



# **Center on Crime, Race, and Justice**

*Annual Report: 2022 - 2023*



# The Center on Crime, Race, and Justice

In January 2023, the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice officially launched the Center on Crime, Race, and Justice (CRJ), which aims to make the criminal justice system more equitable and just for all. The five labs of CRJ, the Violence and Justice Research Lab (VJRL), Corrections and Reentry Lab (CRL), Crime Prevention Lab (CPL), Race and Justice Lab (RJL), and the affiliated Northeastern University Public Evaluation Lab (NU-PEL), position race and diversity at the forefront of research to understand how diverse communities are differentially impacted by crime, violence, and responses to crime.



*SCCJ Director and Violence and Justice Research Lab Co-Director, Amy Farrell, poses with CRJ Co-Directors, Natasha Frost and Carlos Cuevas at CRJ's launch party*

## DEIB statement

Core to the work at CRJ is the integration and inclusion of diverse voices and experiences. Toward that end, CRJ has developed a racial justice and equity statement and set of principles that are revisited each semester. The statement was originally developed in the Violence and Justice Research Lab and is being modified to serve all CRJ labs. Critical elements of the statement include the active recruitment and engagement of a diverse group of researchers, students and community partners. Creating space for people with different experiences and backgrounds to engage in research is central to this mission. We have taken numerous steps to create community and open spaces for dialogue about issues of equity and inclusion in CRJ. One example, is the CRJ and CAB sponsored community tour at the start of the fall 2022 semester. The tour was organized to welcome and introduce new faculty, doctoral students and CAB members to parts of Boston, with a focus on Boston's racial history. The event was followed by a lunch where seasoned and new CRJ affiliated and CAB members shared experiences and made connections. We held two additional receptions which provided opportunities for collective dialogue with students, faculty and CAB members throughout the year.

# The Labs

## Violence and Justice Research Lab

The Violence and Justice Research Lab (VJRL), co-directed by Carlos Cuevas and Amy Farrell, supports and promotes research in the areas of violence and victimization, its impact and consequences, and the role of the justice system in addressing these issues. The VJRL has a particular focus on underserved and understudied populations, who are often particularly vulnerable to experiencing violence. The VJRL aims to improve our understanding and response to crime victims and identify policies and practices that create more responsive systems of justice to promote recovery, healing, and community restoration.

- Understanding the Physical and Psychological Health and Wellness Needs of Minor Sex Trafficking Victims (Farrell, PI, Cuevas, Co-PI)
- Understanding the Criminal Justice and Health Care Needs of Latinx Victims of Hate Crime and Bias Victimization (Cuevas, PI, Farrell, Co-PI)
- Understanding Labor Trafficking of Children in U.S. (Farrell, PI)
- How Supply Chains Break: Coordinated Interdiction for Catastrophic Disruption of Illicit Supply Networks (Farrell, Co-PI)
- Labor Trafficking in Construction and Hospitality: Analyzing Victim Recruitment, Exploitation, and Service Needs to Identify Strategies for Prevention and Intervention (Farrell, Co-PI)

## Corrections and Reentry Lab

The Corrections and Reentry Lab, directed by Natasha Frost, partners with national nonprofit organizations and state and local justice agencies in the areas of institutional and community corrections. The Corrections and Reentry Lab's core research focuses on the institution's impacts on those who live and work in carceral institutions and the impacts of correctional system involvement on an array of post-release outcomes for formerly incarcerated citizens. The Correction and Reentry Lab's research intends to mitigate the negative effects of correctional system contact on individuals, their families, and broader communities.

- Turning Points in the Careers of Correction Officers (Frost, PI) - Funded by the National Institute of Justice
- Sources and Consequences of Prison Violence (Frost, PI) - Funded by Arnold Ventures, through the University of California, Irvine
- Navigating Mainstream Institutions and Non-Traditional Alternatives Post Incarceration (Denver, PI) - Funded by the National Science Foundation

## **Crime Prevention Lab**

The Crime Prevention Lab (CPL), co-directed by Eric Piza and Brandon Welsh, conducts rigorous basic and applied research on a range of crime prevention interventions to improve community safety and resilience. The mission of the lab is to promote crime prevention for social impact and social justice. As part of this work, the CPL strives to increase the understanding of local crime problems, inform new policy innovations, and document the success of particular developmental, community, and situational crime prevention interventions. CPL work involves applied research partnerships with agencies and governments, both in the Greater Boston area and globally.

