

# **BEYOND THE BARS**

Connecting The Struggles



**Saturday, March 5, 2016  
Columbia School of Social Work**

**A Community Collaborative Event**

# Conference Schedule

## **MARCH 4TH, 2016**

**FRIDAY NIGHT KICK-OFF EVENT** 7:30-9:30pm

**Angela Davis**

Virtual remarks from **Mumia Abu-Jamal** and **Alicia Garza**

Conversation on Connecting the Struggles  
with **Cory Greene, Abraham Paulos, Delaine Powerful** and  
**Danielle Sered**, moderated by **Michelle Fine**

Performances from **Impact Repertory Theatre** and  
the **Theater for Social Change**

Hosted by **Malik Yoba**

## **SATURDAY, MARCH 5TH, 2016**

### **CONNECTING THE STRUGGLES**

Morning Plenaries and Afternoon Panels

#### **SATURDAY MORNING PLENARIES**

**Check In:** 9:00am - 10:00am

**Plenary #1:** 10:00am - 11:30pm

The Roots of Mass Incarceration and the History of Resistance to It

**Plenary #2:** 11:45 - 1:15

Challenging Reform Efforts that Exclude People  
Convicted of Violent Offenses

**LUNCH/TABLING** 1:15 - 2:15pm (Lunch will be served on a first-come basis)

#### **AFTERNOON PANELS**

**Block #1:** 2:15 - 3:45pm

**Block #2:** 4:00 - 5:30pm

## **SUNDAY, MARCH 6TH, 2016**

**BUILDING THE GRASSROOTS** Organizing Workshops

11:30 - 5:30 pm

## **PLENARY 1**

**10:00 - 11:30 am**

### **The Roots of Mass Incarceration and the History of Resistance to It (Room 311/312)**

This plenary session will explore the question of how we ended up with a system of mass incarceration; what are its roots. It will examine the history of resistance to this system including from people inside prison and from those who have come home. It will look at the current struggles in the communities led by younger people and their relationship to the policies and practices of mass incarceration.

#### **Panelists**

**Khalil Gibran Muhammad**, Director, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

**Angela Davis**, Activist, Scholar and Writer

**Dan Berger**, Assistant Professor, University of Washington at Bothell

**Laura Whitehorn**, Former Political Prisoner/Organizer, Release Aging People in Prison/RAPP

**Page May**, Assata's Daughters

**Moderator: Barbara Ransby**, Professor and Director of the Social Justice Initiative at the University of Illinois Chicago

## **PLENARY 2**

**11:45 am - 1:15 pm**

### **Challenging Reform Efforts that Exclude People Convicted of Violent Offenses (Room 311/312)**

Policies and practices in the criminal justice system usually include advocating to let those with non-violent crimes out of prison while keeping those with violent crimes in. This plenary will challenge the exclusion of people convicted of violent offenses in decarceration strategies, and examine alternative approaches.

#### **Panelists**

**Bernardine Dohrn**, Activist, Academic and Children's and Women's Rights Advocate, Founder, Children & Family Justice Center at Northwestern Univ. School of Law

**Marc Mauer**, Executive Director, The Sentencing Project

**Mujahid Farid**, Director, Release Aging People in Prison

**John Valverde**, Executive Vice President for Program Operations, The Osborne Association

**Moderator: Soffiyah Elijah**, Executive Director, Correctional Association of New York

## **AFTERNOON PANELS: BLOCK 1**

2:15 – 3:45 pm

### **Deconstructing the Calls to End Mass Incarceration: Examining Solutions, Strategies, Values, and Visions (Room 311/312)**

Calls to end mass incarceration are coming from every part of the political spectrum. This session will analyze the differences among these calls and examine the various strategies that are being put forth to change the criminal justice system. The panelists will speak to issues of mass criminalization, prison abolition, and restorative practices; in addition panelists will address the role of women in the prison abolition strategy and the role of the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated in ending mass incarceration. The session will address the questions; can we eliminate mass incarceration without challenging capitalism, racism and patriarchy?

