Research & Evaluation Center Lands $3M ‘Cure Violence’ Grant

**By Adrienne Anifant**

The Research and Evaluation Center (R&E Center) at John Jay College of Criminal Justice has received a grant of nearly $3 million from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to evaluate the efficacy and outcomes of the “Cure Violence” model of gun-violence reduction.

As part of the two-year project titled “Evaluating the Cure Violence Model for Gun-Violence Prevention,” the research team will study the key components of the model, the procedures used to implement it, and its effectiveness in reducing pro-violence social norms in high-risk communities. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation selected the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) to implement the Cure Violence approach in two New York City neighborhoods, and the (R&E Center) will collect data in those communities and two comparison communities. President Jeremy Travis touted the award, saying: “For those of us in the crime policy world, the fact that John Jay has been selected, with partners, to evaluate the Cure Violence initiative is a great vote of confidence in our ability to deliver a credible and rigorous evaluation of this high profile strategy.”

Since Dr. Jeffrey Butts became Director of the (R&E Center) in 2010, the research team in the Center has raised $8 million in funding for various projects. “The Center is excited to work with CCI to implement high-quality Cure Violence programs,” said Butts. “John Jay will track implementation and measure effects in community in both the implementation site and in comparison communities all within New York City. This is a real vote of confidence in New York City and how the city is implementing a public health approach to violence prevention which has been supported by the City Council, public health, and the State.”

The Cure Violence model is a public health approach to ending gun violence that uses what are termed credible messengers, such as formerly incarcerated individuals, to intervene in gun-related violence, usually among youths ages 15 to 25. The Cure Violence model asserts that its public health approach can change high-risk individuals’ violent behavior through specifically-targeted mentoring from “violence interrupters.” Using such an approach, the research model has been repeatedly shown to reduce violent incidents, particularly among at-risk youths.

In January, the two Cabinet agencies issued an advisory to every U.S. school district, encouraging them to use positive disciplinary alternatives to removing children from school. Data from across the country show that students of color, especially black males, are suspended from school at three times the rate of their white peers, Coke noted. “A single out-of-school suspension in the ninth grade doubles the chance of course failure and early high school drop out,” she said, and increases significantly the likelihood of involvement in the criminal justice system. The Atlantic Philanthropies grant will fund Coke’s study of youth experiences of criminalization at school, on the street (e.g., the use of stop and frisk), and at home (e.g., experiences of parental incarceration) and their collective impact on student achievement in school.

**Continued on Page 3**
When a Common Fungus Turns Deadly
Research Earns a Magazine Cover Story

By Adrienne Anifant

Adding further luster to John Jay’s already glittering reputation for cutting-edge work in science, Assistant Professor of Biology Jason Rauceo and his team of student researchers recently had their pioneering investigation into a potentially life-threatening fungus published as the cover story in the leading science magazine Genomics.

Rauceo has been studying Candida albicans since graduate school, intrigued by a fungus that is one of only a few dozen among millions in existence that can infect humans. In healthy individuals, Candida lives in the mouth and gastrointestinal and vaginal tracts as a harmless microbe; however when an individual’s immune system is compromised, Candida can cause infections. Minor, common infections caused by Candida are diaper rash, oral thrush and vaginal yeast infections, but Candida infections can also be lethal in severely immunocompromised individuals, where it inhabits vital organs such as the kidneys. At-risk groups include patients undergoing extensive chemotherapy and AIDS patients, among others.

The Genomics article, titled “Genome-wide transcriptional profiling and enrichment mapping reveal divergent and conserved roles of Sko1 in the Candida albicans osmotic stress response,” discusses the mediating effects of Sko1, a DNA gene regulator.

Rauceo and his team, including undergraduate co-authors Jennifer Teubl and Leonid Sukala, were interested in understanding how Candida evades antifungal drugs when it inhabits highly saline niches in the body such as the kidneys. When Candida exists in a saline-rich environment, its susceptibility to certain highly effective antifungal drugs is significantly reduced. Rauceo and his research team wanted to understand the genetic circuitry that governs Candida adaptation under these conditions.

“My research seeks to understand the genes within Candida’s DNA that are turned on or off in diverse environments, and this study focuses on one master switch that controls the response to salt stress which is a protein called Sko1. If pharmacologists were to design a drug targeting a master switch such as Sko1, it might be a way to promote survival of a patient suffering from severe Candida infections in the kidneys.”

Rauceo’s innovative approach used molecular genetic and novel statistical techniques to analyze Candida’s complete DNA processes, studying which genes are turned on and off in different environments. They were able to present their complex findings using a new tool called enrichment mapping, that allows a researcher to understand the biological processes affected within Candida under such conditions in a simplified format. It was these findings and their creative presentation that earned the research its place on the cover of Genomics.