## **Race and Justice Lab**

The Race and Justice Lab, directed by Kevin Drakulich, utilizes strategic social science research methodologies to assist government agencies, educational institutions, and community stakeholders in the development of policy changes to advance racial justice. The Race and Justice Lab focuses on identifying and understanding racial disparities in the administration of justice, evaluating efforts to remedy racial disparities and bias across stages of the justice system and illuminating the role of implicit and explicit racial bias in the criminal justice system.

## **Northeastern University Public Evaluation Lab (NU-PEL)**

NU-PEL is an interdisciplinary lab, co-directed by Amy Farrell and Alisa Lincoln, comprised of faculty and student teams conducting evaluation research on what is/is not successful in various community programs that leads to healthier communities and enhances the lives of those living within them. The lab is a collaboration of the Institute on Health Equity and Social Justice Research in Bouvé College of Health Sciences and the Center on Crime, Race, and Justice in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Our work aims to provide evidence-based reforms to address these disparities in the system. The Center on Crime, Race, and Justice is an interdisciplinary community-engaged entity, which aims to bring collaborators and students from various disciplines within the social sciences to help move forward our knowledge in these areas.

*Lisa Bailey-Laguerre, CRJ's Director of Community Relations, stands with Sam Williams, Co-Director of CRJ's Community Advisory Board.*



# Research

Since the center's official launch this January, the inaugural five labs within the center have worked to advance research related activities. The research within the labs not only contributes to advancing criminological and criminal justice policy and practice, but also to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging through these research activities.

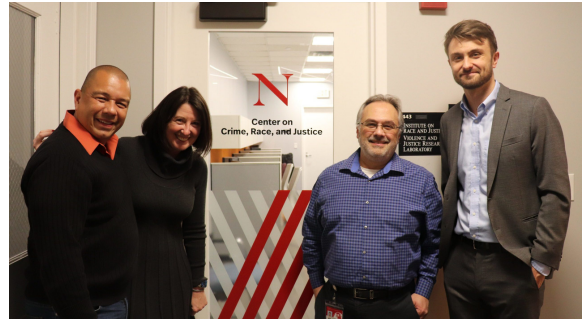
Research with SCCJ was organized under each of the research labs within CRJ as it launched in January 2023. Across the research labs are ongoing grant-funded research projects, totaling over \$6 million, that contribute to the Center's mission, including:

- **Turning Points in the Careers of Correction Officers: A Longitudinal Study of Occupational Stress, Trauma Exposure, Psychological Distress, and Suicide Risk Among Correction Officers.** Natasha Frost, Principal Investigator, CRL: \$996,440 (Funded by the National Institute of Justice).
- **Understanding the Physical and Psychological Health and Wellness Needs of Minor Sex Trafficking Victims.** Amy Farrell and Carlos Cuevas, Principal Investigators, VJRL: \$985,786 (Funded by the National Institute of Justice).
- **Understanding the Criminal Justice and Health Care Needs of LatinX Victims of Hate Crime and Bias Victimization.** Carlos Cuevas and Amy Farrell, Principal Investigators: \$896,836 (Funded by the National Institute of Justice).
- **Understanding the Trafficking of Children for the Purpose of Labor in the United States.** Amy Farrell, Principal Investigator, VJRL: \$664,690 (Funded by the National Institute of Justice).
- **Collaborative Research: D-ISN: Financial and Network Disruptions in Counterfeit and Illegal Medicines Trade (FIND-M).** Nikos Passas, Principal Investigator, CPL: \$500,000 (Funded by the National Science Foundation).
- **The Sources and Consequences of Prison Violence.** Natasha Frost, Principal Investigator, CRL: \$433,026 (Subcontract from UC-Irvine, Funded by Arnold Ventures).
- **Navigating Mainstream Institutions and Non-Traditional Alternatives Post-Release.** Megan Denver, Principal Investigator, CRL: \$297,178. (Funded by the National Science Foundation).
- **"All reentry is local": Evaluating a Strategy to Reenter State Prisoners through Local Correctional Systems.** Megan Denver, Principal Investigator, CRL: \$249,766.
- **2022 Shannon CSI Statewide Research Partner.** Megan Denver, Principal Investigator: \$239,942 (Funded by Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety).
- **Labor Trafficking in Construction and Hospitality: Analyzing Victim Recruitment, Exploitation, and Service Needs to Identify Strategies for Prevention and Intervention.** Amy Farrell, Principal Investigator, VJRL: \$110,000 (Subcontract from RTI, Funded by National Institute of Justice).
- **Analytical Assistance to the Paterson Coalition for Opioid Response and Assessment.** Eric Piza, Principal Investigator: \$68,973. (Subcontract from the Research Foundation, Funded by the City of Patterson).
- **The Emergence and Diffusion of Illicit Virtual Goods Across the International Ecosystem.** Ekaterina Botchkovar, Principal Investigator, CPL. (Subcontract from Georgia State University, Funded by Department of Homeland Security).
- **FY23 LARP: Reducing Boston Gang Violence through Prevention.** Megan Denver, Principal Investigator: \$61,813. (Funded by Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety).
- **Human Trafficking Grant: Improving Outcomes for child & Youth Victims of Human Trafficking.** Amy Farrell, Principal Investigator: \$36,156. (Funded by Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety).



