ABOUT THE CENTER

Founded in January 2018, the Center for Justice Research is a research center devoted to data-driven solutions for an equitable criminal justice system. The primary focus is to produce innovative solutions to local criminal justice reform efforts by utilizing an experienced research collective. Ultimately, ensuring that our results are disseminated to key policy makers, justice-oriented decision-makers and community stakeholders. We stand as the only university level criminal justice research center situated on the campus of a historically black college or university. By bringing together a diverse set of expertise with the single goal of improving the criminal justice system, our projects support the multi-partisan push towards criminal justice reform.

In effect, we seek to serve as a Center focused on:

ADVANCING POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

DETERMINING THE INFLUENCE OF PREDICTIVE BIAS

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PROSECUTORIAL DECISION-MAKING
“Locally criminal reform efforts have not had the benefit of academic research to provide the baseline and ongoing data collection and analysis necessary to evaluate their success or failure. By focusing on sound research practices pre- and post-reform, Center for Justice Research will help elected officials like me assess our progress.”
~ Kim Ogg, Harris County District Attorney

“For years, Texas Southern has been a leader in research and problem solving in our under-served communities.”
~ Sheila Jackson Lee, Member of Congress
OUR MISSION
To produce interdisciplinary criminal justice research that utilizes advanced and innovative methodological approaches to dismantle justice-oriented barriers through non-partisan, culturally responsive research.

OUR VISION
An equitable criminal justice system for members of resilient communities through the production of impartial research and data-driven solutions.

OUR key to SUCCESS
With a desire to be the best the personal motivation

"nothing is wrong with"

Rewards for both you and the country will be far greater.

Selfless motivation for the personal motivation into a mask.
ADVANCING POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS
Communities rely on police departments to "protect and serve", and the police, in turn, rely on community support and cooperation. However, this relationship is not always harmonious. Given the strained relationship between the police and the minority community, coupled with the subjective reality of the HBCU culture, it is evident that we are in a unique position to address this problem.

Our policing projects are designed to provide data-driven solutions to improve community trust, transparency and accountability. Previous research has demonstrated that improving police-community relations, along with reducing excessive surveillance and enforcement practices, can strengthen perceptions of legitimacy and reduce mass incarceration.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PROSECUTORIAL DECISION MAKING
The Center for Justice Research, recognizing the need for scientific recommendations for the reduction of mass incarceration, will produce practically relevant criminal justice science to produce high-impact empirical analyses and innovative policy solutions. Research has shown that the most under-examined, yet most powerful player, in this current criminal justice crisis is the district attorney/prosecutor. Subsequently, you will find the research projects focused on prosecutorial actions to end mass incarceration, as they are uniquely situated to do so because of their wide ranging discretion and power.

DETERMINING THE INFLUENCE OF PREDICTIVE BIAS
Across the country, criminal justice institutions have turned to a data-driven movement to drive down inequities, squelch rising prison populations, reduce recidivism, save billions of dollars and reduce the crime rate. The criminal justice system has begun to utilize predictive assessments to allocate resources to likely crime hot spots and to predict the likelihood of re-offending.

Reports have shown that the underlying algorithms of the predictive assessments are hampered by weak measures of predictive equity and bias. As such, our risk assessment projects focus on determining predictive bias and developing a racially/ethnically equitable predictive instrument.
PRETRIAL DISPARITIES

There has been no shortage of discourse surrounding racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system. In fact, the need to address these inequities have emerged as a central tenet of most viable criminal justice reform efforts. However, missing from the ongoing dialogue concerning race, crime, and justice, are attempts to evolve from the mere documentation of disparity’s presence to action through empirically informed policy recommendations, program development and intervention designs. This report represents one such localized movement toward action in Houston, Texas, the third largest criminal justice system in the nation, whereby we examine those behavioral characteristics and systematic responses that underlie the state of racial/ethnic disparities in the local jail system.
TEXAS RE-ENTRY SERVICES: IMPROVING ACCESS FOR SUCCESSFUL RETURNS TO THE COMMUNITY

After several conversations with local community leaders, the justice-involved, and returning citizens, it became clear that there was no on-line portal available to identify Texas re-entry services. As full re-acclimation into society should be a guaranteed right after serving a debt to society, the Texas Southern University Center for Justice Research, with the support of January Advisors, created this Re-Entry Dashboard. Compiling over 4,600 Texas re-entry services improves access to rehabilitative services for the thousands of returning citizens, their families and service providers in the name of criminal desistance and improved public safety.
Hope Richard is the Administrative Assistant for the Center for Justice Research.

Ambery Lype is the Outreach Communications Coordinator for the Center for Justice Research.

Howard Henderson, PhD, is the Founding Director of the Center for Justice Research and Professor of Justice Administration in the Barbara Jordan – Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs.

