



## DRAFT PROGRAM

*All times are Eastern Daylight Time & subject to change*



***The American Council of Chief Defenders (ACCD) Summer Conference*** – Where chief public defenders come to engage in discussions about new issues facing public defenders across the nation and exchange ideas on effective approaches to public defense leadership.

### **Monday, June 14, 2021**

12:00 noon-1:00 p.m. **ACCD Welcome and Chiefs Roundtable**

1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. **Litigating Race: What Does Implementation Look Like?**

Presenters: Renate Lunn, Director of Training, New York County Public Defender Services, New York NY

*This session will focus on practical steps involving how to create a practice of litigating race in your jurisdiction. We will hear from public defender offices on how to structure and implement these trial and client strategies and how to address any challenges and barriers to implementation.*

2:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. **BREAK**

2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. **Community Engagement: How to Leverage the Power of the Community**

Presenter: Justine Olderman, Executive Director, Bronx Defenders, New York NY

*This session will focus on how to engage with the community to advance reforms and common goals. We will learn about a comprehensive community engagement strategy to advance advocacy around COVID-19, jury selection, and other critical systemic reforms.*

3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. **Navigating the Changes in Office Culture: Post-COVID 19 Public Defense Practice**

Presenter: Stan Germán, Executive Director, New York County Public Defender Services, New York NY

*COVID-19 radically changed the practice of public defense. The changing environment has introduced virtual court hearings, remote work environments, and rapid societal changes that will force public defender offices to adapt. This session will focus on how to balance these changes in culture and create healthy organizations that provide zealous advocacy and meet the changing staff demands.*

4:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. **Close Out Announcements and ACCD Updates**

5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. **Networking/Social Hour**

# Community-Oriented Defender Network Conference



Tuesday, June 15

12:00 – 1:45 p.m. **COD Opening Plenary & COD Network Member Updates**

The opening plenary for the COD conference will focus on “Disrupting Carceral Systems: How to Dismantle Systems of Surveillance, Oppression, and Harm.” The panel will explore the historical and current systems of government surveillance that target black, brown, indigenous, and other minority communities and result in disproportionate harm. We will explore various federal, state, and local strategies that include legislative, grassroots, and movement building. You don’t want to miss this discussion because it will provide a roadmap on how to ACT to disrupt the harm targeted at client communities.

**Moderator:**

*April Frazier Camara*, Chief, Lifelong Learning, National Legal Aid & Defender Association, Washington DC

**Panelists:**

*Barbara Creel*, Director, Southwest Indian Law Clinic, New Mexico

*Patrice James*, Co-Founder, Black Public Defender Association, Chicago IL

*Tina Luongo*, Chief of Criminal Practice, Legal Aid Society of New York City

*Joyce McMillian*, Community Advocate, New York City

1:45-2:00 p.m. **Break**

2:00-3:30 p.m. **Concurrent Workshops** (*one workshop may be added here*)

- **Rising Tide: Small Changes for Big Holistic Impact**

We become defenders because we want to be of service. At our best, we are defending PEOPLE rather than cases. But defending whole people means reckoning with the challenging, complex, and intersecting challenges our clients encounter -- the loss of housing, work, educational continuity, child custody, safety, medical care, or property due to an arrest, just to name a few of the most common types of fallout. We, as attorneys, need to be able to fight for our clients across all fronts, but how do we do it alone? Fighting on all fronts solo leads to burnout and frustration. We can and we must do better.

**Presenters:**

*Emily Galvin-Almanza*, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Partners for Justice, New York NY

*Vichal Kumar*, Regional Director, Eastern Region, Partners for Justice, New York NY

- **White Savior: Pass the Mic**

Turn up the volume and silence the noise. People of color are not voiceless; rather, they are repeatedly “overlooked” and “unheard.” As advocates in public defense, have we turned a blind eye to the ways in which internalized privilege, power, and white saviorism have muffled the voices of those we serve? With the recent surge in political progressive thinking, those who work closely with people of color must re-examine their personal behaviors in the professional space. This program will seek to honestly and openly unpack the ways in which white saviorism manifests itself in public defense. Join us for an introspective discussion.

**Presenter:**

*Natasha Dartigue, Esq.*, Deputy District Public Defender for Baltimore City, Office of the Public Defender, Baltimore MD

**NASAMS Track**

- **After the Conviction: The Harm of Collateral Consequences**

This workshop will look at the ongoing collateral consequences that affect our clients well beyond the courthouse and for years to come. Using guidance from *Kentucky v. Padilla*, we will discuss how to identify collateral consequences, why it is important to do so, and how to use them to negotiate and mitigate. Our focus will be on reducing the negative impacts and stigma.