# Engagement

*CRJ Co-Directors Natasha Frost and Carlos Cuevas pose with Anthony Peguero and Bart Baily, visiting scholars who presented during CRJ launch week*



## **CRJ Launch Week: January 16-20, 2023**

Although CRJ's labs were officially established in July 2022 and the website debuted in October 2022, the Center's official launch was celebrated with a series of launch week events during the week of January 16, immediately following the MLK Jr. Holiday. Wednesday January 18, Dr. Anthony Peguero, Arizona State University, gave a well-received talk titled *School Safety, Education, and Racial Equity*. On Thursday, January 19, Bart Baily, Director of Violence Prevention for the New York City Board of Correction, gave a keynote address titled "Improving Serious Injury Tracking and Reporting in New York City Jails" (Riker's Island). Both of these talks were attended by CSSH faculty, staff and students along with members of the Community Advisory Board.

## **Engagement with the CRJ Community Advisory Board (CAB)**

The CRJ also partners with the Community Advisory Board (CAB), a unique function of the Center on Crime, Race, and Justice. The CAB consists of prestigious local community practitioners with expertise in various areas of community practice, including criminal justice, education, workforce development, advocacy and youth development. From September 2022 through Spring 2023, the CAB met monthly with members of CRJ's research teams, participating in the planning and co-sponsoring of several CRJ events and providing input on new research initiatives and projects. As part of these meetings, the CRJ has also shared information about SCCJ's co-op program and opportunities to include students in the work of CRJCAB members. The CAB also successfully recruited and oriented three new members to its membership, welcoming Ms. Charlene Luma, LICSW, Chief of the Victim Witness Assistance Department, Suffolk County DA's Office; Mr. David Mayo, Director of the Office of Returning Citizens, City of Boston; and Vonnessa Goode-Knight, Executive Director of Project HOPE.

This year, the CAB has continued to build relationships and capacity for collaborative work among researchers and community members. In January 2023, the CRJ Leadership Team convened a meeting between CAB members and CRJ Lab Directors to discuss upcoming NIJ grant solicitations and potential areas of research partnership opportunities. As a part of this effort, smaller CRJ Lab group meetings with lab directors and CAB members were convened to explore potential research partnership on areas of interest to CAB members and best practices for integrating CRJCAB input into the research and grant application process at CRJ.

The CAB hosted several events in 2022 to strengthen CRJ's ties to the Boston community and partners. On October 1st, Mr. Sam Williams (Executive Director of Concord Prison Outreach and Co-Director of the CRJCAB) led newly hired SCCJ faculty, newly recruited CAB members, SCCJ graduate students and the CRJ leadership team on a Black Boston Community Exploration Tour. The purpose of the tour was to provide an activity for new SCJ faculty, graduate students, and CAB members to form new relationships and offer a historical and cultural overview of Boston's communities.

# Impact

## Race and Community Dialogue Series

In collaboration with the SCCJ and CRJCAB, the CRJ co-hosted a series of discussions with broader communities. Each of these events were dialogues (as opposed to presentations) that engaged members of the Community Advisory Board and individuals representing additional community members. All events in the dialogue series are offered in a live-stream format to encourage broader participation.

The 2022-2023 Race and Community Dialogue Series included dialogues on:

- “Trauma Informed Services within the Boston Public Schools” (November 2022)
- In January, the CRJ co-sponsored 'A Complex Community Conversation on Tyre Nichols: Say His Name' with the Law School
- “A Complex Community Conversation on Tyre Nichols: Examining Community Trauma and Mental Health,” (February 2023) **178 virtual attendees**
- “CRJ Re-Entry Forum: Post Incarceration Challenges in the 21st Century,” (April 2023)

Each of these events featured CRJ faculty, CAB members, and individuals from external organizations (see flyers for each of these events in the Appendices).