A Raw, Unsweetened Look at 9/11 Loss

By Adrienne Anifant

Professor Adam Berlin’s post-9/11 novel, The Number of Missing, published by Spuyten Duyvil Press, examines the nature of loss through the tragedy of 9/11. Eschewing the crutch of sentimentality and romanticism, Berlin remains loyal to his characters’ plight in following the process of contending with death, unresolved conflicts, regret, torn friendships and new love severed at its beginnings.

The Number of Missing begins a month after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. David (the narrator) and Mel meet regularly to drink, to give each other comfort and to reminisce about Paul, who died in his office at the World Trade Center. David is particularly tormented because he’d fought with his best friend shortly before the disaster — Paul, recently married to Mel, was pushing David to change his irresponsible life.

“I wanted to keep this novel raw,” Berlin noted. “I didn’t want any sweetness. I wanted to capture that still, sad, dead feeling that was pervasive throughout the city after the attacks. I was thinking about post-war novels where damaged characters go on living but not really. It’s the ‘not really’ I tried to get right in my book.”

A downtown Manhattan resident at the time, Berlin was home when the planes hit. As the attack unfolded, he instinctively started to walk toward the towers to get as close as possible, but then suddenly stopped and, remembering he was supposed to teach that day, took the subway to John Jay. “It was ridiculous in some ways because only a few students showed up, but I felt I had to be there for them. If I hadn’t gone to school, I think I would have gotten too close.”

Berlin dedicated the book to Police Officer John W. Perry, who was retiring that day from the NYPD. Before Perry could turn in his badge at police headquarters, he rushed down to the Trade Center to help out. He did not survive.

Berlin is the co-editor, along with his English Department colleague Jeffrey Heiman, of J Journal: New Writing on Justice.

Visit the Office for Advancement of Research’s Web site at www.jjay.cuny.edu/academics/960.php
Capital Ideas

New Book Looks at Pivotal Death-Penalty Cases

By Adrienne Anifant

A death-penalty scholar and former capital litigator, Professor Evan Mandery, chair of the Department of Criminal Justice, is reaping an abundance of critical acclaim for his latest book, A Wild Justice: The Death and Resurrection of Capital Punishment in America, tells the story of America’s ambivalent relationship with capital punishment, culminating in two landmark Supreme Court cases in the 1970s.

Published in August 2013 by W. W. Norton, this is the sixth book for Mandery, whose interest in the death penalty surged during his pro bono work on a death penalty appeal in Alabama. His client was 15 when he shot a woman in front of her 2-year-old son. “I interviewed my client’s victim's husband who was against the death penalty,” Mandery said. “The human drama of that moment was captivating to me.”

Over time, Mandery has carved out a career encompassing some 20 law review articles, a textbook expressing his views on the legal and moral landscape of capital punishment in the U.S., and three literary satiric novels. He said it was his writer’s sense of empathy for people that made law and litigation compelling. Now in A Wild Justice, he comes full circle in telling the story of the Supreme Court’s struggles with the capital punishment issue in the cases of Furman v. Georgia (1972) and Gregg v. Georgia (1976).

Mandery believes his instincts as a writer informed his story of why the nation’s highest court did not overturn the death penalty. “It is very much driven by personalities, and the pacing is very novelistic,” he said. “I tried to maintain evenhandedness and balance in the book, and stay away from the morality of capital punishment. To me it is story about how the Supreme Court operates, told realistically — not through judicial opinions, but from the perspectives of all characters involved.”

Center to Evaluate ‘Cure Violence’ Model

Continued from Page 1

approach, gun violence reduction can be achieved without individuals having to be embroiled in the legal system.

Sheyla Delgado, who completed a master’s degree John Jay in Criminal Justice in 2012, and Laura Negredo, who earned her master’s in International Crime and Justice in 2013, are research analysts at the Center. During the past year they have worked on a New York City Council-funded assessment of the Cure Violence model that was implemented in five sites within all five boroughs.

“We are assessing the implementation of the anti-gun violence initiative in existing New York City sites for fidelity to the model. Chicago has been using this approach for a while and it has shown to be a very promising approach to reducing shootings,” said Negredo.

Delgado added, “One part of the model that is unique for an anti-violence program is the use of credible messengers to identify victims of gun violence who may become future shooters and work to interrupt the cycle of violence.”

A number of other John Jay students, alumni and faculty are on the staff of the Cure Violence evaluation project, including undergraduates Laila Alsabahi and Clarence Neil-Colon, graduate student and alumna Rhoda Ramdeen, alumni Leonardo Dominguez, Josh Eichenbaum and Yeireline Rodriguez, doctoral student Evan Misshula and anthropology Professor Ric Curtis.

