

NATIONAL CENTER ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

**IMPACT REPORT
2021**





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ABOUT THE NATIONAL CENTER ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The National Center on Restorative Justice (NCORJ) improves criminal justice policy and practice in the United States through supporting education, research, and training to further restorative approaches. The NCORJ is a partnership between Vermont Law and Graduate School, the University of Vermont, the University of San Diego, and the U.S. Office of Justice Programs. The NCORJ is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to educate and train the next generation of justice leaders and to support and lead research focusing on restorative justice and addressing social inequities to improve criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.

This project is supported by Grants No. 2020-MU-CX-K001 and No. 15PBJA-20-GK-00035 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view, images, or opinions in this document and are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE INSTITUTE

The NCORJ hosts two Restorative Justice Institutes each year on different applications of restorative approaches. In 2021, the focus area was restorative approaches to policing. The Institutes highlight existing models and how those models can be replicated nationally. These events are aimed at educating juvenile and criminal justice professionals in restorative justice principles, research, and applications.

Restorative Approaches to Policing Think Tank (Feb. 2021)

This inaugural institute was structured as a virtual “think tank” for restorative justice and policing experts from across the United States who use restorative approaches in policing in a variety of models. From this inaugural institute, the NCORJ produced a restorative policing reference list and a report featuring restorative policing program descriptions.

Restorative Approaches to Policing Public Event (Oct. 2021)

The second institute was attended virtually by over 300 participants and included live-streamed keynotes and panels, break-out discussion sessions, and skills-based workshops. Three key models of restorative justice in policing were featured:

- Police-nonprofit partnerships that enable police to directly refer cases to restorative justice programs
- Police-community dialogues to rebuild trust in law enforcement
- Restorative practices by police to take responsibility for current and historical harm caused by their departments

The NCORJ also developed a website to provide restorative justice resources specifically for police agencies: RestorativePolicing.com.

96%

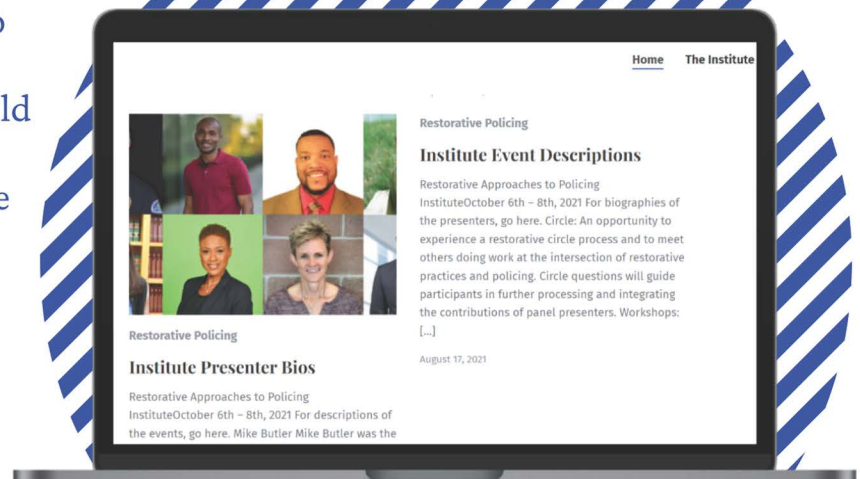
Surveyed participants who were satisfied with the first institute

300+

People who participated in the second institute

100%

Surveyed participants who were satisfied with the second institute



RestorativePolicing.com has received 3800+ views from 2000+ visitors from 39 countries



THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE RESEARCH COMMUNITY (RJRC)

The NCORJ launched the Restorative Justice Research Community (RJRC) to support the advancement of restorative justice research. The RJRC is an interdisciplinary academic community where researchers and scholars find collaboration, support, and inspiration. RJRC projects, events, and resources foster connections and creativity to help shape the future of restorative justice research.

The RJRC is housed within the University of Vermont’s Justice Research Initiative (JRI), an interdisciplinary research group focused on applied, collaborative scholarship. The JRI serves as the research and data hub of the NCORJ.

PROJECTS	DETAILS
Community Gathering	A biennial conference where restorative justice scholars come together to collectively focus on RJ research needs and applications.
Justice Scholars	A seminar series to engage an international learning community and support collaborative research endeavors.
Postdoctoral Research Associate	A two-year mentored opportunity for an early-career investigator to conduct pressing research in the field of RJ with an international network of scholars.
Research Fellowship Program	A two-year “think-tank” cohort of US scholars designed to address foundational challenges in the field.
Restorative Inquiry Partnership	A curriculum development team exploring restorative research methodologies and applications.
Restorative Justice Research and Data Library	An online reference database of peer-review research articles, tools, and other resources.