## Schulman Family Distinguished Lecture

Prior to it’s official launch, and coinciding with the soft launch of the CRJ website, CRJ co-hosted the Fifth Annual Schulman Family Distinguished Lecture featuring Dr. Katheryn Russell Brown (University of Florida) who offered comments on Florida's “Stop Woke Act.” As part of her visit, Dr. Russell Brown participated in a graduate student breakfast and CRJCAB luncheon hosted by one of CRJCAB’s agency partners. The Schulman Lecture was run in a hybrid format, and very well attended, with over 100 in person and virtual participants.

## NIJ Research Conference

In May 2023, five CRJ faculty members (Cuevas, Denver, Farrell, Frost, and Piza) presented at the National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ) National Research Conference. The conference, held between May 23 and May 25, 2023, featured NIJ grantees presenting on their research findings with an emphasis on the relevance of those findings to policy and practice.

*Pictured from left to right: Amy Farrell, Megan Denver, Natasha Frost, Carlos Cuevas and Eric Piza.*



# *Impact Continued...*

## **Research Presentations for Broader Audiences**

Eric Piza (Crime Prevention Lab) gave a presentation titled “Placed-Based Problem Solving for Crime Prevention: The Current Evidence and Important Next Steps” at the Boston Mayor’s Office’s Practicum for Partnership-Based Violence Reduction on April 4th.

Natasha Frost (CJR co-director, Corrections and Reentry Lab) presented at the annual conference of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) in September 2022.

## **Multigenerational Research Teams**

Multigenerational research teams have long been utilized by faculty directing the CRJ labs, and a willingness to develop multi-generational research teams is a prerequisite for affiliating with one of the labs. Megan Denver (CRL) was awarded a Summer 2023 Multigenerational Research Team Stipended Graduate Assistantship (SGA).

Across the labs of CRJ there are 21 doctoral students, 4 masters students, and 15 undergraduate students actively engaged in one or more research projects. All of the labs within CRJ have biweekly or monthly lab meetings in addition to multigenerational team project meetings for individual projects.

The CRJ site hosts a research inquiry submission form for students interested in joining the CRJ. Since its creation in October 2023, the form has been filled out and submitted by 47 students. We invite students interested in research opportunities to join one or more of the lab’s meetings, which are a key mechanism through which we recruit onto funded projects.

## **2023 Undergraduate and Graduate Summer Research Fellowships**

The Center hosts a summer research fellowship for undergraduate and masters level students. This year the fellowship involves four CRJ fellows (3 undergraduate and 1 masters) working on research projects within one of the labs and collectively on a collaborative project with the Florida ACLU, examining complaints by Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees in Florida correctional facilities. Their work will allow the ACLU to better understand the nature of these detention complaints. In addition, students are also assigned to projects with CRJ faculty to collaborate on ongoing research within the Center.



# Goals

## One Year Goals

1. Officially launch the Crime Prevention Lab and bring additional faculty into the work of the labs and the center.
2. Continue to develop centralized resources to streamline work of faculty and the labs.
3. Submit funding proposals to various federal and private funding agencies.

## Five Year Goals

1. Further grow and develop the newer Labs within the Center, the CPL and RJL.
2. Continue to diversify projects and funding sources within the center to include other federal agencies as well as private foundations funding
3. Bring additional SCCJ and outside faculty into the Center to grow and diversify the research and mentoring opportunities within the Center.



*Natasha Frost, Co-Director of the Center on Crime, Race, and Justice, poses with Anthony Peguero*

# Appendices

- Appendix A. Members of leadership
- Appendix B. Lists of faculty, students, staff, internal and external partners involved
- Appendix C. Advisory Council/Advisory Board members
- Links to event brochures, images, webpages/websites

## Appendix A. Members of CRJ Leadership

### Center Leadership

**Carlos Cuevas**, Co-Director of the Center on Crime, Race, and Justice  
**Natasha Frost**, Co-Director of the Center on Crime, Race, and Justice  
**Lisa Laguerre**, Director of Community Relations, Center on Crime, Race, and Justice

### Lab Directors

**Carlos Cuevas**, Co-Director of the Violence and Justice Research Lab  
**Kevin Drakulich**, Director of the Race and Justice Lab  
**Amy Farrell**, Co-Director of the Violence and Justice Research Lab  
**Natasha Frost**, Director of Corrections and Reentry Lab  
**Eric Piza**, Co-Director of the Crime Prevention Lab  
**Brandon Welsh**, Co-Director of the Crime Prevention Lab

