



Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

Corrections Section

Missing: Criminal Justice Data

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The New York Times (reprinted March 21, 2018)

Criminal justice data in this country is hard to come by. It can be messy and difficult to understand. And in many cases, the data doesn't exist at all.

How many people are in jail? For what crimes? For how long? Are people in jail mostly awaiting trial? Are they there for being unable to pay bail of \$500 or less? You might think we know the answers to these basic questions, but we don't.

Missing data is at the core of a national crisis. The United States leads the industrialized world in incarceration. With nearly 5 percent of the planet's population and almost a quarter of its prison population, the country has invested a tremendous amount of money in the corrections system without the statistics necessary to tell us whether that money is actually reducing crime, improving fairness or lessening recidivism. State and federal spending on corrections has grown more than [300 percent over the past 20 years](#) — becoming one of the fastest-growing line items in state budgets.

No credible business would ever make this kind of investment without being able to gauge its success. Moreover, we've all come to expect transparency when it comes to how the important institutions in our lives — our schools and hospitals, for example — are performing. Data-driven decision-making is the norm there, as it should be for criminal justice.

Why don't we have better criminal justice data? Because justice in this country is primarily local. The United States [has over 3,000 counties](#), and each county has multiple agencies that

record data, each in its own way. There is no common language, and there are no standard definitions. Worse, the data is notoriously difficult to get. The result? No one can make informed policy decisions to improve public safety, reduce costs or identify patterns of inequity.

But all of this is beginning to change. Two weeks ago, Florida legislators [passed a bill](#) that would make the state's criminal justice system the most transparent in the country. The bill, which is expected to be signed into law by Gov. Rick Scott, requires the state's 67 counties to collect the same data, record it in the same way and store it in the same public place. The state is to set up a repository that will house data that covers arrest to post-conviction and will be collected and reported by court clerks, state attorneys, public defenders, county jails and departments of correction.

The legislation is a common-sense measure, but it's also a huge step forward. At my organization, [Measures for Justice](#), we have been collecting criminal justice data from all over the country for six years. We go agency by agency to collect the data, much of it stored in an antiquated fashion. What we often notice is missing and incomplete data.

What's more, agencies often fail to make full use of the data they have, despite constantly receiv-

ing data requests from professionals in and out of the system who seek to make improvements. At times, we have found that the public data is so hard to get — dispersed among multiple agencies, in multiple formats — that it is in essence unavailable.

But when we have all the data, we can begin to address aspects of the criminal justice system that might well merit reform. In Florida, for instance, we will now be able to [see who is being assigned bail](#) and for what kind of charges. We'll get information on whether cases involving poor defendants have outcomes different from those of cases involving more affluent defendants.

The state will also collect data on ethnicity, which will show how Latinos, the largest ethnic group in Florida, are being treated by the criminal justice system. And for a more accurate picture of recidivism, it will collect data on whether probation and parole revocations are due to technical violations or to arrests for a new offense. The law mandates that everything will be published in a "modern, open, electronic format that is machine-readable and readily accessible to the public" on the state Department of Corrections website.

Information should be available to everyone. It can't be limited to a small group of local professionals, who themselves have only access to an incomplete database or old documents in the basement of a county building. Florida's lawmakers have recognized the need to let the sunshine in and get this right. Other states might enjoy the light as well.

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Spring 2018 - Corrections Now

Message from the Chair

It was great to see everyone who attended the New Orleans Conference and the Section's annual breakfast and business meeting. We had a wonderful opportunity to network and were blessed to hear update's on Louisiana's efforts to assist in reentry from Steven Lassalle and representatives from Rising Foundations, a nonprofit working on behalf of individuals reentering society from incarceration in New Orleans. On behalf of the Section and the executive board, I would like to thank Deb Vegh and Stacy Parker for their leadership on the executive board, and Wes Johnson for his leadership as founding editor for our section journal over the past years.

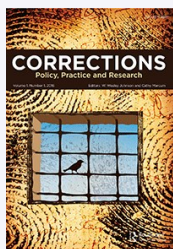
However, we're also excited to add new members to the executive council. We welcome Lisa Carter (Executive Counselor), Meghan Novisky (Secretary/Treasurer) and Natalie Goulette (Vice-Chair). We welcome Tina Freiburger as our new Associate Editor of CPPR.

