



NATIONAL CENTER ON
RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE



NATIONAL CENTER ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

IMPACT REPORT

2022



CONTENTS

- **Public Education Overview:** *page 3*
 - **Restorative Justice Institutes:** *page 4*
 - **Training Division Highlights:** *page 5*
 - **Public Education Initiatives:** *page 6*
 - **Communicating Restorative Justice:** *page 7*
- **Higher Education Overview:** *page 8*
 - **Expanding Access to Restorative Justice Education:** *page 9*
 - **Higher Education Collaborations:** *page 10*
- **Research Overview:** *page 11*
 - **2022 Research Highlights:** *page 12*
and page 13

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.

PUBLIC EDUCATION OVERVIEW



NCORJ team members with staff of the Vermont Department for Children and Families

Expanding the implementation of restorative justice in the criminal justice context hinges on greater buy-in from 1) the general public to increase popular support for alternative approaches and 2) justice system actors, including police, judges, lawyers, and probation/diversion officers, who have the power to refer cases to restorative justice processes.

The NCORJ draws on a national network of restorative justice practitioners and advocates to find the most effective voices to include in our events, trainings, and coaching program.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE INSTITUTES

The NCORJ organizes an annual institute series to disseminate information from experts in a particular field about the successful implementation of restorative justice and the possibility of replicating existing models nationwide. In 2022, the area of focus was restorative approaches to reintegration. The goal of the institutes was to promote these approaches by highlighting the perspectives and expertise of scholars, practitioners, and individuals who have experienced incarceration and reentry firsthand.

Restorative Reintegration Think Tank (Feb. 2022)

This event brought together 25 academics and practitioners with expertise in restorative justice approaches to reentry after incarceration. Participating practitioners provided program descriptions. An evaluation survey was administered for the institute, and all 13 participants who completed the survey indicated that the institute was useful, increased their knowledge level, and was a satisfactory experience. In response to the institute's success, UVM researchers are collaborating on writing a white paper that will identify and outline core elements of restorative reintegration.



"Restoring Humanity" speakers, from left to right: Richard Sandoval, Jason Samuel, D'Andre Brooks, L'Tomay Douglas Varlack-Butler, Darryl Varlack-Butler

"I didn't know what I didn't know. I have been judging this population. I learned that everyone has a story and we all have more in common with each other than I previously thought. I am walking away from this event a transformed human being. I am humbled and moved by what I heard."

-Survey Respondent

Restorative Reintegration Public Event (June 2022)

The second institute on Restorative Reintegration was a public event held on June 11, 2022, at the University of San Diego, and was attended by 102 people in-person and 192 people via live stream. The event was titled "Restoring Humanity: A Speaker Showcase on Restorative Reintegration," and featured seven speakers who shared their lived experiences of reintegration through TedX-style talks. The event was organized in partnership with the San Diego Catholic Diocese, the NCORJ, and BJA. Kimberly Kras, a criminal justice professor at San Diego State University, presented a theoretical framework, which was followed by the seven speakers sharing their stories and insights. Videos of the talks are available on the [NCORJ website](#). The evaluations for the event were overwhelmingly positive.

TRAINING DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS



Avery Arrington, Cymone Fuller and Abby Crocker present "Rehabilitation Through Reconciliation: The Role of Restorative Justice in Transforming the Criminal Legal System" at the NACDL Conference Sept. 2022

- In July and August, the NCORJ Training Division collaborated with local restorative justice leaders to deliver two full-day restorative justice training sessions for law enforcement in South Burlington and Springfield, Vermont, advancing officers' knowledge and support of restorative approaches.
- In September, the training division delivered a full-day workshop on restorative justice implementation for the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF).
- In November, the training division presented at a youth justice summit, an annual convening for Vermont juvenile justice system actors that include restorative justice organizations and diversion programs. The theme was "Shared Community, Shared Responsibility: Working restoratively with our youth, families, and communities."

- NCORJ team members Avery Arrington, Lindsey Pointer, and Robert Sand collaborated with fellow BJA 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.
 - The NCORJ team conducted two introduction to restorative justice sessions for NACDL and the PWC prosecutors, defenders, law enforcement, and community members in January and May 2022



Flier for the Nov. 2022 webinar on "Restorative Justice in the Criminal Legal System"

"This experience has increased my restorative lens overall in every aspect of my work...it opened my eyes to the shortcomings of our current practice and how punitive it can be..."