Presenter:

*Elizabeth Justesen*, Chief Community Outreach Officer, Legal Aid Society of Suffolk County, Central Islip NY  
*Pamela Neely*, Social Justice Coordinator, New Hour for Women and Children, Brentwood NY  
*Carly Sommers*, Staff Attorney, Nassau Suffolk Law Services, Hempstead NY

3:30-3:45 p.m. Break

3:45-5:15 p.m. Concurrent Workshops

- **Criminal Defense & Medical-Legal Partnerships: A New Paradigm**

An early proponent of the holistic defense model, the Rhode Island Public Defender (RIPD) recently expanded the application of this model by collaborating with the local public health community. This partnership, in a variety of contexts, has resulted in better case outcomes for RIPD clients. Most recently, under the umbrella of the Lifespan Transitions Clinic and in conjunction with the Brown University Warren Alpert School of Medicine, RIPD has been able to access resources through this emerging Medical-Legal Partnership by engaging with public health experts and bringing these resources to bear to achieve better outcomes for clients. Attendees will acquire the tools necessary to engage public health officials and develop medical legal partnerships in their jurisdictions.

Presenters:

*Chelsea Kelly*, Assistant Public Defender, Rhode Island Public Defender, Providence RI  
*James A. Lawless*, Social Services Casework Supervisor, Rhode Island Public Defender, Providence RI  
*Dr. Rahul Vanjani*, Primary Care Physician, Lifespan/Brown Univ. Warren Alpert School of Med., Providence RI

- **The D.C. Reentry Navigator: A Nationwide Blueprint for Empowering Clients with Tools for Successful Reentry & Reintegration**

The Washington, D.C., Public Defender Service (PDS), in collaboration with more than 100 D.C. and federal stakeholders, created and produced a comprehensive and groundbreaking book, *The D.C. Reentry Navigator: Empowering You to Succeed with a D.C. Criminal Record*, a first-of-its-kind for the District of Columbia. This valuable resource helps educate, support, and empower people as they steer through the turbulence of life following criminal system involvement. For the first time, people affected by the system will have easy access to resources—in hard copy or online—so they may plan for their futures.

Presenters:

*Chiquisha Robinson, Esq.*, Deputy Chief, Prisoner & Reentry Legal Services, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC  
*Jamie Rodriguez, Esq.*, Chief, Community Defender Division, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC  
*Tyrone Walker*, Director of Reentry Services, Georgetown University's Prison and Justice Initiative, Washington DC

- **Early Advocacy: Extending Gideon's Promise**

The presenters, all attorneys from The Bronx Defenders, will speak on the work they each are doing within the new innovative Early Defense Team. The presentation will describe how this holistic model extends the boundaries of traditional public defense and put clients on an equal footing with those who have the monetary means to retain a lawyer at earlier stages of their legal situations. The presentations will demonstrate the benefits of early intervention in legal matters before they become legal matters.

Presenters:

*Matt Diaz*, Community Intake Supervisor/Attorney, Early Defense Practice, The Bronx Defenders  
*Annie Mathews*, Supervising Attorney, Immigration Practice, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY  
*Michael Thomas*, Early Defense Team Leader and Community Intake Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

**NASAMS Track**

- **Mitigation Assessment: Community Violence and Its Impact on Neurological Development**

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce and discuss the importance of incorporating community efficacy and its impact on brain development/architecture into the mitigation assessment interview. Research findings linking the relationship between community violence/wellness and brain development as well as interview techniques to unpack those relationships will be discussed.

Presenter:

*Marian L. Swindell, PhD, MSW, Associate Professor, Mississippi State University, Meridian MS*

5:15-6:15 p.m.                      Networking Reception

## Wednesday, June 16

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.                      *Plenary Session*

**Rising We Keep Us Safe: A Conversation with DC's Grassroots Leadership**

Join us for a conversation with Afeni Evans and Joella Roberts. As the nation struggles to turn the tides of racism and violence, Afeni's and Joella's work is a beacon of hope and inspiration. They will share their wisdom and insight into community safety and collaboration as it relates to the criminal legal system.

