

*The Tow Youth Justice Institute is a university, state and private partnership established to lead the way in juvenile justice reform through collaborative planning, training, research and advocacy.*

## Upcoming JJPOC Meetings:

JJPOC Meetings are the third Thursday of every month at 2 p.m., at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

## In This Issue:

### Sharing 5 years of The Tow Youth Justice Institute's work and accomplishments!

## Juvenile Justice Club

In the Spring of this year, the Juvenile Justice Club was created at the University of New Haven through the work of Tow Youth Justice Institute Intern Richard Concepcion. The club's purpose is to educate students on campus about the prevalent issues currently happening with youth in the juvenile justice system. They encourage students to use their voice to share the issues that are happening with our youth and give students the resources to actively engage



in discussions about ways we can make society a better and safer place for young individuals. This Fall, they held their first campus event, a Juvenile Justice Career Panel.

## SPECIAL EDITION!

### Celebrating 5 Years of Justice Reform!

Student Interns with the Tow Youth Justice Institute planned an event on campus to celebrate its 5 Year Anniversary! On October 29th, students from across the campus enjoyed fall treats like apple cider and donuts, played games and WNHU, the University of New Haven's award-winning radio station, set the tone with music. Students also had the opportunity to learn about the Institute and the work in reforming the juvenile justice system by visiting multiple stations of information and talking with staff. They were given a "passport" and when they received a stamp at each station, they were entered into drawings for gift cards and more!



(Pictured from left, Megan McClintock, Richie Concepcion and Bridget McEvelly)

The Student team also planned a social media campaign and, did what is called tabling, in the Campus Center before the event to promote and raise awareness of the event and why we are celebrating. In addition to team members above, the student team included Alex Scranton, Rebecca Satzberg, Paige Constantineau, Paul Klee and Catherine Parafati. Also, Alex, Paige and Amanda Pappas contributed to the writing of this newsletter!

## The Engine Behind the Work

Since 2014, the work of the Tow Youth Justice Institute has been supported by multiple partners. Our partner, the Tow Foundation has provided over \$2,600,000 in funding. We are grateful for our founding partner and other funders who have provided over \$5.2 million.

# Thank you!



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## Our Approach to Elevate Youth Justice Reform in Connecticut

The Tow Youth Justice Institute was founded on October 14, 2014 to gather experts in the field of youth justice for the state of Connecticut and nationally and be a resource toward work to reform the juvenile justice system and provide University of New Haven students opportunities for experiential education and leadership development. The Institute is also a research partner for Connecticut’s Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC). The Tow Youth Justice Institute is currently following an eighteen-month strategic planning process completed in December 2018, in which our mission statement, vision, and values were updated. Our mission states the institute was established “to lead the way for juvenile justice reform through the engagement of policymakers, practitioners, service providers, students, communities, youth, and their families. TYJI works to promote the use of effective, data-driven practices, programs, and policies related to youth justice, focusing on the needs and well-being of youth up to the age of 24” clarifying the breath and focus of our efforts. Our vision further analyzes by what means we intend to accomplish the goals explored in the mission statement, mentioning “cross-system collaboration and transparency”, “critical discourse”, “authentic engagement...from youth, their families, and the community”, and “long-term commitment”.



### Tow Youth Justice Institute Strategic Plan

After four years of operation, the TYJI has had many successes toward its original goals. We have established the Institute as an important center for dissemination of knowledge and capacity building in subject matter areas critical to youth justice reform efforts. As we work to fulfill our mission and vision, we have defined five new goals to expand our scope of work over the next three years.

**GOAL #1** - Research and evaluate youth justice issues in order to advance data-driven policies and practices.

**GOAL #2** - Educate policy makers, practitioners, and the community about ways to advance juvenile justice reform and achieve better outcomes for youth.

**GOAL #3** – Collaborate with policy makers, practitioners, and community, especially youth and their families, in order to promote and achieve multi-system reform.

**GOAL #4** - Engage University of New Haven students in ways that provide personal and professional development opportunities to support the formation of a future workforce through strong, innovative youth justice educational programs.