-Vermont DCF Workshop Participant

100%

Satisfaction rate among surveyed training participants

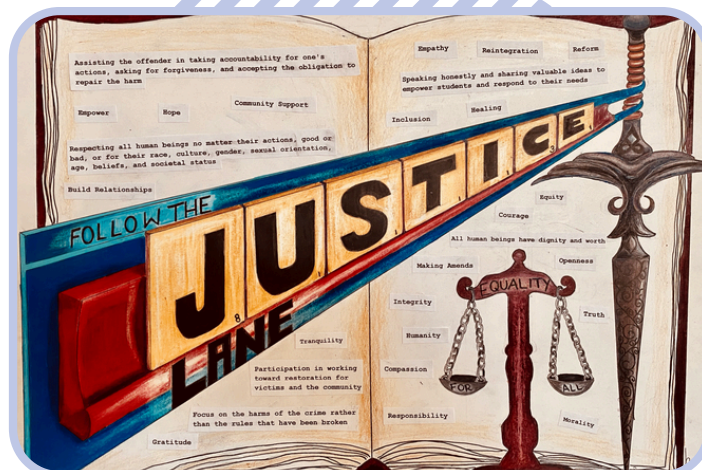
180+

Total viewers of "Restorative Justice in the Criminal Legal System" Webinar

- In honor of International Restorative Justice Week, the training division hosted a webinar titled "Restorative Justice in the Criminal Legal System." Panelists presented applications of restorative justice across the continuum of the criminal justice system and received great feedback from participants. Additionally, a fact sheet providing an overview of restorative justice, key benefits, and highlighting the work of the NCORJ was developed and distributed to webinar registrants shortly after the panel concluded and is available on the NCORJ website.

Restorative Justice Education in Prisons

- The second time piloting the Restorative Justice Education in Prisons curriculum (led by Kathy Fox) occurred in October 2022, after being canceled in spring 2022 due to COVID-19.
 - This curriculum is being revised and will be available in 2023.
- Kathy Fox and Lindsey Pointer presented on restorative justice education in prisons at the July 2022 National Association of Community and Restorative Justice (NACRJ) conference (in collaboration with Professor Shannon Sliva of Colorado).



Justice Lane by Hope Hamerslough



National Association of Community and Restorative Justice Collaboration

- Collaboration between NCORJ and NACRJ is ongoing to build a national map of restorative justice programs. The map is scheduled for launch in the first half of 2023, with a submission form for programs to add themselves to the map.
- The NCORJ and NACRJ are also collaborating to hold a national dialogue on best practices in restorative justice. A facilitation team for the dialogue, consisting of NACRJ outgoing President Sheryl Wilson and Professor Greg Paul of Kansas State University, held a first discussion on best practices at the NACRJ conference in July 2022. NACRJ Executive Director Joel Friesz is actively involved in both collaborative projects.

National Restorative Coaching Program

- The planning process for the NCORJ Coaching Program began in 2022, and a design team comprised of Justine Andreu Darling, Kathleen McGoey, and Francisco Carbajal was formed. Resources have been developed and are being finalized for a pilot group in January 2023. A public launch of the National Restorative Coaching Program is planned for August 2023.



COMMUNICATING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

“What is restorative justice?” This is an important question that can be difficult to answer. If we want restorative justice to take root in the criminal legal system and beyond, it is essential that we find creative and concise ways to communicate restorative justice to the public.

In recognition of this need and in honor of International Restorative Justice Week 2022, the National Center on Restorative Justice (NCORJ) invited the RJ community to submit 3-minute videos that answer the question “What is restorative justice?” We received 21 videos creatively answering the prompt, which are now available in a gallery on the [NCORJ website](#).

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION INITIATIVE

The NCORJ initiated a collaboration with Restorative Justice Data Systems (RJDS) to complete a Scope and Requirements document to inform the development of case management systems to aid community restorative justice program implementation. A tailored case management system would help restorative justice programs streamline processes to increase capacity to expand case load. Throughout 2022, RJDS held interviews with restorative justice programs to inform the creation of the Scope and Requirements document.