Comments? Questions? Suggestions?
Send them to Daniel Stageman, Director of Research Operations, Office for Advancement of Research, Room 601 BMW, e-mail: dstageman@jjay.cuny.edu

Visit the Office for Advancement of Research’s Web site at www.jjay.cuny.edu/academics/960.php
**GRANTS UPDATE**

**Jeffrey Butts** (Research and Evaluation Center), $2.942 million from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, for an evaluation of the Cure Violence Model of Gun-Violence Prevention. (See article, Page 1.)

**Elise Champeil** (Science), $463,861 from the National Institutes of Health, for her study of the “Role of p21 Signaling Pathway in Response to MC and DMC DNA Interstrand Crosslinks.”

**Preeti Chauhan** (Psychology) and Karen Terry (Criminal Justice), $30,000 from the Foundation to Promote Open Society, for the study “Innovative Policing Strategies.”

**Tanya Coke** (Public Management), $598,217 from Atlantic Philanthropies, to support the School Justice Project. (See article, Page 1.)

**Ric Curtis** (Anthropology), $14,155 from the National Institutes of Health via New York University, for “Discovery to Implementation and Back: Research Translation for the HIV/SU Epidemic.”

**Wendy Guastaferro** (Public Management), $15,253 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services via the University System of Georgia, for her research into “Enhancing Safety and Well-being of Children of Adult Drug Court Participants.”

**Stephen Handelman** (Center on Media, Crime and Justice), $150,000 from the Tow Foundation, for the Tow Juvenile Justice Media Projects. Also, $200,000 from the Public Welfare Foundation for various center initiatives, including a symposium on the Affordable Care Act and a Pretrial and Criminal Justice Journalism Network project.

**Ann Jacobs** (Prisoner Reentry Institute), $275,000 from the Ford Foundation, for “Corridors to College Success, Prison to College Pipeline.” Also, $115,000 from the Tow Foundation, to support the Tow Advocacy and Research Fellowship Initiative.

**Olivera Jokic** (English), $22,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities, for an NEH Enduring Questions Course on the Nature of Friendship.

**David Kennedy** (Center for Crime Prevention and Control), $149,999 from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services, for “Racial Reconciliation and Enhancing Police Legitimacy.” Also, $237,420 from the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County, for the initiative “Reducing Serious Violence in South Bend, Indiana.” Also, $169,487 from the State of Connecticut via the University of New Haven, for “Preventing Gang Violence in Connecticut: Continued Efforts in New Haven, and Launch in Bridgeport and Hartford. And, $20,090 from the Eric County-Buffalo Safe Neighborhoods Initiative Committee, for a series of “Ceasefire University workshops.”

**Bilal Khan** (Mathematics and Computer Science), $105,299.41 from the National Institutes of Health via New York University, for “Addressing Hepatitis C and Hepatocellular Carcinoma: The Current and Future Epidemics.”

**Silvia Mazzula** (Psychology), $743,599 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, for “Expanding the Latina Researchers Network to Build Community, Diversify Research Capacity and Foster Interdisciplinary Collaborations.” Also, $45,000 from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, for a Conference to Increase Pipeline of Underrepresented Scholars and Researchers.

**Daisy Segovia** (PhD student, Psychology and Law) and Deryn Strange (Psychology), $2,700 from the American Psychological Association, as part of Segovia’s APA Dissertation Research Award.

**Marina Sorochinski** (Psychology), $18,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, for “Using Behavioral Patterns to Link Serial Rape Offenses: A Multidimensional Approach.”

**Maria Volfpe** (Sociology/CUNY Dispute Resolution Center), $2,500 from the Cottonwood Foundation, for “Search for Common Ground – Understanding Muslims in New York City.”

---

**School Discipline Is Focus of Major Grant**

Continued from Page 1

work will also aim to transform punitive school discipline policies to a more positive, restorative approach.

“Some of my research will look at engagement of students who are managing two very different messages in their lives: a call to stay in school and graduate to college or career, and a presumption of criminality that tells them that prison is their future. I am interested in how presumptive criminal treatment affects students’ optimism, grit and engagement,” said Coke. During the spring 2014 semester, Coke is teaching an experimental graduate course on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

aging two very different messages in their lives: a call to stay in school and graduate to college or career, and a presumption of criminality that tells them that prison is their future. I am interested in how presumptive criminal treatment affects students’ optimism, grit and engagement,” said Coke. During the spring 2014 semester, Coke is teaching an experimental graduate course on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.

From 2010 to 2013, Coke worked as a Senior Consultant to the Atlantic Philanthropies, where she conceived the foundation’s grantmaking initiative on nonprofit organizations and philanthropy in John Jay’s Department of Public Management.