2021 RJRC HIGHLIGHTS

- The JRI welcomed Sylvie Frisbie to the team. As the Research Manager, Sylvie will play in integral role with the research group and community operations.
- JRI-affiliated faculty authored several scientific conference presentations:
 - Fox K, Crocker AM (2021 Nov). *Discipline as Rehabilitation: Correctional Staff Perceptions of their Role in Rehabilitation*. Paper Presentation at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) 2021 Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.
 - Ramdath C, Lin J, Long J, Reyes K, Sliva S, Chamber D, Carter, Demarest M, O'Connell D, Visher C, Champney J, Belfiore D, Kim J, Spies K, Powell K, Tennapel M, Canadake Huebner, Hallett, Givens A, Peters CM, Plunkett D, Fox K, Crocker AM (2021 Nov). *Transformation and Innovation in Prison Reform: Year One of the Prison Research and Innovation Initiative*. Thematic Discussion at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) 2021 Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.
 - Visher C, Lin J, Sliva S, Fox K, Crocker AM, Demarest M, O'Connell D, Chambers D. *Incarceration During a Pandemic: Perspectives from Residents and Staff*. Thematic Discussion at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) 2021 Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

STEERING COMMITTEE

The RJRC is supported by a steering committee of academic scholars from across the country who are responsible for conceptualizing the framework, building the infrastructure, and providing strategic management of the community.

- Abby Crocker, *University of Vermont*
- Marilyn Armour, *University of Texas*
- David Karp, *University of San Diego*
- Lindsey Pointer, *Vermont Law and Graduate School*

EDUCATION



Talking piece used in circles to determine revised PLOs

COURSE MAPPING AND EVALUATION

During fall 2020, the NCORJ held a series of circles with students, faculty, community partners, Advisory Board members, and restorative justice practitioners to reflect on the learning outcomes of the Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ) Program at Vermont Law and Graduate School. Circle participants were asked to reflect on what MARJ students need to know, do, and value as they prepare to take on leadership roles in the restorative justice movement. This process generated a new set of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for the MARJ. The new PLOs were used in a course mapping process, which endeavored to understand, through engagement with program faculty and students, the extent to which the current course offerings fulfill the PLOs.

The insights from this process are guiding the curriculum development moving forward, and the NCORJ is producing scholarship about the process, as well as user-friendly guides to support other higher education institutions in undergoing a restorative curriculum development. The NCORJ published a report on this process to date in early 2022.

ACCESS TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE EDUCATION

The NCORJ supports scholarships for participation in the University of San Diego Certificate in Restorative Justice Facilitation. This year-long program trains the next generation of restorative justice leadership by providing a comprehensive understanding of restorative justice principles and practices, and supporting new practitioners with skill-development and coaching support. Eighty people applied for the first 10 scholarships and the selected participants began their certificate program in Spring 2022.

80

*Applicants for the first set of
Restorative Justice Facilitation
Certificate scholarships
funded by the NCORJ*

*"I am a believer! Really looking
at restorative justice as a philosophy
and really working to adapt my way of
thinking. It has opened up a whole
new future to me!"*

—Prison Class Participant

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE EDUCATION IN PRISONS

In spring 2021, the NCORJ developed a restorative justice curriculum for education in a prison setting. In fall 2021, the NCORJ piloted the curriculum at Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF) for women incarcerated in the facility. Over seven sessions, participants were introduced to the philosophy and practice of restorative justice and explored how restorative justice could be implemented in the prison setting. The aim is to integrate restorative practices into correctional protocols and, over time, influence prison culture to be more supportive, communicative, and positive. Assessments from the first class found that 100% of participants agreed that the course positively impacted their thinking about relationships and how they will resolve harms and conflict in the future.

The NCORJ will refine the course and offer it again in 2022. The curriculum will ultimately be widely disseminated for use in other facilities.