The "What is Restorative Justice?" Video Gallery housed on the NCORJ website will serve as an invaluable resource for communicating restorative justice to the public

HIGHER EDUCATION OVERVIEW



NCORJ Team Members were present at the 2022 National Association of Community and Restorative Justice Conference, where they presented on aligning restorative justice teaching with restorative principles in higher education classrooms.

The existing criminal legal system replenishes itself regularly with newly minted graduates trained in an adversarial model. Educating undergraduate, graduate, and law students in this adversarial model perpetuates its use.

The NCORJ creates change through promoting restorative justice education in undergraduate, graduate, and law programs, equipping the next generation of criminal legal professionals to bring the restorative justice approach to bear in reforming a broken system.

The NCORJ is hosted by Vermont Law and Graduate School (VLGS), the only law school with a Masters in Restorative Justice (MARJ) as well as a Professional Certificate program. The University of San Diego (USD) also offers a Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice with an emphasis on preparing students for practice and implementation. The NCORJ leverages the institutional experience and strengths of its partners to promote restorative justice education in universities and law schools across the country.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE EDUCATION

USD Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice Scholarships

As a part of our efforts to increase access to restorative justice education, the NCORJ provides at least 10 scholarships to the USD's Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice Facilitation and Leadership program per academic semester.

- USD celebrated its first graduating class of eight scholarship recipients in December 2022. The certificate graduates benefitting from the scholarships included
 - One attorney and one professor of political science working on criminal justice reform and restorative justice policy development
 - Five k-12 educators working on the school-to-prison pipeline,
 - One founder of a non-profit helping people reintegrate into society after incarceration.
- These scholarships are increasing access to restorative justice education for current and future justice system leaders.



Gambian teacher overcomes all odds to become restorative practitioner, train K-12 schools

Article profiling the efforts and achievements of Masanneh Jallow, a December 2022 certificate graduate

VLGS Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ) Course Mapping and Evaluation Project

The MARJ Course Mapping and Evaluation project is currently in its second phase, which involves evaluating the outcomes of the MARJ program from the perspective of graduates. Researchers from UVM developed surveys to assess the alignment of the MARJ curriculum with program learning outcomes, which were administered to MARJ program graduates in May 2022. UVM is now working on developing a report to share survey findings with the VLGS team and other stakeholders, to support continuous quality improvement. VLGS is implementing the curriculum changes identified in phase one of the project, which will continue to be evaluated by NCORJ.

- NCORJ team members Alanna Ojibway, Lindsey Pointer, and David Karp presented on this project at the July 2022 National Association of Community and Restorative Justice (NACRJ) conference



NCORJ team members Lindsey Pointer and Alanna Ojibway at the 2022 NACRJ Conference

7

New courses have been submitted for approval in response to feedback gained from the MARJ Mapping & Evaluation Project

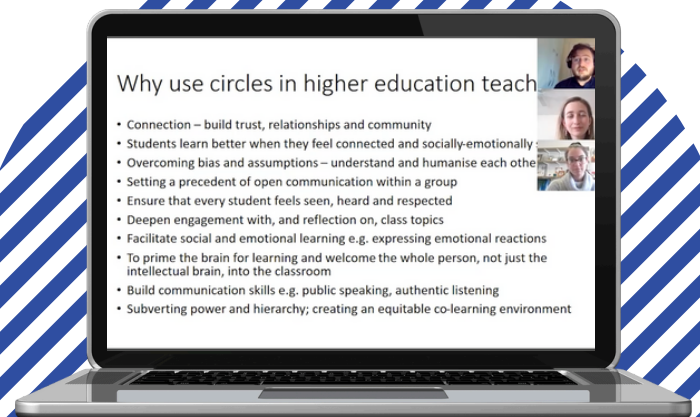
HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATIONS

Restorative Pedagogy Network

The Restorative Pedagogy Network organizes workshops and produces resources to promote the implementation of restorative justice education in universities worldwide, spanning various disciplines. Through this project, NCORJ team members Alanna Ojibway and Lindsey Pointer have collaborated with Ian Marder from Maynooth University in Ireland to conduct workshops on participatory and experiential learning in restorative justice education, as well as the use of circles in the classroom. These workshops aimed to connect educators teaching restorative justice and practices, encouraging them to share and co-create ideas and methods to achieve this objective.

