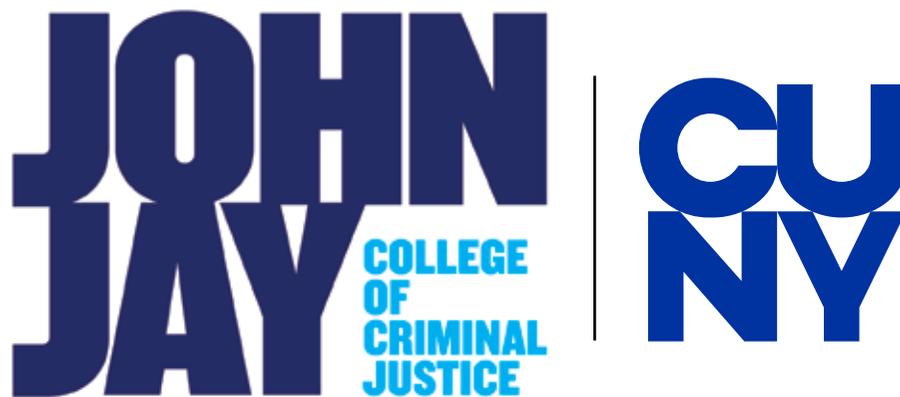
BNY MELLON

For further information, please call
Buckley Hall Events at 914-579-1000,
email JohnJayGala@buckleyhallevents.com
or visit jjay.cc/Gala2020

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JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY CUNY IS THE GREATEST URBAN UNIVERSITY IN THE WORLD.

Our focus is on exploring justice in its many dimensions. Our strong liberal arts curriculum equips students to pursue advanced study and meaningful, rewarding careers in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Our students are eager to engage in original research and experiential learning, excited to study in one of the world's most dynamic cities, and passionate about shaping the future.