Afeni Evans is an anti-war and anti-imperialist Army veteran who has dedicated her life to fighting for Black liberation and non-violent community safety through an abolitionist lens. She is a core member of Freedom Fighters DC, a Black-led grassroots organization that focuses on Black liberation, mutual aid and political education. Identifying as a lesbian, she is at the intersection of queerness and Black identity and a true believer that the most urgent truths come from the mouths of those who suffer the most and that those voices should be at the center of liberation efforts.

Joella Roberts is a DACA recipient from the beautiful twin islands known for carnival and calypso - Trinidad and Tobago. Joella's knack for strategy and coalition-building has also allowed her to build organizing capacity on the ground in her and other local communities. Her advocacy, which largely centers on Black migrants, includes partnering with national organizations committed to social and political change, organizing rallies and protests in collaboration with other grassroots organizers, and building sustainable mutual aid structures that address the material concerns of her people. A mural celebrating Joella's deep commitment to her community - and that of other community organizers - can be found at 4th and Kennedy Streets NW in Washington, D.C.

Presenters:

*Afeni Evans, Freedom Fighters DC, Washington DC*

*Joella Roberts, University Program Coordinator, FWD.us, Washington DC*

1:00-1:10 p.m.                      Break

1:10-2:40 p.m.                      Concurrent Workshops

- **Debunking the Resource Desert: NLADA and AmeriCorps VISTA**

Resources and capacity remain a challenge for offices to expand holistic defense and anti-racist practices, but AmeriCorpsVISTA and NLADA are rising to the occasion. In this session, you'll meet members from across the country and hear how they have used creative problem-solving to expand data collection and community partnerships for their host communities and how the NLADA AmeriCorps program allowed members to start a career in public service. Come ready to brainstorm how you could use additional capacity and walk away knowing how to apply for an NLADA AmeriCorpsVISTA member in your office.

Moderator:

*Anna Ladd*, NLADA-AmeriCorps DCS Program Director, Senior Program Associate, National Legal Aid & Defender Association, Washington DC

Presenters:

*Kristen Brown*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Office of the Alternate Defense Counsel, Denver CO

*Dametrick Evans*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Law Offices of the Cook County Public Defender, Chicago IL

*Nichele Hudson*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Connecticut State Division of Public Defender Services, Hartford CT

*Batya Kemper*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Santa Barbara County Public Defender, Santa Barbara CA

*Dr. Donna Marain*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Law Office of the Public Defender, Augusta GA

*Maisy Menzies*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Contra Costa County Office of the Public Defender, Martinez CA

- **The Excessive Fines Clause: A Tool to Protect Clients Living in Poverty**

Courts, municipalities, and legislatures have been plugging budget holes by imposing ever-increasing fines and fees on criminal defendants and mounting aggressive collection efforts. Some courts have slowed this process during the pandemic, but, as the world returns to business as usual, we can expect even those jurisdictions to return to the status quo—or worse—as governments look to make up for lost revenue. Now is the time to fight not only against over-incarceration but also against the imposition of criminal justice debt that can trap clients in poverty for years and drain the resources of their families and communities as their loved ones struggle to help them avoid the harsh consequences of nonpayment. The Eighth Amendment’s Excessive Fines Clause has great potential to protect our clients from fines and court fees they can never hope to pay off. But the clause is rarely invoked at sentencing, and there is little precedent on how courts are to determine whether any given fine is unconstitutionally excessive. This session will focus on how you can fight to ensure your clients are afforded the full protections the clause confers. This session discusses what arguments to make, how best to raise them, and how to make sure punitive fees and costs are properly classified as fines in the analysis. We will provide an argument outline and discuss strategies for appeal.

Presenters:

*Brian Hardingham*, Staff Attorney, Debtors' Prison Project, Public Justice, Oakland CA

*John He*, Skadden Fellow, Debtors' Prison Project, Public Justice, Oakland CA

*Lindsey E. Smith*, Staff Attorney, Debt Free Justice Campaign, Juvenile Law Center, Philadelphia PA

*Seth Wayne*, Senior Counsel, Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, Georgetown Law, Washington DC

- **Where There’s a Will, There’s a Way! Building Social Work and Holistic Defense Capacity in Your Office**

Join this session to learn about strategies that are working to strengthen access to social workers and holistic outcomes for clients. Whether you work in a public defender office, managed assigned counsel system, or court appointed system, there are ways to access help for clients in need of services and in need of alternatives to incarceration. This workshop will provide you with important insights from a state that can’t get social workers funded and from another state that figured out how to use social workers through a contract system. Practitioners in Missouri and West Virginia will share details of how their models evolved – with and without budgets!