Over the next few months, the board will begin working hard to prepare for our next meetings in Baltimore, Maryland March 26-30. Baltimore is a great city and we haven't been there as an organization in quite some time so I look forward to a great number of

sessions and papers around corrections-related topics. As you plan for the meeting, please plan to attend our section breakfast that occurs on Friday morning of the conference. This year's breakfast had the smallest attendance in recent memory, and you missed a great set of speakers. Our membership dues help pay for the breakfast, so I'd encourage you to try to be there in Baltimore. I know it's early but if you plan your heavy drinking for Wednesday night and Friday night, both your body and our section will be appreciative of your efforts (that was a joke, in case you missed it). Also, please

begin considering nominating people (or yourself) for leadership and for awards. This section would not function without the wonderful executive board that I've been privileged to serve with. We need to continue the energy of our organization and you can be a part of that. Furthermore, please encourage your students to submit papers for the travel award, and consider nominating your colleagues for our membership awards. Our members are doing great work; they should be recognized for it. Have a great summer and I look forward to hearing from you in the fall.

Corrections: Policy, Practice, and Research — Call for Papers!



CPPR is seeking manuscript submissions for 2 upcoming special issues of the journal.

The first, "Community Corrections," seeks manuscripts that focus on the implementation and effectiveness of community corrections and has a submission deadline of **June 15, 2018**.

The second special issue, "What Works in Corrections: Program and Policy Evaluations," seeks submissions that offer evaluations of programs or policies implemented in adult and juvenile correctional settings and has a submission deadline of **June 1, 2019**.

All manuscripts should be

submitted through the online submission website: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cppr>.

Any questions can be addressed to the Editor, Dr. Cathy Marcum, marcumcm@appstate.edu or to the Associate Editor, Dr. Tina Freiburger, Freiburg@uwm.edu.

Corrections Section News



Danielle Haverkate & Dave May

Dr. Kelly Cheeseman Student Paper Travel Scholarship

The presentation by Danielle Haverkate, a student at Arizona State University, explores policy changes such as "Ban the Box" and how it may not improve reintegration for prisoners. The authors explore the "felony label" operating on a continuum, impacting various aspects of an ex-offender's life. This presentation uses data from the Arizona Recidivism Reduction Project, a study which uses prisoner interviewers to study fellow prisoner perceptions of recidivism.

Local Donation

The 2018 recipient of the Corrections Section's charitable donation was Rising Foundations. This organization provides pathways to self-sufficiency for formerly incarcerated people with an aim to stop the cycle of incarceration in low income communities. In their unique workforce development program they promote small business development, access to safe and affordable housing, and financial security, while rebuilding neighborhoods: <https://www.risingfoundations.org/>

Executive Board Positions Available:

Interested in Getting Involved?

The Executive Board is currently accepting nominations for the following positions:

Vice Chair (2 year term)

**Executive Counselor
2 positions (3 year term)**

For more information, please contact David May at: dmay@soc.msstate.edu

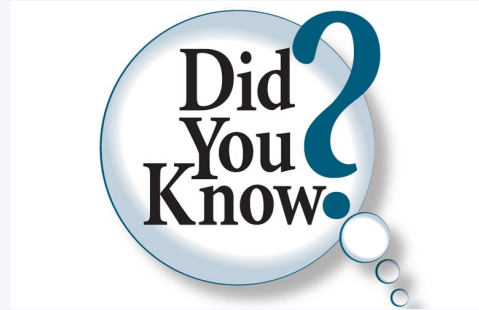
Reminder About Membership For Doctoral Students

The ACJS offers doctoral students in criminology and criminal justice the opportunity to receive a one-year waiver of membership dues.

This offer can be used at any point during a doctoral program, and we strongly encourage doctoral students to utilize this opportunity to join

the organization at no cost. If you mentor doctoral students, please encourage them to join the ACJS by completing the following form:

<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.acjs.org/resource/resmgr/Membership/PhDMembershipApplication.pdf>



2019 Section Awards and Scholarships

Nominations for the 2019 awards and scholarships are being accepted now through **November 1, 2018**. Nominations can be sent to :

ACJS.Corrections@gmail.com. Please check the Corrections Section website for further information.

John Howard Award

The nominee MUST have made significant contribu-



tions to practice, but also can have made significant contributions in scholarship, teaching, policy, or service.

Outstanding Section Member

Requires membership in and preferably contribution to the ACJS Corrections Section; and significant research and/or scholarship in the field of corrections. Self nominations are allowed and encouraged.

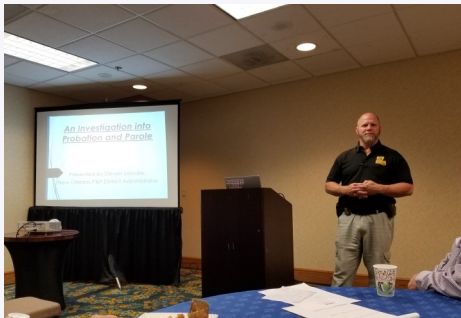
Dr. Kelly Cheeseman Student Paper Travel Scholarship

Students presenting papers at the ACJS annual conference are encouraged to submit their papers to the Awards committee for consideration for receipt of the travel scholarship. A letter of recommendation/support from a faculty advisor is advised.