**GOAL #5** - Become a valued content expert and resource in the field of youth justice in the state and nation.

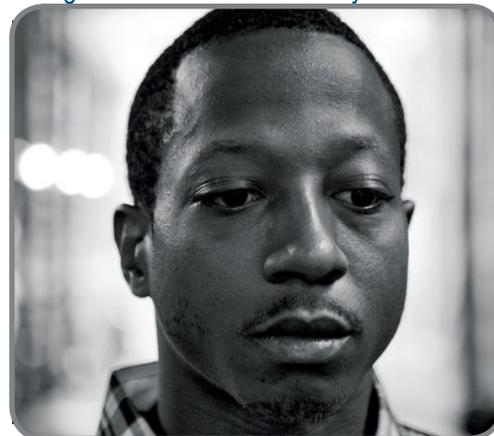




## Updated Curriculum for Juvenile Justice Concentration

In the fall of 2015, the TYJI Curriculum Committee met several times to identify areas for improvement in the Henry C. Lee College juvenile justice concentration and to review course descriptions from undergraduate and graduate program/certificates related to juvenile justice from nine colleges and universities. Contrasting the curriculum at these universities with the curriculum offered at the University of New Haven led to the knowledge that although criminal justice and criminology programs are rapidly growing throughout the United States, most colleges and universities do not offer concentrations, certificates, or degree programs in juvenile justice. The plan for the new curriculum was built on the foundation of the University's B.S in Criminal Justice. The CJ classes challenge students to think critically about the nature of crime, the characteristics of individuals engaged in crime, and the operations of the justice systems. Several of these courses meet the University of New Haven's core competencies, which all students must demonstrate before graduation, within the context of criminal justice. To learn more, see our June 2017 Newsletter.

In the fall of 2018, the "Youth Injustice and the Kalief Browder Story" course was developed, and the first official course commenced in the spring semester of 2019. This course engages students at the University of New Haven who are interested in exploring injustice through the true story of Kalief Browder. Kalief Browder was a 16-year-old who was accused of stealing a backpack and sent to Rikers Island Jail, an adult prison. The judge eventually dismissed all of the charges against Kalief, after he spent three years in prison. As a result of depression and suicidal thoughts, from his time at Rikers, Kalief committed suicide. This course deeply looks into the juvenile and criminal justice systems and the impact these systems have on youth. This course will be offered in the spring of 2020 as online and on campus courses.



## Research



Another and very important way the TYJI keeps reform on the state's radar screen is through research. This team of professors and students seek to identify new and improved ways of responding to youthful offending through a data-driven lens that helps us to implement evidence based programs and policies in juvenile justice. The team of undergraduate, graduate and PhD students work on research projects for the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) and agencies outside of JJPOC. Our students provide research that focuses on juvenile justice matters with a goal of identifying opportunities for policy change. To learn more, see our Spring 2018 Newsletter.

## Student Engagement

Since its inception, the Tow Youth Justice Institute has engaged students through internships and other activities. There have been 33 internships, in which students have participated in research that supports the work of the JJPOC and other projects, worked on JJPOC activities, supported the cohorts of the leadership program and the restorative justice practices project, and contributed to content in newsletters, issue briefs, social media and the website.

## Advisory Council

The Advisory Council was created in April, 2017 with a purpose of assisting and aiding in the growth of the Tow's youth justice work. This council accomplishes this by identifying new strategic directions for courses of action, fostering connections with national organizations and other public and private entities for the collaboration on new projects and seeking new ways of funding in order to further support the work of the Institute. Meetings occur three times a year and review a multitude of aspects including reports on the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee's progress, the progress and findings of research projects and potential funders as well as any other important initiatives. The members of this council provide their input and add information about their specific area of work and its relation to youth justice in the state of Connecticut and on a national level. To see the members of the Advisory Council, visit [newhaven.edu/towyouth](http://newhaven.edu/towyouth) and click on Sections.