Presenters:

*Annie Legomsky*, JD/MSW, Senior Public Defender, Missouri State Public Defender, St. Louis MO

*Matthew Mahaffey*, District Defender, Missouri State Public Defender, St. Louis MO

*Cara Netzer*, AmeriCorps VISTA, Public Defender Services, Charleston WV

*Stephanne C. Thornton*, Criminal Justice Specialist, Public Defender Services, Charleston WV

**NASAMS Track**

- **Realities for Vulnerable Clients: Prisoner Advocacy at Sentencing**

Some clients will experience prison in uniquely challenging ways that result in a higher level of punishment for them. This training is focused on how to educate judges at sentencing on the realities and specific harms of prison for a vulnerable client in order to mitigate (or even eliminate) a prison sentence. This training is also focused on ways for defense counsel to proactively identify and address some of the challenges or threats that a vulnerable client will face in prison. This includes how to strategically support clients in accessing programs or treatment while incarcerated, how to document needed accommodations in prison, and how to receive the best initial classification or placement possible within a prison system. This training will discuss sentence mitigation rooted in conditions of confinement for clients with mental or physical disabilities, histories of victimization, serving time for a sex offense or as a cooperator, and how these vulnerabilities can intersect and compound for young adults in particular.

**Presenter:**

*Tara Chen*, Staff Attorney, Prisoner & Reentry Legal Services Program, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC

2:40-2:50 p.m.                      Break

2:50-4:20 p.m.                      Concurrent Workshops (*one workshop will be added here*)

- **Public Defender Coalition for Immigrant Justice**

The Public Defender Coalition for Immigrant Justice came together in the early weeks of the Biden administration to add a much-needed perspective in federal policy conversations about the intersection of the criminal and immigration legal systems. This coalition is comprised of PD offices across the country working to ensure that our clients—those trapped within both the criminal legal system and the immigration legal system—are neither left behind nor sacrificed in an effort to advance immigration reform. Learn about the work the coalition has been doing and how public defender offices can engage in these national conversations.

**Presenters:**

*Rosa Cohen-Cruz*, Policy Counsel & Immigration Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Jennifer T. Friedman*, Deputy Public Defender, Immigration Defense Unit, San Francisco Office of the Public Defender, San Francisco CA

*Jenny R. Hernandez*, Attorney, Immigration Defense Unit, City of Atlanta Office of the Public Defender, Atlanta GA

*Jennifer Klein*, Staff Counsel, Immigration Impact Unit, Committee for Public Counsel Services, Boston MA

**NASAMS Track**

- **(Accurately) Predicting the Future is Hard: Cognitive Bias and Risk Assessment**

Increasingly, decisions in criminal justice systems are focused on prediction of criminal recidivism. However, predicting who is likely to recidivate is plagued with unknowns. These unknowns may be filled in by assumptions on the part of the evaluator, thereby influencing who is deemed “too risky” and should therefore have their freedom curtailed or taken away entirely. Risk assessment instruments were developed to improve the accuracy of predictions about who is likely to recidivate. However, simply using a risk assessment instrument is no guarantee that the accuracy of the likelihood estimate has not been influenced by evaluator bias. Moreover, the unequal distribution of risk factors among racial/ethnic groups calls into question the impact of purportedly objective risk instruments on BIPOC. In addition, how decision-makers in criminal justice settings respond to a risk score can lead to outcomes that are misaligned with risk management and risk reduction. Learn about some of the scientific research regarding sources of bias that have the potential to infect both evaluations of risk as well as risk-based decisions in criminal justice settings. There will also be specific discussion of potential avenues for attorneys to challenge risk “scores.” Attorneys, social workers, mitigation specialists, and mental health professionals will all benefit from this session.

**Presenter:**

*Jennifer Kamorowski*, Assistant Professor, Plymouth State University, Plymouth NH

4:20-4:30 p.m. Break

4:30-5:30 p.m. *Closing Plenary – The Voices of Lived Experience*

Ronald Simpson-Bey is an NLADA board member and current chair of NLADA's Client Council. He is also a national leader in decarceration and director of outreach & alumni engagement at Just Leadership U.S.A. Join Ronald for a discussion with the people closest to the problem and the solutions.