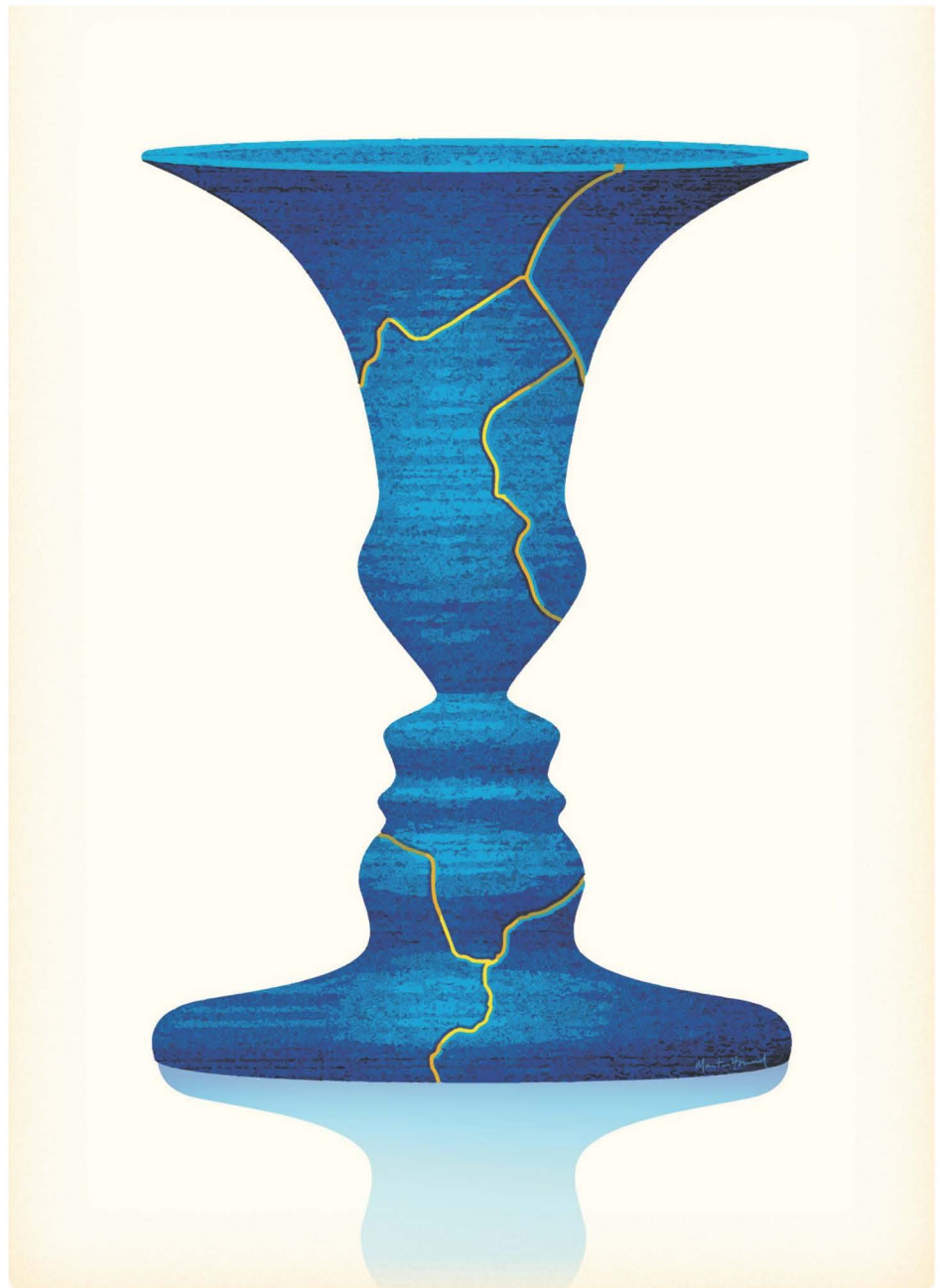


TRAINING

In November 2021, the NCORJ hired Avery Arrington to lead the new Training Division.

The NCORJ Training Division will work with various organizations seeking professional development to aid in criminal justice reform. To reduce barriers and inequity in access to knowledge, all resources and content created will be accessible to the public for free. The NCORJ's Training Division will offer both in-person and online educational and training opportunities.

A coaching program is in development to support newly trained restorative justice practitioners and increase their confidence and abilities for effective implementation. A team of advanced practitioners will work with new facilitators and offer guidance and feedback, review practice design, and provide leadership and expertise.



Healing Encounter by Martin Howard,
from Reimagining Justice: a Restorative Justice Art Gallery

COMMUNICATIONS

In July 2021, the NCORJ hired Taylor Long as Communications and Media Coordinator. In 2021, social media profiles, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, were established, and continue to grow an audience. A website and bi-monthly newsletter are in progress.