Jennifer Wyatt Bourgeois is a graduate research fellow at the Center for Justice Research. She has been selected to present at the 71st Annual Academic Scientific Meeting held by the American Academy of Forensic Scientist in Baltimore, Maryland February 18, 2019. Her focus will be The Impact of Forensic Evidence on Drug-Related Offense Sentencing Outcomes. Only a portion of the total papers submitted are accepted for presentation; therefore, this is an achievement for the Center for Justice Research.

David Baker, PhD, is a fellow in the Center for Justice Research at Texas Southern University and an associate professor with the Department of Administration of Justice and Interim Chair in the Barbara Jordan – Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs at Texas Southern University.

Declan Ihekwoaba Onwudiwe, PhD, is a professor of Administration of Justice in the Barbara Jordan - Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs and a fellow in the Center for Justice Research.

Jasmine M. Drake, PhD, is a fellow in the Center for Justice Research, an assistant professor and the Graduate Program Director in the Administration of Justice Department in the School of Public Affairs at Texas Southern University.

Faculty Research Fellows
Arron Corey Clay is a graduate research fellow in the Center for Justice Research. His research interest includes police violence, probation, and the criminalization of marijuana.

Jennifer Wyatt Bourgeois is a graduate research fellow at the Center for Justice Research. Her research focuses on parental incarceration and disparities in the criminal justice system.

Jeslyn Huynh is a graduate research fellow at the Center for Justice Research. Her main research interests are in the examination of racial disparities and re-entry dashboard for returned citizens and racial disparities by offense.

Melissa Kwende is a graduate research fellow in the Center for Justice Research. Her work focuses on racial disparities and the sociocultural nuances in the criminal justice systems of African nations.

Seneca Dunmore is an intern with the Center for Justice Research. Her research focuses on the prison industrial complex and the school-to-prison pipeline.

Angelica Olunkwa is an undergraduate research fellow at the Center for Justice Research. She is a Junior majoring in the Administration of Justice.
Leah Johnson-Register is an affiliated graduate research fellow. Her work focuses on race, gender, crime and the media.

Mi Johnson-Register is an affiliated graduate research fellow. His work examines race, gender, class, mental health, and crime.

Edidiong Mendie is an affiliated graduate research fellow. Her work examines race, gender, class, mental health, and crime.

Abiodum Raufu is an affiliated graduate research fellow. His work focuses on examining officer warnings, citations, and arrests.

Devonte White is an affiliated graduate research fellow. His research examines the violent behavior among athletes.

AFFILIATED RESEARCH FELLOWS

Dr. Jasmine Drake is a fellow at the Center for Justice Research, and she currently serves as a Governor-appointed Commissioner for the Texas Forensic Science Commission. The Commission is required to investigate allegations of professional negligence or professional misconduct that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis conducted by an accredited laboratory. The Legislature also requires the Commission to develop and implement a reporting system through which accredited laboratories may report professional negligence or misconduct.
“Working at the Center for Justice Research is one of the most educative experiences of my life. I have learned the value of research and objectivity. I am surrounded by encouraging and supportive colleagues. I quite enjoy being a Research Fellow at the Center because it is the ideal environment for me to work, learn and grow as a researcher.”
~ Melissa Kwende
Interdisciplinary, Evidence-Based Approach to Criminal Justice Reform

Minority Student Research Matriculation Program

Research Focused on Solutions to Police-Community Relations, Algorithmic Bias and Mass Incarceration

Encouraging Evidence-Based Policy Solutions and Criminal Justice Reporting

Foster Greater Criminal Justice Intellectual Environment at HBCU’s

Web Presence for HBCU Criminal Justice Research-Based Problem Identification and Solutions

US taxpayers pay $69 billion each year to maintain the prison system

1 in 15 black men is behind bars

1 in 13 African Americans are unable to vote due to laws that deny the right to vote to ex-felons

Arrest of blacks results on drug charges are 2.8 to 5.5 times higher than are white adults, despite similar use rates.
“The Center for Justice Research has been a significant milestone in my journey as a doctoral student. The CJR provides a research environment that extends beyond the traditional classroom experience and encourages an applied research approach. By working on various projects, I have evolved as a researcher by refining my writing and statistical analysis skills. Additionally, as a graduate research fellow, I have been provided opportunities to enhance professionally by presenting research at various local and national conferences. I truly appreciate the time and effort the CJR has invested in me as I continue to develop as a researcher and continue to expand my knowledge.”

~ Jennifer Wyatt Bourgeois

“The Center for Justice Research provides me with a perfect combination of independence and support. My mentors match my research interests and provide various opportunities while allowing me to construct my own distinctiveness in the field. The center enables an environment that is engaging, encouraging and most importantly, one that is advantageous to success after my Ph.D. is completed.”

~ Corey Clay