**COD Conference Ends**



# Black Public Defender Association Conference, June 17-18



Thursday, June 17

12:00 – 1:30 p.m. *BPDA Opening Plenary*

## **Policing as Trauma: Litigating Race in a Criminal Case**

National debates following the killing of George Floyd highlight the need for a national reckoning on the traumatic effects of policing in communities of color. In this interactive workshop, participants will:

1. Become familiar with research on the psychological and emotional trauma associated with routine policing in communities of color;
2. Consider the unique impact of policing on adolescent development;
3. Understand how cognitive phenomena like racial bias and stereotype threat affect police discretion and police-civilian encounters; and
4. Recognize how race and trauma affect critical legal questions in a criminal case, including search and seizure, custodial interrogation, pre-trial detention, trauma-informed and sentencing. This workshop will help defenders incorporate race into their trial strategies to understand the importance of race at various decision points in a juvenile or criminal legal case.

### Presenter:

*Kristin Henning*, Blume Professor of Law & Director of the Juvenile Justice Clinic and Initiative,  
Georgetown University Law Center, Washington DC

1:30-1:45 p.m. Break

1:45-3:15 p.m. Concurrent Workshops

- **A Discussion of Strategies for Dismantling Racist Structures Within and Outside of Your Office**

This workshop will explain what a regular day looks like for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Directors. What are the challenges, and how do EDI Directors overcome those challenges? Additionally, if you do not have an EDI Director in your office, there will be a discussion on strategies to tackle and dismantle racial injustices of structures within and outside of their office.

### Presenters:

*Alaina Bloodworth*, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Baton Rouge Office of Public Defender,  
Baton Rouge LA

*Shannon Cumberbatch*, Director of Equity & Institutional Transformation, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Amari Harris*, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Attorney, Virginia Indigent Defense Commission, Richmond VA

*Patrick Orciani*, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Maryland Office of the Public Defender,  
Baltimore MD

- **Expanding Early Access to Counsel: The Why and the How**

Early intervention is a crucial part of reducing racial inequity and when done properly, has drastic impacts on a person's life. At the Bronx Defenders, we have been working to expand early access to legal advice. In this presentation, we will briefly discuss the benefits of early legal intervention as well as ways to increase early access to legal assistance.

### Presenters:

*Simmi Kaur*, Community Intake Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Marian Mikhail*, Early Defense Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Christopher Smith*, Community Intake Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Michael Thomas*, Early Defense Team Leader and Community Intake Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY





- **Race & the 4th Amendment**

The killing of Black people at the hands of law enforcement is not a new phenomenon. It is time for public defenders to play a key role in fighting back against the use of the 4<sup>th</sup> amendment to unlawfully stop and surveil Black communities. This session will examine the issues surrounding race and the Fourth Amendment and discuss strategies for criminal defense attorneys to challenge law enforcement practices through the courts.

Presenters:

*Byron Conway Jr., Staff Attorney, Federal Defender Program, Atlanta GA*

*La Mer Kyle-Griffiths, Director of Training & Complex Litigation, Still She Rises, Tulsa OK*

- **Warrior Motion Practice: Innovative Written Advocacy**

This course promotes the use of motion practice as a tool to address and challenge fundamental and/or social wrongs. It encourages lawyers to think outside the bounds of traditional legal and motion practice and use whatever relevant legal mechanisms necessary to construct cogent, persuasive arguments.

Presenter:

*Zamir Ben-Dan, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of New York City, New York NY*

3:15-3:30 p.m.                      Break

3:30-5:00 p.m.                      Concurrent Workshops

- **Building Trusting Relationships with Clients**

How do we as public defenders build meaningful and trustworthy relationships with clients? How do investigators and attorneys support each other and shape productive relationships? This training will focus on navigating relationships and zealously investigating in a climate of distrust for a criminal legal system steeped in racism and discriminatory treatment.

Presenters:

*Faheemah Downs, Chief of Investigations, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC*

*Anthony Matthews, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC*

*Michael Rucker, Senior Investigative Specialist, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC*

*Tyrees Smith, Investigative Specialist, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC*

- **Ending the Family Death Penalty: REPEAL ASFA**

In 1997, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) was enacted, which wildly changed the legal landscape of the family regulation system. The result was an extreme attack on Black families, an attack from which we have yet to recover. This workshop will discuss the history of ASFA as well as current efforts to dismantle this federal policy. Members of the panel include directly affected activists, organizers, and lawyers working to shift the laws around this system.

