

## Message from the Director

As the leaves fall, the researchers at the Justice Center have been busy with their many research projects. Over the last few weeks, the final round of interviews with the HOPE team members were led by Dr. Gary Zajac. Also, data collection for The Administration of the Death Penalty in Pennsylvania project is wrapping up in Philadelphia.

### PENN STATE JUSTICE CENTER FOR RESEARCH

Doris L. MacKenzie, Director  
Gary Zajac, Managing Director

The Justice Center is excited to welcome three new research assistants: Elaine Arsenault, Edward Hayes, and Diana Pehlic Samardzic who will be contributing to the Center's ongoing projects. Barbara Cox, our administrative coordinator, took a position in the Office of Grants and Contracts. She has been an essential part of the success of the Justice Center. Best of luck in your new position Barb!

*Professor Doris MacKenzie*

### Justice Center Welcomes New Research Assistants

**Elaine Arsenault** completed an accelerated Master's program in Justice Studies at the University of New Hampshire. For her thesis, Elaine conducted qualitative interviews with corrections professionals to examine aspects of mentoring that might serve as motivation for offenders to participate in rehabilitation efforts, and also the feasibility of mentoring programs in New England. While at UNH, she assisted with the administration of a longitudinal survey seeking to identify the predictors of delinquency in middle and high school students. Elaine graduated from Penn State with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with Neuroscience. Throughout her undergraduate career, Elaine served as a research assistant in both the Language Pathways and the Stereotyping and Prejudice Laboratories, helping collect and code data for various studies. Currently, she is working on the HOPE project which evaluates the implementation of the HOPE probation program that involves swift, certain, and consistent sanctions in 4 sites across the country.

**Edward Hayes** earned his Master's degree in Criminological Research at the University of Cambridge. His thesis at Cambridge explored the possible childhood risk and protective factors of leaders that help perpetuate mass killings. Ed has also worked as a paralegal assisting York County Children Youth and Families in which he helped prepare caseworkers and attorneys for trial, managed databases related to case seriousness and conducted searches for adoptive resources using legal research tools. For his undergraduate education at Messiah College, Mr. Hayes studied both Criminal Justice and Accounting, and minored in Psychology. While at Messiah he worked as a research assistant for Dauphin County Juvenile Probation and helped collect data on family involvement in the juvenile justice system. Ed is currently working on The Administration of the Death Penalty in Pennsylvania project which examines the role of racial disparity in death penalty sentencing.

**Diana Pehlic Samardzic** earned her Bachelor's degree in Sociology from SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica, NY and her Master's degree in Sociology from SUNY University at Buffalo. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Sociology from SUNY Buffalo. Her dissertation investigates the employment representation of immigrants and other racial and ethnic groups within occupations net of major supply-and demand-side explanations in the literature on occupational segregation. As a graduate student at SUNY Buffalo, Diana presented her past research at the 2012 Eastern Sociological Society meeting, and taught Social Research Methods at the undergraduate level. Her research interests include quantitative methods, immigration and the labor market, program evaluation, and gender and racial inequality. Her exclusive role is the evaluation of Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement Training Institute (PACSETI), major project of Penn State's Justice and Safety Institute (JASI) which is a partner of the Center (see the New Project section below for a more detailed description).

### Justice Center Post-Doc Publication

Justice Center post-doc Susan McNeeley, recently contributed to the Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice upcoming issue on crim-event criminology, guest edited by Pamela Wilcox and Brooke Miller Gialopsos. Dr. McNeeley's article reviews the empirical status of lifestyle-routine activities theory as it relates to victimization, offending, and crime at places. It also recommends avenues for future work, suggesting that scholars and practitioners begin to focus on: (a) the interaction of lifestyle with other factors, such as gender or delinquent values; (b) virtual places and outline routine activities; and (c) the use of convergent settings to facilitate co-offending.

The article is available online at: <http://ccj.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/10/08/1043986214552607.full.pdf+html>

## New Project

The Justice Center is now working with Penn State's Justice and Safety Institute (JASI) on the ongoing evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement Training Institute (PACSETI). PACSETI is a major, long term project of JASI, which is an original partner of the Center. PACSETI provides all of the training for the child support enforcement caseworkers throughout Pennsylvania, under a multi-year contract from the PA Department of Public Welfare. The Center is serving as the evaluation partner for PACSETI, and Diana Samardzic's position is funded through this partnership (see above for an introduction to Diana). Dr. Zajac recently joined the PACSETI management team, and together with Diana will develop and pursue a program evaluation agenda around PACSETI. Diana is based out of the School of Public Affairs at Penn State Harrisburg, pursuant to the nascent linkage between the School, JASI, and the Center. The evaluation of PACSETI is in its early developmental stages and updates on this work will be presented in The Docket over the coming years.

## Reentry Planning Committee Meetings

The Centre County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) which is composed of a variety of stakeholders from county government, the criminal justice field, the courts, law enforcement and victim service/advocacy organizations has identified offender reentry as a top priority for Centre County. CJAB has been awarded grant funds to assist them in developing a comprehensive reentry plan for offenders.

The Coalition meets on a monthly basis and at this time, has finished developing their vision and mission statements and soon will be ready to enact change for the county. Professor Doris MacKenzie has been asked to serve on the Reentry Planning Committee, and is interested in assisting the Coalition by providing the Justice's Center's unique research skills.

## Justice Center Post-Doc Alumni News

**Dr. Matthew DeMichele**, RTI researcher, and former Justice Center Postdoctoral Scholar was awarded a NIJ grant for a total of \$700,059 for three years. Matthew's study will provide a more comprehensive and extensive understanding of deradicalization processes among domestic violent extremists to inform community level prevention and intervention strategies.

**Dr. Ian Elliott**, Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, recently published a book chapter and a paper in *Sexual Abuse: The Journal of Research and Treatment* about female sex offenders. Dr. Elliott has also been invited to join the Research Committee for the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

Congratulations Matthew and Ian on your success!

## Recent Publications

McNeeley, S. (2014). Lifestyle-Routine Activities and Crime Events. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*. First Published Online: October 13, 2014.

### Coming Up on The Docket:

- Justice Center Researchers Head to The American Society of Criminology Conference
- The Prison Inmate Networks Study (PINS) Mini conference

### Spring Criminology Forum

The Penn State Justice Center for Research is pleased to announce that esteemed criminologist Candace Kruttschnitt will be speaking at the Crim Forum on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Noon. Save the date!

Justice Center for Research

The Pennsylvania State University  
327 Pond Laboratory  
University Park, PA 16802  
814-867-3292  
[www.justicecenter.psu.edu](http://www.justicecenter.psu.edu)

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