Restorative Justice Education in Law Schools

The NCORJ is expanding restorative justice education in law schools through a collaboration with a group of faculty who teach restorative justice in law schools across the country. The collaboration aims to develop resources that will help other law schools incorporate restorative justice content in their existing courses or create stand-alone restorative justice courses. The curated collection of materials will include activities, readings, and class agendas that are appropriate for the law school context, making it easy for faculty with an interest in teaching restorative justice to utilize them. The resources will be widely disseminated, with the goal of reforming the criminal legal system by infusing restorative justice into the education of future system actors.



Alanna Ojibway, Lindsey Pointer, and Ian Marder present on using circles in higher education classrooms; the video has earned 270+ views

RESEARCH OVERVIEW



Members of the NCORJ Core Team at their 2022 Strategic Planning Retreat

The NCORJ supports a community-driven, interdisciplinary approach to research that bridges the research-practice gap, empowers diverse voices, and grows the next generation of justice researchers.

Restorative justice research has lagged behind practice. Where research does exist, it is often narrowly applicable to a specific program or context that is difficult to translate across settings. Moreover, widespread variation in shared language and definitions, practice, and implementation has made advancing research in the field a challenge. NCORJ research efforts and activities aim to understand and address these challenges.

Initiatives launched in 2022 include 1) a deep investigation into the restorative justice literature and current research base, and 2) the establishment of a Restorative Justice Research Community (RJRC), including the development of a research fellowship.

The research core of the NCORJ is managed by the University of Vermont's (UVM) Justice Research Initiative. UVM is a National Science Foundation (NSF) top 100 public research university in the US.

2022 RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- The NCORJ began working with Sheila McMahon to develop an empirical overview of restorative justice in the context of the US criminal legal system.
- Sheila helped convene a literature review group, which began meeting on a bi-weekly basis. The group is developing a dissemination strategy that will support a series of publications on restorative justice research in the context of the US criminal legal system.



Sheila McMahon

POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING PROGRAM

The NCORJ welcomed a new postdoctoral associate, Dr. Sejung Yang to the team in July 2022. Dr. Yang is supporting the research literature review and RJRC fellows project, and is working to advance her research portfolio on the intersection of restorative justice, social work, and violent crime.



Dr. Sejung Yang,
Postdoctoral Associate

RJRC

- The NCORJ established the Restorative Justice Research Community (RJRC) to support the development and advancement of a community-engaged research agenda. RJRC projects, events, and resources are intended to foster connections and creativity, bridge the research-practice gap, and grow the next generation of justice researchers. The RJRC is managed by a steering committee which includes NCORJ core team members, Abby Crocker from the University of Vermont, Marilyn Armour from the University of Texas, David Karp from the University of San Diego, and Lindsey Pointer from the Vermont Law and Graduate School.

2022 RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS, CONT.

RESEARCH FELLOWS

2022-2024



Rochelle Arms Almengor
Berea College



Anne Hobbs
University of Nebraska



Shannon Sliva
University of Denver

The Restorative Justice Research Community (RJRC) launched its first project - a research fellowship. The fellowship supports a cohort of academic restorative justice researchers in a series of roundtable discussions. The discussions are intended to identify and understand challenges and opportunities with restorative justice research, and to recognize themes and priority areas to help inform future directions.

- Roundtable discussions are grounded in topics and readings relevant to conducting restorative justice research.
- Fellows are encouraged to engage with their local communities, such as practitioners, individuals with lived experience, or those working within the system, to help enhance their thinking on topic areas and support the fellows' sharing these voices as part of the roundtable discussions.
- The team supported a project launch event in September 2022 and held the first 3-hour virtual roundtable discussion in November 2022. The discussion focused broadly on "Research, RJ, and the US criminal legal system". Future discussion topics will be determined on an emergent basis.
- Fellows were identified through a competitive call for applications that was released in March 2022. Fellows were selected based on strength of scholarly and professional record, connection to local community practitioners and/or those with lived experience, and commitment to meaningful, collaborative engagement. The 2022-2024 cohort of research fellows includes Anne Hobbs, University of Nebraska Omaha, Shannon Sliva, University of Denver, and Rochelle Arms Almengor, Berea College.



The RJRC is partnering with Deb Witzel and Three Stories Consulting to support the facilitation of the Fellows roundtable discussion series.