Presenters:

*Ashley Albert, parent advocate in Washington State*

*Tiheba Bain, Founder & Executive Director, Women Against Mass Incarceration, Connecticut*

*Erin Miles Cloud, Co-Founder and Co-Director, Movement for Family Power*

*Bishop Marcia Dinkins, Founder & Executive Director, Black Women Rising*

*Kelis Houston, Founder, Village Arms*



- **Social Workers Have Trial Skills Too**

Social workers and lawyers possess different skill sets. Social workers are specifically trained in active listening, empathy, paying attention to verbal and non-verbal cues, patience and cultural competency. This presentation unlocks the multiple ways – using these skills – that social workers and attorneys can work together during a criminal trial.

Presenter:

*Lori James-Townes*, Executive Director, National Association for Public Defense

*Porsha-Shaf'on Venable*, Supervising Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

- **Treating a Lawyer's Grief: The Root of Recovery & Inclusion**

Historically, Lawyer Assistance Programs have focused on treating symptoms, i.e., alcohol and substance use, rather than focusing on the root cause of a lawyer's mental health and need for assistance and recovery. The legal profession is suffering from the lack of meaningful well-being options available. We cannot continue to use the same methods and expect different results. This session will explore an evidence-based program that provides lawyers with a toolkit for life, both personally and professionally, when experiencing loss and change.

Presenter:

*Heather D. Horton*, Esq., ACC, Principal, The H-Squared Group LLC, Washington DC

5:00-6:00 p.m.                      Networking Reception

## Friday, June 18

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.                      *Plenary Session*

### **Black Men in Leadership**

This plenary panel will involve a discussion among some of the prominent Black men who are leaders in Public Defense. They will discuss their own leadership development, share how they have overcome obstacles they faced on their journeys, how they navigate nuances of leading while being targets in their own communities, and the goals that they have set within their leadership roles.

Moderator:

*Stan Germán*, Executive Director, New York County Defender Services, New York NY

Presenters:

*Derwyn Bunton*, Chief District Defender for Orleans Parish, New Orleans LA

*Michael Carter*, Executive Director, Federal Community Defender Office, Detroit MI

*Sharone Mitchell Jr.*, Chief Defender, Cook County, Chicago IL

*Mercer ("Monte") Givhan*, Director of Training and Staff Development, Civilian Complaint Review Board, New York NY

1:00-1:10 p.m.                      Break

1:10-2:40 p.m.                      Concurrent Workshops

- **Decarceration Mechanisms**

There are greater efforts in the criminal legal reform space to reexamine and correct our harsh and overly punitive sentencing laws, but how do we ensure that depopulation measures are equitable in their outcomes? This session will explore the mechanisms available to achieve decarceration. We will also discuss how we can push for decarceration measures that address racial disparities in the criminal legal system and transfer resources back to Black communities.



Moderator:

*Chiquisha Robinson*, Deputy Chief for the Prisoner & Reentry Legal Services, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC

Presenters:

*Nazgol Ghandnoosh, Ph.D.*, Senior Research Analyst, The Sentencing Project, Washington DC

*David Singleton*, Executive Director, The Ohio Justice and Policy Center, Cincinnati, OH

*Paula Thompson*, Executive Director, Voices for a Second Chance, Washington DC

- **Disrupting Carceral Systems: State and Local Disruptions to Homelessness, Education, Immigration**

Black people are penalized and criminalized in systems outside of the criminal legal system. We'll focus specifically on housing, education, and immigration to discuss how Black communities are surveilled, policed, and punished within these systems. We'll hear from lawyers and advocates who are working to disrupt these carceral systems at the local and state level.

Moderators:

*Michelle Bonner*, Consultant, National Legal Aid & Defender Association, Washington DC

*Tinsae Gebriel*, Deputy Director, Racial Equity Initiatives, National Legal Aid & Defender Association, Washington DC

Presenters:

*Francis Adewale*, Community Court Lead Assistant Public Defender, City of Spokane Public Defender's Office, Spokane WA

*Brittany K. Ruffin*, Affordable Housing Advocacy Attorney, The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, Washington DC

*Nakisha Winston*, Staff Attorney, Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC

- **Practicing While Brown or "Other": A Strengths-Based Approach**

Many of us do not look, feel, dress, worship, or choose to live like the "majority" of our colleagues or country, but we remain an integral part of the criminal legal system. In this session, we will acknowledge the generational strengths built into us, create space for humility and grace, explore ways to find our voices, and bolster our practice.