On “Building Better Lives, Not Bigger Prisons”

At this year’s General Business Meeting and Breakfast, our Keynote Speaker was Steven Lassalle, District Administrator for Louisiana Adult Probation and Parole. In his role within the New Orleans District, LaSalle explained that his approach to corrections involves a mentality shift away from relying on incarceration and instead focusing on increasing the accessibility of resources for justice involved individuals to enhance their likelihood of success. Given that Lassalle works in Louisiana, a state with one of the highest incarceration rates in the U.S., this shift has been met with many barriers. Yet, Lassalle has been a part of successfully implementing a state-wide steering team, which includes a panel of staff from probation, parole, the DOC, and the parole board so that solutions are collaborative, responsive, and uniform. Together, this committee has worked to develop tools for justice involved individuals at three stages: during incarceration with assessment and prisoner programming, as they near re-entry with the preparation of home plans and improvement of parole release guidelines, and when they return home, with supervision services, day reporting centers, and aftercare programming. These goals, in addition to significant reductions in the use of technical violations, are in line with legislation shifts in the state which now limit periods of parole to a maximum of 3 years rather than 5. LaSalle reported that while these changes have not been easy, the state has saved a total of 6 million dollars thus far and is noticing qualitative shifts in rapport building between parolees and parole officers.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 56th annual meeting of ACJS will be held **March 26– March 30, 2019, at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore, MD.** The conference theme is “Justice, Human Rights, and Activism.”

Paper and poster submissions are requested by the Program Committee by **September 30,**

2018 with a final deadline of **October 15, 2018.**

The Section encourages faculty, students and practitioners in the field to submit a paper or poster presentation.

Additionally, suggestions are welcome for a **corrections-related charitable organization**

in the Baltimore area for consideration of a donation made on behalf of the Section.

Please inform the E-Board of your suggestion via e-mail no later than December 1:

ACJS.Corrections@gmail.com



Photo Credit: baltphoto.org

See you in Baltimore!!!

Corrections Section Purpose

The purpose of the Corrections Section is to bring together academy members who have a particular interest in corrections, to facilitate and encourage research and theory development related to corrections, to encourage appropriate and effective teaching techniques and practices for corrections courses, to serve as a resource network for and encourage interaction among academic, research, practitioner and policy-making sectors in order to further knowledge about corrections, and to encourage the organization of corrections-related conference activities.

**Solicitations for op-eds or research items are welcome for the next edition of the newsletter!!
Email us!**

Follow Us on Social Media!!

Twitter: @ACJS_CS

LinkedIn: ACJS Corrections Section

Facebook: ACJS Corrections Section

<https://www.facebook.com/ACJSCS/?fref=ts>

Executive Board

David May, Chair

Natalie Goulette, Incoming Chair

Meghan Novisky, Secretary

Executive Counselors:

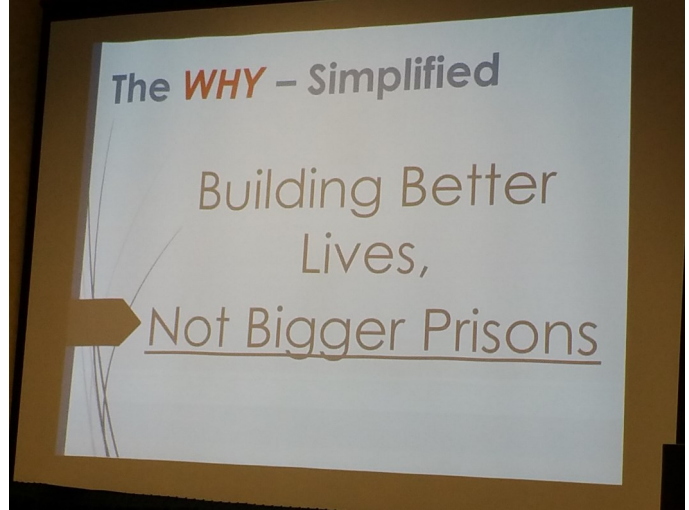
Adam Matz

Patricia Dahl

2018 Annual Awards Ceremony & General Business Meeting



Danielle Haverkate, recipient of the 2018 Dr. Kelly Cheeseman Student Paper Travel Scholarship



Kelly Orians, executive director & co-founder of Rising Foundations, accepting Section donation from Dave May