## Campus and Community Events

### 2015

- National League of Cities Convening 2015
- Restorative Justice Practices Forum w/Judge Andrew Becroft from New Zealand
- Child Welfare Law Symposium
- Connecticut Department of Children and Families Training of Trainers Child Welfare Response to Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking
- Child Health and Development Institute School, Police, and Community Symposium
- International Association of Police Chiefs (IAPC) and Law Enforcement Institute of Juvenile Justice seminar on juvenile justice reform
- Hillhouse student visit to the University of New Haven with the New Haven Board of Education on the Public Safety Academy
- America's Distorted Image: The Over-Incarceration of African Americans Panel discussion

### 2016

- CT Police Executives Juvenile Justice Conference
- JustLeadershipUSA (JLUSA) Emerging Leaders Training
- Tow Youth Justice Institute Community and Campus Open House
- Vera Institute of Justice panel discussions: Understanding Status Offenses & Shaping Local Status Offense Responses through Legislation.

### 2017

- William H. Carbone presented on "Lessons Learned From States That Have Raised the Age of Criminal Responsibility" at webinar of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Social briefing on building comprehensive community-based services and supports for children and families involved in the juvenile justice system - Moving from Institutions to Community-based Treatment in Juvenile Justice with national experts Marc Schindler, Shaena Fazal and John Dixon.
- Department of Correction, Cheshire Correctional Institute TRUE Unit Student Visit
- 13th Documentary – A facilitated discussion for students, faculty and staff

### 2018

- Color of Justice Revisited Student Engagement with experts in the field of juvenile justice
- Tow Youth Justice Institute Student Open House
- Kalief Browder presentation by brother Akeem Browder on the death of his brother and impact to his family, his community, New York and the nation.
- Taking a Stand for Better Youth and Police Relations – Kaepernick
- Council of State Government Justice Center Public Safety Conference

### 2019

- Council of State Governments iOYouth Press Conference
- Chief Justice Robinson lecture and informal conversation: Social Justice in Today's Society
- JJPOC Integrated Community Expertise Meet & Greet
- Tow Youth Justice Institute Experiential Education Non-profit Open House
- Tour of the W.O.R.T.H. Unit at the York Correctional Institute
- University of New Haven Chapter of NAACP presented a panel discussing juveniles in the Criminal System: Trapped in the System.



# Five Years of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

## Legislative Highlights

The JJPOC, created in 2014, has had many years of successful legislation passed in the State of Connecticut. Here are a few highlights. A Journey through Connecticut's Juvenile Justice System can be found in our September 2017 Newsletter.

### 2014

P.A. 14-217

Creation of the JJPOC to oversee reform of the juvenile justice system

### 2015

P.A. 15-183

- Established a Children's Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Health Plan Implementation Advisory Board.
- Prohibited out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for children in pre-K through 2nd grade.
- Required all juvenile facilities to comply with the recommendations of the National Prison Rape Elimination Act
- Raised transfer age to 15 for certain offenses

### 2016

P.A. 16-147

- Implemented a Community-Based Diversion System lead by the Youth Service Bureaus
- Creation of truancy intervention models and programs
- Limited the grounds for detention
- Closed the Connecticut Juvenile Training School, the state's only juvenile prison, by July 1, 2018.
- Eliminated truancy and defiance of school rules as status offenses by July 1, 2017
- Called for training of police in the use of restorative practices and other youth-related areas

### 2017

P.A. 17-2

- The Judicial Branch will assume the responsibility of the continuum for juveniles from DCF on 7/1/18
- The Office of Policy and Management will begin to report annually on juvenile recidivism

### 2018

P.A. 18-31

- Created an Education Committee that will improve the educational services provided to youth in out of home placement. A plan will be submitted to the JJPOC by 1/1/20.
- The JJPOC shall report by 1/1/20 on a justice reinvestment plan that will allow for the reinvestment of a portion of the savings from reduced incarceration to become strategic investments in home, school and community services.

### 2019

P.A. 19-187

- The state shall review methods other states employ to transfer juvenile cases to the regular criminal docket, and detain the aforementioned youth. The review shall consider public safety, as well as effectiveness in changing behaviors. The review shall include programmatic and organizational alternatives with cost options and be submitted by 1/1/20.
- Best practices shall be developed in the areas of suicidal and self-harming behavior, solitary confinement and programming/services by July 1, 2020.
- Effective July 1, 2020 all ombudsperson services shall be independent of the agency that they serve
- Effective June 30, 2020, FWSN shall include runaways, children beyond control of their parents and juveniles who engage in indecent or immoral conduct. They will no longer be referred to the juvenile courts.