### CRJ Affiliated Staff

**Tina Di Blasi**, Finance & Administration Manager  
**Lisa Laguerre**, Director of Community Relations, Center on Crime, Race, and Justice  
**Rachel San Giacomo**, Marketing & Communications Specialist

## Appendix B. Center on Crime, Race, and Justice - Faculty, Staff, Students, and External Partners

### Community Advisory Board

- **Maddrey Goode**, Co-Director - Community Advisory Board; Director, Mass Hire, Boston Career Center
- **Samuel Williams**, Co-Director of the Community Advisory Board; Executive Director, Concord Prison Outreach Inc.
- **Mia Alvarado**, Executive Director, Roxbury Youthworks, Inc
- **Olinka Briceno**, Student Services Coordinator, Boston Public Schools
- **Lanita Cullinane**, Superintendent, Bureau of Field Services, Boston Police Department
- **Harry Harding**, Vice President of Innovation & Strategic Partnerships, Children's Services of Roxbury
- **Charlene Luma**, Chief of Staff at Suffolk County District Attorney's Office
- **Lucinda Mills**, Violence Prevention Specialist, Boston Public Schools
- **Jeffrey Richards**, Attorney in Charge, Youth Advocacy Division
- **William Rodriguez**, Professor at Boston University

### Corrections and Reentry Lab

- **Natasha Frost**, Associate Dean of Research; Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Patrice Collins**, Assistant Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Cultures, Societies and Global Studies
- **Megan Denver**, Assistant Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Simon Singer**, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Abigail Ballou**, Doctoral Student
- **Kayla Bates**, Doctoral Student
- **Happiness Daniel**, Doctoral Student
- **Cassie DiBenedetti**, Doctoral Student
- **Ayanna Miller-Smith**, Doctoral Student
- **Oscar Navarro**, Doctoral Student
- **Heather Paterson**, Doctoral Student
- **Cassidy Pereira**, Doctoral Student
- **Daniel Trovato**, Doctoral Student
- **Ali Eftekhary**, Masters Student
- **Natalie Singal**, Masters Student
- **Lily Truppi**, Masters Student
- **Jennie Wang**, Masters Student
- **Kyung-A Hong**, Undergraduate Student
- **Noelle Furnanz**, Undergraduate Student
- **Rina Gelman**, Undergraduate Student
- **Keneya Onuaguluchi**, Undergraduate Student
- **Juliette Piovoso**, Undergraduate Student

### Crime Prevention Lab

- **Eric Piza**, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Director of Crime Analysis Initiatives
- **Brandon Welsh**, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice; Director, Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study
- **Ayanna Miller-Smith**, Doctoral Student
- **Heather Paterson**, Doctoral Student
- **Savannah Reid**, Doctoral Student

### Race and Justice Lab

- **Kevin Drakulich**, Associate Director and Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice , Director of the Race and Justice Lab
- **Patrice Collins**, Assistant Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Africana Studies
- **Ermus St. Louis**, Assistant Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Brandon Craig**, Doctoral Student
- **Happiness Daniel**, Doctoral Student
- **Christian Law**, Doctoral Student
- **Jillian Reeves**, Doctoral Student
- **Jada Vaughan**, Doctoral Student
- **Shania Hernandez Phillip**, Undergraduate Student
- **Gabrielle Kassabian**, Undergraduate Student

## Violence and Justice Research Lab

- **Carlos Cuevas**, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice; Co-Director of the Violence and Justice Research Lab
- **Amy Farrell**, Director and Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice; Co-Director of the Violence and Justice Research Lab
- **Ekaterina Botchkovar**, Undergraduate Program Director; Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Ineke Marshall**, Professor of Sociology and Criminology and Criminal Justice
- **Stephen Abeyta**, Doctoral Student
- **Chase Childress**, Doctoral Student
- **Callie Hansson**, Doctoral Student
- **Matthew Kafafian**, Doctoral Student
- **Sarah Lockwood**, Doctoral Student
- **Jada Vaughan**, Doctoral Student
- **Amelia Wagner**, Doctoral Student
- **Candi Willis-deJesus**, Doctoral Student
- **Rackell Carrasco**, Undergraduate Student
- **Sophia Castillo**, Undergraduate Student
- **Jordan Hardenburgh**, Undergraduate Student
- **Julia Horan**, Undergraduate Student
- **Connor Johnson**, Undergraduate Student
- **Caroline Salemy**, Undergraduate Student
- **Mara Steed**, Undergraduate Student
- **Dominic Nishigaya**, Undergraduate Student



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