#### **Panelists**

Glenn Martin, Founder and President, JustLeadership USA

Ruthie Gilmore, Professor of Geography, CUNY Graduate Center

Gina Dent, Associate Professor, University of California Santa Cruz

Bryant Brown, Black Youth Project 100

*Moderator:* Vivian Nixon, Executive Director, College and Community Fellowship

### **Youth Activism: Mobilizing Communities for Social Change (Room C03)**

Youth voices are often ignored or silenced within movements, so young people are creating movements of their own. This session will bring together various groups of high school students serving as activists in their schools and communities to address issues that are directly and indirectly linked to mass incarceration. This panel will examine the impact that youth organizing is having on personal, community, and systematic levels.

#### **Panelists**

SOUL Sisters

Liberation Program/Brotherhood Sister Sol

buildOn

Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (RAPP)

*Moderators:* Albery Abreu, Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (RAPP) and Men of Strength (MOST); Chandeeah Davis, Youth Development Specialist, STEPS to End Family Violence – Moderator

### **Shaping Public Opinion: The Role of Journalism and Media in Defining Justice (Room C05)**

This session will bring together journalists who cover the criminal justice system to examine both how journalism has encouraged policies that support mass incarceration and how journalism has made contributions towards change. Panelists will discuss the challenges they each face in deciding what to write about, and how they choose frameworks, narratives and language in their work.

## **Panelists**

Jesse Wegman, Editorial Board, New York Times

Mychal Denzel Smith, Knobler Fellow, The Nation Institute, Contributing Writer, The Nation and Author of Invisible Man, Got the Whole World Watching: A Young Black Man's Education

Vikki Law, Freelance Journalist and Author of Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women

Raven Rakia, Journalist, Grist.org

*Moderator:* Frances Negron-Muntaner, Associate Professor, Columbia University, Director of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race at Columbia University

## **Mental Health: Across the Justice Continuum (Room 405)**

Prisons and jails are frequently referred to as “the new mental health institutions.” People with mental health issues are involved at each stage of the criminal justice system. This session will look at national efforts to divert people with mental health problems from entering the criminal justice system; it will review mental health conditions and release planning in Rikers Island and in the New York State prison system. It will discuss ongoing efforts to improve the situation for those suffering from mental illness and ask what does it mean to see mental health as a public health issue and to not criminalize those who are dealing with mental health problems.

## **Panelists**

David Cloud, Senior Program Associate, Substance Use and Mental Health Program, Vera Institute of Justice

Alex Abell, Criminal Justice Advocate, Mental Health Project, the Urban Justice Center

Five Mualimm-Ak, Director, Harlem Restoration Project

Jack Beck, Director, Prison Visiting Project, Correctional Association of New York

*Moderator:* Cindy Rodriguez, Urban Policy Reporter, New York Public Radio -

## **Reducing the Number of People Incarcerated: Exploring Mechanisms and Strategies for Release (Room 406)**

This session will examine concrete mechanisms and strategies for reducing the numbers of people who are incarcerated. It will discuss federal pardons and clemencies and New York State parole and clemencies, compassionate release, and bail reform. Panelists will discuss the obstacles to using these existing mechanisms and strategies for getting them used; panelists will also discuss broader courses of action for reducing the numbers of people who are incarcerated.

## **Panelists**

Nkechi Taifa, Advocacy Director, Criminal Justice for Open Society Foundations

Peter Goldberg, Executive Director, Brooklyn Bail Fund

Mujahid Farid, Director, Release Aging People in Prison

Ronald Simpson-Bey, Alumni Associate, JustLeadershipUSA

*Moderator:* Brett Dignam, Clinical Professor of Law, Morningside Heights Legal Services, Inc., Columbia Law School

## **Ending State Violence Among Police and Corrections: Looking at Solutions (Room 305)**

In recent years there have been increasing calls for an end to state violence and accountability for those who have enacted the violence. State sanctioned violence is enacted in the name of public safety, with little consequence or attention to justice, accountability and actual safety. This panel will examine several forms of state violence including police violence, violence inside prisons/jails, and the death penalty, and will ask the following questions. What can accountability for state violence look like? What can be done both in the short term to decrease state violence and in the long term to end state violence?

