Transforming Texas’ Criminal Justice System

A Symposium for Journalists

SPONSORED BY THE JOHN JAY COLLEGE CENTER ON MEDIA, CRIME AND JUSTICE AND THE CHARLES KOCH FOUNDATION WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AUSTIN MOODY COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION

OCTOBER 21ST – 22ND, 2019
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
MOODY COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
BELO CENTER FOR NEW MEDIA
300 W. DEAN KEETON ST, AUSTIN TX 78712
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21
All sessions at the University of Texas at Austin Moody College of Communication

8:00–9:00am PRIVATE BRIEFING,
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
FOR JOURNALISTS

9:00am–9:15am
WELCOME
Stephen Handelman, Director, Center on Media Crime and Justice at John Jay College (CMCJ)
Kathleen McElroy, Dean, School of Journalism, University of Texas at Austin

9:15am–9:45am
OPENING KEYNOTE:
A Summary of the CJ Reform Issues Currently at Play in Texas, their Current Status and Changes of Passage
Joe Moody, Speaker ProTem, Texas House of Representatives

9:45am–11:00am
SESSION 1
THE POLITICS OF CJ REFORM IN TEXAS, 2019
Lauren Johnson, Criminal Justice Coordinator, ACLU of Texas
Marc Levin, Vice President, Criminal Justice Policy, Texas Public Policy Foundation
Sandra Guerra Thompson, Professor in Law, Director Criminal Justice Institute at the University of Houston Law Center
MODERATOR: Jolie McCullough, reporter, Texas Tribune

11:00am–11:10am
BREAK

11:10am–12:25pm
SESSION 2A
REDUCING INCARCERATION
Recodifying Texas CJ Laws and Practices; Rolling Back Mandatory Minimum Sentencing
Shawn Dick, District Attorney, Williamson County
Nick Hudson, Criminal Justice Policy Analyst, ACLU of Texas
Kim Ogg, District Attorney, Harris County
MODERATOR: John C. Moritz, Austin Bureau USA TODAY NETWORK

12:25–1:30pm LUNCH

12:40pm–1:00pm
WELCOMING REMARKS
William R. Kelly, Director, Center for Criminology and Criminal Justice Research, Professor of Sociology, UT Austin

1:00pm–1:30pm
LUNCHEON PRESENTATION:
The Problems in Accessing Texas’s Criminal Justice Data, and Efforts to Make the System More Transparent
Katharine Teleki, Director of Policy and Planning, Texas 2036

1:30pm–2:45pm
SESSION 2B
REDUCING INCARCERATION
Pretrial Diversion / Cash Bail Reform / Wrongful Convictions / Drug Prosecutions / Indigent Defense
Geoffrey Burkhart, Executive Director, Texas Indigent Defense Commission
Lina Hidalgo, Judge Harris County (Houston)
Amanda Woog, Executive Director, Texas Fair Defense Project
MODERATOR: Cary Aspinwall, Dallas-based staff writer for The Marshall Project
2:45pm–2:55pm
BREAK

2:55pm–4:10pm
SESSION 3
RETHINKING THE MISSION AND PRIORITIES OF TEXAS PROSECUTORS

John Creuzot, Dallas County District Attorney
Mark Gonzalez, District Attorney, Nueces County (Corpus Christi)
Stacey Mathews, Judge, 277th District Court
MODERATOR: Jessica Brand, Legal Director, The Justice Collaborative

4:10pm–4:20pm
BREAK

4:20pm–5:30pm
SESSION 4
SUCCESSFUL PRISON REENTRY AND REDUCING RECIDIVISM: AN EXPERIMENTAL MODEL
“The Safe Streets and Second Chances” pilot project in Texas

Kevin Garrett, Texas Jail Project
John Koufos, National Director of Reentry Initiatives at Right on Crime, Executive Director of Safe Streets & Second Chances
Carrie Pettus-Davis, Assistant Professor, Florida State University, Founding Director, Institute for Justice Research & Development, Lead Researcher, “Safe Streets & Second Chances” Pilot Program

DISCUSSION LEADER: Andrea Ball, Austin American-Statesman

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

8:30–9:00am CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

9:00am–10:20am
SESSION 5
RETHINKING THE MISSION/IMPROVING CONDITIONS OF INMATES IN TEXAS JAILS & PRISONS

Diana Claitor, Co-Founder & Director, Texas Jail Project
Michele Deitch, Senior Lecturer, LBJ School of Public Affairs UT School of Law, University of Texas at Austin
MODERATOR: Keri Blakinger, Reporter, Houston Chronicle

10:20am–10:30am
BREAK

10:30am–11:45am
SESSION 6
FROM THE INSIDE LOOKING OUT
Formerly Incarcerated Leadership on the Future of Reform

Darwin Hamilton, Author/Speaker/Chair of Grassroots Leadership
Annette Price, M.S., Statewide Coordinator of Texas Advocates for Justice
Doug Smith, Senior Policy Analyst, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition
DISCUSSION LEADER: Mark Wilson, Austin American-Statesman

11:45am–1:20pm
JOURNALISTS ROUNDTABLE (BOXED LUNCH)

SYMPOSIUM WRAP
Discussion of Texas Criminal Justice Coverage

DISCUSSION LEADERS:
Stephen Handelman, Director, Center on Media, Crime & Justice
Terri Langford, Editor, Texas Standard
THE CENTER ON MEDIA, CRIME AND JUSTICE

The Center on Media, Crime and Justice at John Jay fosters quality, in-depth reporting on the criminal justice system. Operated by working journalists, it provides training and skills assistance to reporters at every level around the country, and nurtures the work of young and distinguished journalists on the new frontiers of the media industry. Over 850 reporters, editors and broadcasters have participated in center activities since 2007. Internship and work-study programs also provide opportunities for student journalists at John Jay and other educational institutions around New York to learn criminal justice reporting skills.

thecrimereport.org/center-on-media-crime-justice-at-john-jay-college/

CHARLES KOCH FOUNDATION

The Charles Koch Foundation provides grants to scholars and non-profit organizations that help people improve their lives and communities. We support a diversity of viewpoints and perspectives that foster respect for all people and protect human dignity, developing creative solutions that will help make the world better for all people.

www.charleskochfoundation.org/about-us/

ABOUT JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

An international leader in educating for justice, John Jay College of Criminal Justice of The City University of New York offers a rich liberal arts and professional studies curriculum to upwards of 14,000 undergraduate and graduate students from more than 135 nations. In teaching, scholarship and research, the college approaches justice as an applied art and science fairness, equality and the rule of law. For more information, visit www.jjay.cuny.edu

THE CRIME REPORT

Produced by the Center on Media, Crime and Justice, The Crime Report provides daily digests of criminal justice news and research, commentary from leading figures in the field, and our award-winning original reporting available nowhere else.