



## Criminology and Criminal Justice Gets Back Into Fall



The Criminology and Criminal Justice Department welcomed people back to campus this fall! Sponsored by the Graduate Student Association, faculty and graduate students, we celebrated after being (mostly) online for the past year. We wish everyone a happy and healthy fall semester!

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## Alumna Jennifer Cobbina recognized with Distinguished Alumni Award



Dr. Jennifer Cobbina (pictured on the right) recently was recognized with the university-wide Distinguished Alumni Award during the 30th annual Founders Celebration. Cobbina graduated from the program with her MA in 2006, and her PhD in 2009, and she is currently an associate professor in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Her research examines the intersection of race, gender and crime as well as public response to police use of force. Cobbina interviewed nearly 200 residents of Ferguson and Baltimore about the police killings of Michael Brown and Freddie Gray in researching and writing her 2019 book “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot: Why the Protests in Ferguson and Baltimore Matter, and How They Changed America.”

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## New report from UMSL criminologists shows lengths of stay at St. Louis County jail increasing even as admissions decline



A 40% decline in admissions to the St. Louis County Department of Justice Services over a 10-year period has not produced a proportionate reduction in people in jail, according to a new report produced by University of Missouri–St. Louis criminologists Beth Huebner, Lee Slocum and doctoral student Andrea Giuffre for the Research Network on Misdemeanor Justice.

This new research indicates that fewer arrests, and thus admissions to St. Louis jails, are being offset by a rising number of people who remain jailed for longer periods of time – thereby increasing the average length of stay.

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## Dan Isom Appointed as St. Louis Public Safety Director

Dr. Dan Isom, Criminology and Criminal Justice alum and current instructor in the department, was appointed as the St. Louis Public Safety Director under Mayor Tishaura Jones last spring. Isom is the former St. Louis Police Chief, and also worked as the Executive Director

of the Regional Justice Information Service.

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## Samantha Simon Awarded Russell Sage Foundation Grant

Assistant Professor Samantha Simon was recently awarded a Russell Sage Foundation Presidential Grant for her work, "Learning Lethal Force; Police Firearms Training and Evaluation." The grant will



support her work on police firearms training. Simon's project focuses on how are police officers trained to use firearms, how virtual simulation technology shapes police firearms training, and how ideologies of race and gender structure the way that lethal force is conceptualized and taught. Simon was also featured in UMSL's Ask An Expert about her work in police academies, where she argues that "police training is an organized effort to condition officers to conceptualize their relationship with the public as a war."

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## Alumna Niquita Loftis earns promotion to Assistant Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer

Dr. Niquita Loftis recently earned a promotion to Assistant Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer in the Northern District of Texas. Loftis graduated with her PhD in Criminology and Criminal Justice in 2017, and also earned her MA and BA in the department. She indicated that her PhD was instrumental in helping her secure the promotion. During her time at UMSL, Loftis worked on the disparity of supervised released sentences of child pornography defendants.



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## Outstanding undergraduate students awarded scholarships



Undergraduate student Hannah Hook (pictured on the left) was recently awarded the Doris Fishman Administration of Justice Scholarship, which recognizes outstanding students who are pursuing a Criminology and Criminal Justice major. JohnPaul Werner (pictured on the right) and Benjamin Mason were awarded the Jennings Do-Dads Juvenile Justice Scholarship, which recognizes outstanding students who have an interest and commitment to work in juvenile justice. Congratulations to these stellar undergrads!

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## Alessandra Early Wins Award from the Division of Victimology

Congratulations to doctoral student Alessandra Early, who won a travel award from the [Division of Victimology](#) to attend the [American Society of Criminology](#) in Chicago, Illinois. Early is also being recognized at the American Society of Criminology's Division on Women and Crime's award ceremony for the Larry J. Siegel Fellowship for the Study of Gender and Crime for her project, "Queer and Nonbinary Experiences: The Spatial Dynamics of Identity, Race, and Recreational Drug Use."



## Report Released on COVID-19 and Crime Trends in U.S. Cities

Curators' Distinguished Professor Emeritus Richard Rosenfeld and graduate student and Research Specialist Ernesto Lopez released their most recent report for the Council on Criminal Justice. Their report, entitled "[Pandemic, Social Unrest, and Crime in U.S. Cities](#)," focused on crime trends during the COVID-19 pandemic. They examined changes in crime rates in 29 American cities since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, with an emphasis on homicide and other violent crimes. They conclude that "As the pandemic subsides, long-lasting reductions in violence and crime will require pursuing evidence-based crime-control strategies and enacting long-needed reforms to policing." Their research was [also cited by the White House](#) in their strategy to combat gun violence and other crime. Lopez and Rosenfeld also published an accompanying study in [Criminology and Public Policy](#) on their findings.



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## Paige Vaughn Awarded Richard Block Award

Recent PhD graduate Dr. Paige Vaughn won the Richard Block Award from the Homicide Research Working Group for her dissertation, "Dual Disadvantage: An Examination of Racial Disparities in Victim and Suspect Criminal Justice Treatment." Vaughn is now an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Criminology at [Spring Hill College](#).



## Lee Slocum Recognized with UMSL Hero Award

Professor and Department Chair Lee Slocum was recognized with an UMSL Hero Award. Slocum was recognized for her scholarship and community work, including work with [Beyond Housing](#) and the [St. Louis City Department of Health](#), as well as her teaching.

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## Jennifer O'Neill Awarded Huber Dissertation Fellowship

Recent PhD graduate Dr. Jennifer O'Neill won the Charles G. Huber, Jr. Endowed Dissertation Fellowship in Criminology and Criminal Justice. The fellowship was the result of a [generous gift from alum Charles Huber](#), who graduated with a BA from the department. O'Neill recently defended her dissertation, "Schools on the frontlines of governance: How the convergence of criminal justice and education shapes adolescent perceptions and behavior."



## Kelsey Cundiff recognized at Early Career Research Symposium

Assistant Professor [Kelsey Cundiff](#) was voted Best Visuals for her presentation, "Homicide Hot Spots in San Francisco: Changes over Time and Space, 1849-2003" at the [2021 Early Career Research Symposium](#). The Symposium featured junior faculty from across the campus.

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# Marisa Omori wins paper award

Along with a co-author, Assistant Professor Marisa Omori won the Donal MacNamara Award from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences for their article, "Racial threat, Social (dis)organization, and the Ecology of Police: Towards a Macro-level Understanding of Police Use-of-Force in Communities of Color." The paper examines use-of-force incidents as neighborhood processes to understand how rates and levels of use-of-force vary across New York City.



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