### **Panelists**

**Tyrrell Muhammad**, Project Associate, Prisoners Visiting Project, **Russell Neufeld**, Board of Directors, Witness To Innocence

**Dr. Divine Pryor**, Executive Director, Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions  
**Page May**, Assata's Daughters

**Moderator: Scott Paltrowitz**, Associate Director, Prison Visiting Project, Correctional Association of New York

## **Equitable Access to Education Across the Carceral Continuum (Room C05)**

The education panel will embody the lack of educational opportunities that continues to evade communities who are directly affected by mass incarceration. The panel will highlight what government initiatives, nonprofit agencies, and academia are doing to bridge the gap for those who are being excluded from educational opportunities. Lastly, the panelists will describe the different campaigns and volunteer opportunities to support these efforts.

### **Panelists**

**Jordan Stockdale**, Program Director of School Climate Initiatives, Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice

**Willie Trent**, Member, Education from the Inside Out Coalition

**Sean Pica**, Director, Hudson Link

**Sean Addie**, Director, Office of Correctional Education

**Moderator: Bianca Van Heydorn**, Director of Educational Initiatives, Prisoner Reentry Institute at John Jay College

## **Examining Surveillance and Technology in the Struggles for Justice (Room 404)**

This session explores how police, prosecutors and courts use surveillance technologies. These include social media, body cameras and internal databases and alert systems. We discuss the surveillance of people both under and outside of court supervision, videoing of police/civilian interaction, and efforts to predict and monitor illegal activity. We also consider surveillance as an alternative to incarceration. The session asks: does the increased use of surveillance increase public safety? Does it improve or worsen the discretion of law enforcement? What are its social costs? What kinds of police/community relationships and understandings come about? What else

might be possible? The session will also discuss the ways in which communities use surveillance technology to address violence perpetrated both by police officers and by community members.

### **Panelists**

**Desmond Patton**, Assistant Professor, Columbia University School of Social Work  
**Taylornn Murphy**, Founder, Tayshana Chicken Murphy Foundation, Inc.

**Reverend Dr. Vernon B. Williams**, Human Race

**Michael Sisitzky**, Policy Counsel, New York Civil Liberties Union

**Moderator: Jeffrey Lane**, Assistant Professor, Rutgers University, School of Communication and Information

## **AFTERNOON PANELS: BLOCK 2**

**4:00 – 5:30 pm**

### **Electoral Politics and Legislative Reform: What's Possible?** *(Room C03)*

This session will examine the current landscape of electoral politics and legislative reform in the efforts to end mass incarceration and ask what is possible? This will include an examination of the bipartisan efforts for change, current legislative efforts, a discussion of the 2016 presidential election and its relation to the movement as well as a look at how grassroots activism intersects with political efforts for reform.

### **Panelists**

**Velmanette Montgomery**, New York State Senator, District 25

**Kassandra Frederique**, State Director, New York, Drug Policy Alliance

**Hakeem Jeffries**, United States Congressman, 8th District of New York

**Bryan Epps**, Executive Director, The Shabazz Center

**Eddie Rosario**, Advocate / Activist / Writer

**Moderator: Kyung Ji Rhee**, Juvenile Justice Director, Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions

### **Removing Barriers: Knowing, Enforcing, & Protecting Your Civil Rights After Justice System Involvement** *(Room 404)*

This session will provide a national overview of some of the major collateral consequences faced by people with criminal histories. It will highlight the progress that has been made nationally but will also shed light on the many challenges still faced by individuals today. The session will cover the importance of knowing, enforcing and protecting one's rights under the law, and will also address how one's individual actions may serve as a catalyst for change that can impact and assist others.

### **Panelists**

**Monica Welby**, Senior Staff Attorney, Legal Action Center

**Keith Peterkin**, Program Director, Samaritan Village

**Ronald Day**, Associate VP of the David Rothenberg Center for Public Policy, The Fortune Society

**Moderator: Roberta Meyers**, Director, National H.I.R.E Network, Legal Action Center

## **Revisiting the 1996 Immigration Law: The Birth of Mass Deportations and Its Impact on Mass Incarceration (*Room 406*)**

This panel will revisit the 20th anniversary of the 1996 immigration laws. It will examine its impact and intersectionality with issues of mass incarceration -- further challenging participants to see “mass deportation” and “mandatory detention” as serious collateral consequence of mass deportation -- finally, it concludes by proposing and examining ways in which intersectional advocacy can and should happen.