Presenter:

*Anupama Vishwamitra*, LCSW, Director of Mitigation, Georgia Capital Defender, Atlanta GA

- **Reimagining Better Representation: Divesting from White Supremacy within Public Defense**

In this session, we will critically examine how we as public defenders preserve and reinforce white supremacist language, values, and structures in our work. We will then share examples and strategies of how we can work to divest from these practices. This is a collective space for reimagining new ways to support ourselves and our clients within the legal system. We invite participants to collaborate with us as we continue to work through decolonizing ourselves and explore ways to disrupt harmful practices in our profession.

Presenters:

*Olga Beltre*, Investigator Supervisor and Team Leader, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Kingston Farady*, Homicide Investigator, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Violeta Rivera*, Equity and Institutional Transformation Associate, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

*Elizabeth Williams*, Social Work Supervisor, Criminal Defense Practice and Adolescent Defense Project, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

2:40-2:50 p.m.

Break



2:50-4:20 p.m.

## Concurrent Workshops

- **Closing Juvenile Facilities: The Case for Abolition**

Black children are disproportionately arrested, confined, and tried in adult court. This panel will discuss how we can work towards abolition by investing in alternatives to detention and providing community support for children and families. We will also examine how racial bias and the dehumanization of Black children result in disproportionate confinement of Black children.

Presenters:

*Carmen Daugherty*, Policy Director, Youth First Initiative, Washington DC

*Kristina Kersey*, Assistant Deputy Public Defender, New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, Asbury Park NJ

*Erin Morgan*, Deputy Public Defender, San Joaquin County Office of the Public Defender, Stockton CA

*This panel will also feature youth leaders from the Final Five Campaign.*

- **Police Accountability**

From surveillance, arrest, and detention to brutality and death, Black people remain the targets and victims of racist policing. Despite having tremendous power and devastating impact on Black communities, police officers are rarely held accountable for their actions, and the power entrusted to the system of policing goes unchecked. This plenary will explore tactics to hold police accountable by employing strategic litigation, seeking legislative change, and other larger-scale reforms to keep Black communities safe from police violence.

Presenters:

*Stephany Reaves*, Trial Division Staff Attorney, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC

*Sylvia Smith*, Trial Division Staff Attorney, The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington DC

- **The Power of the Jury Box**

This presentation will identify ways in which public defenders can engage the communities they represent outside the courtroom to empower them with an understanding of the power of the jury box.

Presenters:

*William Snowden*, Founder, The Juror Project, New Orleans LA

*Porsha-Shaf'on Venable*, Supervising Attorney, The Bronx Defenders, Bronx NY

- **Social Science Recognizes Racial Trauma: Getting the Legal System to Do the Same**

This session will identify and describe racial trauma as a recognized social construct that practitioners should be addressing in court. Dr. Antoinette Kavanaugh, forensic psychologist, will explain what racial trauma is and will provide empirical evidence and studies to support those findings. Dr. Kavanaugh, Jacinta Hall, and Carnita McKeithen will also conduct role- playing exercises giving real world examples on how best to gather this information from our clients. Finally, we will discuss ethical implications concerning our duty to raise this issue in court while also giving guidance (motions/handouts) on how to do that.

Presenters:

*Jacinta Hall*, Assistant Federal Public Defender & Adjunct Professor, University of Mississippi School of Law, Jackson MS

*Antoinette Kavanaugh*, Ph.D., ABPP, Board Certified Forensic Psychologist, former Clinical Director of the Juvenile Justice Division, Cook County Juvenile Court Clinic, Chicago IL

*Carnita McKeithen*, Juvenile Trial Division Supervisor, Shelby County Public Defender, Memphis TN



4:20-4:30 p.m.                      Break

4:30-5:00 p.m.                      *Closing Plenary*

Join us for closing remarks from **James Forman Jr.**, who authored the amazing book “**Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America**” which brilliantly describes the internal struggles within the Black community around how to deal with harm and public safety. He is the J. Skelly Wright Professor of Law at Yale Law School. Professor Forman teaches and writes in the areas of criminal procedure and criminal law policy, constitutional law, juvenile justice, and education law and policy. His particular interests are schools, prisons, and police, and those institutions’ race and class dimensions. Don’t miss this riveting discussion!

### **BPDA Conference Ends**