CREATIVE INITIATIVES

The Restorative Lens Podcast



THE RESTORATIVE LENS PODCAST

The Restorative Lens podcast launched in September 2021 with five episodes as part of the first series. Each series of *The Restorative Lens* will highlight different topics within the field of restorative justice and provide an opportunity to hear from those who are directly impacted or involved in the work. This first series features hosts Alanna Ojibway and LTomay Douglas interviewing several authors from the book *Colorizing Restorative Justice*, a collection of 18 different essays by 20 practitioners and scholars of color, exploring the issues of racism and colonization within the field of restorative justice and restorative practices.

5*

Average Rating for
The Restorative Lens
on Apple Podcasts

900+

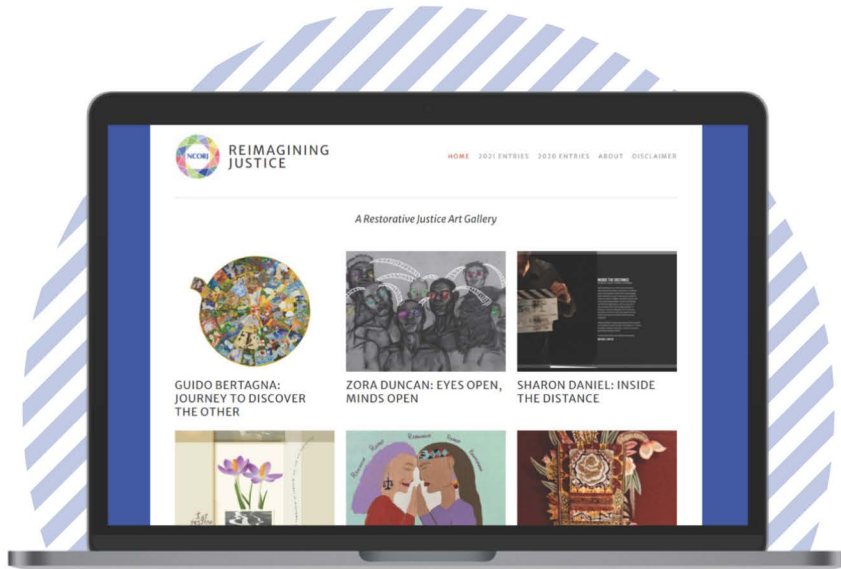
All-time plays for
The Restorative Lens
podcast

28-34

Most common age demographic
for The Restorative Lens
podcast listeners

REIMAGINING JUSTICE: A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ART GALLERY

As a creative outreach effort, the NCORJ launched *Reimagining Justice: a Restorative Justice Art Gallery*. In 2020 and 2021, restorative justice advocates and artists from around the world were invited to creatively portray the philosophy and impact of restorative justice, in honor of International Restorative Justice Week, which takes place each November. The NCORJ received 39 submissions from all over the world. Artists used a range of mediums, including poetry, short stories, fiber arts, film, and interactive virtual installations. They are displayed in a virtual art gallery at ncorj.art.



The Reimagining Justice website (ncorj.art) received 1500+ views from 600+ visitors from 28 countries.

In 2020, the NCORJ participated in the European Forum for Restorative Justice's REstART Festival, a gathering exploring the intersection of art and restorative justice. *Reimagining Justice* was displayed during the festival and Dr. Lindsey Pointer hosted a live Q&A with the Viewer's Choice winners.



A Stitch in Time by Krystina C. Ryan

From Reimagining Justice: A Restorative Justice Art Gallery

COLLABORATIONS

OTHER BJA GRANT RECIPIENTS

Following an introduction by the BJA, the NCORJ is collaborating with another grant recipient, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL), to assist with planning and training for a new restorative justice program in Prince Williams County (PWC), Virginia.

As part of this assistance, the NCORJ is:

- Conducting two introduction to restorative justice sessions for NACDL and the PWC prosecutors, defenders, law enforcement, and community members.
- Orchestrating a virtual site visit for the PWC participants with a Community Justice Center in Vermont and may facilitate a site visit to a center that works with responsible and harmed parties in instances of interpersonal violence.

Following the training sessions and site visit, the NCORJ will serve in an advisory role. The NCORJ appreciates the introduction made by the BJA and looks forward to further collaborations of this nature, where the NCORJ can serve as a catalyst for emerging restorative justice programs across the country.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (NACRJ)

The NCORJ meets regularly with NACRJ leadership to plan two collaborative projects:

- A resource mapping of existing restorative justice programs around the country
- A best practices in restorative justice resource

A first convening of restorative justice leaders on the best practices resource is planned for July 2022 during the NACRJ conference.

Questions that will be discussed include:

- What are the concerns about current restorative justice practice and delivery?
- What does it mean to call yourself an RJ practitioner/professional?
- What constitutes “good practice”?