### **Panelists**

**Khalil Cumberbatch**, Manager of Trainings, JustLeadershipUSA

**Abraham Paulos**, Executive Director, Families for Freedom

**Alina Das**, Associate Professor of Clinical Law and Co-Director of the Immigrant Rights Clinic, NYU Law School

**Mizue Aizeki**, Deputy Director, Immigrant Defense Project

**Ravi Ragbir**, Executive Director, New Sanctuary Coalition

**Moderator: Kirk James**, Founder, Evolve and Professor, Columbia School of Social Work

## **Responding to Violence Among Community Members: Beyond Police and Incarceration (*Room 405*)**

Violence is a daily occurrence for many communities. This session will ask what are responses to community violence that don't rely solely on the state to heal the pain and decrease the incidents of violence? The panel will look at several ways in which organizations and individuals are both responding to violence happening in the community and or are working to prevent violence before it happens.

### **Panelists**

**Marlon Peterson**, Precedential Group & Soros Justice Fellow

**Shanduke Mcphatter**, Executive Director, Gangstas Making Astronomical Community Changes, Inc.

**Erica Ford**, CEO and Founder, LIFE Camp Inc.

**Arissa Wilson-Baggett**, Organizer, Black Youth Project 100

**Nakisha Lewis**, Senior Strategist for Safety, Ms. Foundation for Women

**Moderator: Robert Fullilove**, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences and Associate Dean for Community and Minority Affairs, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

## **Arts and Activism: The Impact that Cultural Organizing has on the Movement to End Mass Incarceration (*Room C06*)**

This session will bring together a range of artist activists to discuss the impact of arts and activism on the movement to end mass incarceration, highlighting the ways in which art can be a source of healing and inspiration as well as an immeasurable tool for storytelling and broader social change.

Opening Poem from **Ngoma Hill**, Performance Poet



### **Panelists**

Michael Skolnik, Editor in Chief, Global Grind

Eric Okdeh, Artist, Mural Arts

Liza Jessie Peterson, Actress, Poet, Playwright, Educator and Advocate

Rico Washington, Writer/Artist

*Moderator:* Piper Anderson, Founder/Chief Creative Strategist, Create Forward LLC

### **The Power of the Student: Organizing for Justice on the College Campus (Room 305)**

The goal of this panel is to have an open dialogue on activism across college campuses around various issues that pertain to mass incarceration, education, liberation, and self-determination. We aim to discuss multiple issues around organizing, including base- & coalition- building, surveillance, co-optation, suppression, self-care, political education, institutional politics, and more. Additionally, we will discuss the dialectical relationship between creating spaces of change and emancipation within higher education institutions that maintain inequity and oppression, historically and contemporarily.

### **Panelists**

Sumathy Kumar, Student, Incarceration to Education Coalition

Dunni Oduyemi, Student, Columbia Prison Divest

Nerdeen Kiswani, Student, Students for Justice in Palestine

Maureen Lane, Co-Executive Director, Welfare Rights Initiative

*Moderator:* Christina M. Chaise, Student, Institute for Urban and Minority Education

### **Women on the Rise: Emerging as Leaders for Criminal Justice Reform (Room C05)**

These women who are mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, friends and family have all been impacted by the criminalization process of themselves, their relatives, and their communities. The panelists will talk about what pushed them to become leaders to change the criminal justice system.

### **Panelists**

Sheila Rule, Co-Founder, Think Outside the Cell Foundation

Andrea James, Executive Director of Families for Justice as Healing and Member of the National Council For Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls (The Council)

Donna Hylton, Criminal Justice Professional, Advocate and Educator, Founder of From Life to Life

Carol Eady-Porcher, Co-Chair and Advocate, Women on the Rise Telling Herstory (WORTH)

*Moderator:* Yolanda Johnson-Peterkin, College and Community Fellowship, Board of Directors

## **Challenging the Punishment Paradigm: International and Domestic Models for Justice and Accountability (Room 311/312)**

This session will examine concrete ways that justice is implemented in ways that maintain respect and human dignity while requiring safety and accountability. It will examine this work in 4 institutions: German prisons; the Peacemaking Program at the Redhook Justice Center; Restorative Justice programs in NYC schools and a Longtermers Program in San Quentin prison in California.

