ideas⁴² DATA COLLABORATIVE FOR JUSTICE AT JOHN JAY COLLEGE

Webinar | Showing Up: Strategies to Increase Court Attendance and Limit Pretrial Detention

Krystal Rodriguez (*moderator*)

Policy Director, Data Collaborative for Justice

Krystal is Policy Director for the Data Collaborative for Justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Focusing on the criminal legal system and the overuse of jails, she develops policy recommendations to support evidence-based criminal justice reforms and provides legal analysis and interpretation to inform DCJ's research. She received her Juris Doctorate from the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law. She previously served as the Director of Law and Justice Policy, Jail Reform at the Center for Court Innovation, where she focused on the harms caused by the jails in New York City. Her work included planning and piloting initiatives to reduce jail populations and divert individuals away from pretrial detention, including supporting the expansion of NYC's supervised release program. She also offered training and technical assistance to municipalities throughout the country seeking to institute reforms. Krystal draws on her years as a public defender with Brooklyn Defender Services, where she represented clients charged with misdemeanor and felony matters, from arraignment to disposition. During law school, she represented non-citizen clients in deportation proceedings, and advised on law enforcement interactions as a part of Main Street Legal Services and CLEAR Project. She also served on the Law Review Editorial Board.

Krystal offers expertise on bail reform efforts, the criminal legal system, and court practices and policies.

Alissa Fishbane

Managing Director, ideas42

As Managing Director at ideas42, Alissa leads the Safety and Justice portfolio to design, test, and scale behaviorally informed interventions that improve outcomes and wellbeing across communities affected by the legal system. Most recently she founded (Un)warranted, an initiative to improve court appearance and court date communications, thereby increasing equitable justice and reducing warrants and jail. Alissa has also led work to increase fairness in bail determinations, improve ability-to-pay systems, reduce violence within communities, and decrease recidivism. Her work has been published in Science and featured in NPR, Fast Company, Forbes, and Bloomberg, among other publications. Alissa served on the World Economic Forum Global Future Council on Behavioral Science and is an affiliate for the Nudge4 Solutions Lab at the University of Virginia. Alissa graduated with honors in Political Economy from the University of California, Berkeley, and holds a Master's degree in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Samantha Hammer

Principal Behavioral Designer, ideas42

Samantha manages Safety and Justice research and design projects at ideas42, partnering with agencies across the country to develop behaviorally-informed approaches to challenges like improving appearance rates, optimizing ability to pay systems, increasing client success on probation, and streamlining early probation termination. She leverages experience conducting qualitative and service design research with public and nonprofit partners in the US and internationally, working across the domains of criminal legal system reform, civic participation, displacement and migration, and public health. Previously, she was the research manager for the social impact consultancy Reboot, where she collaborated with a range of clients including the NYC Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, USAID, UNICEF, and Mercy Corps. Prior to that, she managed research and community development projects advocating for women's rights in Kosovo, Georgia, and Guatemala. Samantha holds a Master's degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and an undergraduate degree from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Karen Kane

Director, Court Research, [New York State Office of Court Administration](#)

After working as a researcher/Director of Research for the New York State Defender's Association and the Capital Data Manager for the New York State Capital Defender Office, Karen Kane began her 18+ year career with the NYS Unified Court System's Office of Court Research, serving in several management roles and then becoming the Director of the Unit in 2018. As Director of Court Research, Karen's portfolio includes overseeing the Court Research Data Team, the Office of Jury Support (OJS), the Criminal Disposition Reporting (CDR) Unit and the Criminal History Records Search (CHRS) Unit.

Karen has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice and Sociology from the State University of New York at Albany and a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice from the University of Albany's Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy.

Hon. Courtney Wachal

Judge, Kansas City Municipal Division

Courtney began her legal career in the Missouri State Public Defender System. She then served as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Kansas City and also served as the mental health court prosecutor for the municipal court. Courtney was then appointed by the Mayor and City Council to serve as Kansas City Municipal Court Judge in Division 203, which oversees all domestic violence cases filed in the court. As part of her commitment to offender accountability and victim safety, she initiated the compliance docket – a specialized supervised probation docket for high risk offenders.

Courtney became presiding judge of the Kansas City Municipal Court drug court program and shortly initiated the Kansas City Municipal Court domestic violence drug court docket, addressing high risk domestic violence offenders with substance abuse disorders. In November 2022, Courtney was appointed presiding judge of the Kansas City Municipal Court and is working to address accessibility in the Courts through walk-in dockets.

Courtney has Bachelor of Arts degrees in English, Psychology, and Political Science from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. She earned her law degree from the University of Kansas.

Jemia Steele

Senior Public Defender, Missouri State Public Defender

Jemia is from St. Louis, MO. She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from Temple University and obtained her J.D. from Saint Louis University School of Law. She has been an attorney with the Missouri State Public Defender system for over 14 years. As a Senior Public Defender, she balances client advocacy while maintaining a high caseload of serious, complex cases. She has first chaired several criminal jury trials and second chaired dozens of jury trials. When COVID-19 hit the St. Louis region; it brought the criminal justice system to a complete halt. Many clients were confused on how to attend virtual court or were unable due to technology-related barriers. Seeing the need of clients to be re-engaged with the criminal justice system to dispose of their cases, the Clayton MSPD office along with St. Louis County Libraries, MacArthur Foundation Safety + Justice Challenge and The Bail Project developed the Tap-In-Center. Jemia helps assist clients with getting their warrants recalled and obtaining a new court date.