### **Panelists**

**Shana Louallen**, Social Worker, Youth x Culture x Ed (Peer Connect)

**Erika Sassoon**, Director of Restorative Practices, Center of Court Innovation

**Troy Williams**, Youth Programs Development Specialist/LeadVOEG, Insight Prison Project, Facilitator & Trainer

**Vedan Anthony-North**, Program Associate, Center on Sentencing and Corrections, Vera Institute of Justice

**Moderator: Kendall Thomas**, Nash Professor of Law, Columbia University

## **Solitary Confinement: An Area Where Efforts Have Made a Difference (Room 301)**

Challenges to solitary confinement have made a difference in the public awareness about its destructive impact and in reduction in usage. Panelists will explore bans on the usage of solitary for young people both in federal prisons and in Rikers Island. It will look at two legal settlements: one in the New York State prison and one in California. The panel will discuss ongoing organizing needed to both enforce the agreements for change and to continue efforts to reduce/limit solitary confinement throughout the country.

### **Panelists**

**Johnny Perez**, Safe Reentry Advocate, Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project

**Phil Desgranges**, Staff Attorney, New York Civil Liberties Union

**Winette Saunders**, Deputy Commissioner of Youthful Offender and Young Adult Programming, Department of Corrections, New York City

**Rita Lomio**, Trial Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Special Litigation Section

**Moderator: Léon Digard**, Senior Research Associate, Center on Sentencing and Corrections, Vera Institute of Justice

## **CO-SPONSORS**

Columbia University School of Social Work  
Columbia School of General Studies, Student Life  
Criminal Justice Initiative: Supporting Children, Families and Communities  
Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia University  
Prisoner Reentry Institute at John Jay College of Criminal Justice  
The Center for Institutional and Social Change at Columbia Law School  
The Heyman Center for the Humanities at Columbia University  
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The Black Caucus at CSSW  
The Social Work & Administration Management (SWAM) Caucus at CSSW

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

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## CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

### The Criminal Justice Caucus

The Criminal Justice Caucus seeks to provide a forum for CSSW students to access a spectrum of issues related to the social issue of criminal justice in order to build awareness, raise consciousness, and enhance practice competencies. Through the use and facilitation of film, lectures, debate, panels, and trainings, the caucus will provide essential context and information about prison expansion in the United States, in which currently one in one hundred adults is in jail or prison; about 10 million children have a parent in jail or prison; and one in nine African American men between the ages of 20 and 34 are in jail or prison. We believe it is the right and responsibility of all social work students to access critical dialogue, both inside and outside of the classroom, about the needs of people affected by incarceration; this client population crosses lines of generation, race, gender, religion, economic status, political belief, ability, sexual orientation, and others. Student voices contribute to building solutions that meet the needs of people in prison, jail, on parole, on probation, victims of crime, children of incarcerated people and their families.

### The Beyond the Bars Fellows

The Beyond the Bars Fellowship offers students and community members an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of mass incarceration and social change, and to collaborate with social justice organizers, activists, and academics to plan the annual Beyond the Bars Conference. This interdisciplinary leadership program aims to bring together a diverse group of Fellows to further develop their leadership skills – Fellows gain a theoretical and practical understanding of mass incarceration – inclusive of its origins, and wide spread personal and societal consequence. Fellows are also introduced to various models of social change while having an opportunity to interact and learn from community activists, organizers and academics. In addition, Fellows work together with the Center for Justice and the Criminal Justice Caucus to organize the annual Beyond the Bars Conference on mass incarceration. The Fellowship is made up of both student and community members. Our aim is to work collaboratively with the University and community towards social change.

### The Center for Justice at Columbia University

The mission of the Center for Justice is to engage the University's many disciplines in working together with community partners to contribute towards ending mass incarceration and to support new approaches to justice and safety through education, research and policy change. It works in partnership with schools, departments, centers and institutes across Columbia, other universities, government agencies, community organizations, advocates and those directly affected by the criminal justice system. Visit [centerforjustice.columbia.edu](http://centerforjustice.columbia.edu) for more information.

