

EVENT PROGRAM

ACTION SPEAKS

A Solutions-Oriented Series On Public Safety and Policing

LET'S TALK ABOUT PUBLIC SAFETY & POLICING

FEATURED SPEAKERS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



MARC H. MORIAL
President and CEO
National Urban League
KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**NJ ASSEMBLYWOMAN
SHAVONDA E. SUMTER**
Paterson, New Jersey



MAYOR ADRIAN D. MAPP
City of Plainfield
President,
NJ Urban Mayors Assoc.



**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
PROSECUTOR
JENNIFER WEBB-MCRAE**



REV. DR. CHARLES F. BOYER
Greater Mount Zion A.M.E. Church
City of Trenton



JOSEPH YOUNGBLOOD II, PH.D.
SVP, Transformational Learning and
External Affairs, Moderator
Kean University



JEROME HATFIELD
SVP, Integrated Health,
Safety, and Response Services
Kean University

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

EXHIBITORS

REFRESHMENTS

OPENING REMARKS FROM THE NJ OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

Saturday, March 1, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

North Avenue Academic Building, Kean

University, 1000 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ



KEAN
John S. Watson Institute for
URBAN POLICY & RESEARCH



EVENT AGENDA

8:30 AM - 9:40 AM

6th Floor (NAAB)

LIGHT BREAKFAST SERVED

9:45 AM - 10:00 AM

Auditorium

OVERVIEW

Barbara George Johnson MPH, JD,
Vice President, External Affairs and Urban Policy

10:00 AM - 10:15 AM

Auditorium

WELCOME REMARKS

Dr. Lamont Repollet, President
First Assistant Attorney General Lyndsay V. Ruotolo

10:15 AM - 10:30 AM

Auditorium

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Marc Morial
President and Chief Executive
Officer National Urban League

10:30 AM - 11:15 AM

Auditorium

PANEL

Joseph Youngblood, II, PhD, JD, Senior Vice President
for Transformational Learning and External Affairs
Moderator

The Honorable Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter
Chair • New Jersey Legislative Black Caucus Thirty-Fifth
Legislative District • New Jersey General Assembly

The Honorable Mayor Adrian O. Mapp
President and Chair
New Jersey Urban Mayors Association City of Plainfield

Rev. Dr. Charles F. Boyer Pastor
Greater Mount Zion AME Church of Trenton Co-Founder Salvation
and Social Justice

Jerome Hatfield
Senior Vice President, Integrated Health, Safety and Response
Services, Kean University

Jennifer Webb-McRae
Prosecutor, Cumberland County

11:15 AM - 11:20 AM

BREAKOUT ROOM INSTRUCTIONS

Keisha Griffin, Ed.D
Senior Operations Manager, External Affairs & Urban Policy

11:30 AM - 12:50 PM

1st and 2nd Floor

BREAKOUT SESSIONS - FIRST FACILITATION

1:00 PM - 1:20 PM

6th Floor (NAAB)

BREAK (BOX LUNCH SERVED)

1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

1st and 2nd Floor

BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SECOND FACILITATION

2:50PM - 3:00 PM

Auditorium

REPORTS FROM BREAKOUT ROOM SESSIONS

CLOSING REMARKS: THE WAY FORWARD

Barbara George Johnson, MPH, JD
Vice President, External Affairs and Urban Policy

Joseph Youngblood, II, PhD, JD,
Senior Vice President for Transformational Learning
and External Affairs

OVERVIEW

Welcome to Action Speaks! A Symposia on Policing and Public Safety

This event is the Kickoff to a symposium series curated and convened to foster meaningful community conversation on public safety, health, and community well-being while charting a course toward crafting and advancing evidence-informed policy solutions to today's public safety challenges. This symposium series, starting with this event, will focus on exploring evidence-informed solutions tied to the recommendations from the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing convened during President Barack Obama's administration. Released in May 2015 in response to national concerns about police practices and community relations, the report provides a framework for law enforcement agencies to build public trust, ensure officer safety, and promote effective crime reduction. It outlines six key pillars with recommendations and action items to guide the transformation of policing in the 21st century. The report has influenced law enforcement policies nationwide, encouraging agencies to adopt evidence-based practices that align with community needs. While some recommendations have been widely adopted, challenges remain in areas like independent oversight and cultural change within police departments.

Six Pillars of 21st Century Policing

1. Building Trust and Legitimacy

Emphasizes that law enforcement agencies should build strong relationships with communities through transparency, accountability, and fair policing practices.

Encourages a guardian mindset over a warrior mentality to foster legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

2. Policy and Oversight

Calls for comprehensive policies on using force, data collection, and independent oversight.

Recommends implementing clear guidelines on policing strategies such as community policing and crisis intervention.

3. Technology and Social Media

Encourages law enforcement agencies to use technology (e.g., body cameras, data analytics) responsibly to increase transparency and efficiency.

Highlights the importance of community input when adopting new technologies.

4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Promotes proactive partnerships between police and community members to address root causes of crime.

Encourages officers to engage with residents in non-enforcement activities to strengthen relationships.

5. Training and Education

Advocates for updated training in cultural competency, crisis intervention, implicit bias, and de-escalation tactics.

Suggests higher educational standards and continuous professional development for officers.

6. Officer Wellness and Safety

Emphasizes the importance of mental and physical well-being for officers.

Recommends improved shift management, stress reduction programs, and mental health resources.

[Click to Access the full report here:](#)

Symposium Series Topics

Kickoff – Saturday, March 1, 2025, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Kean University

Focused on Pillar 1 and Pillar 2

Youth and Public Safety – Summer 2025

Women and Public Safety - Fall 2025

Welcome

Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D.

President, Kean University

Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., a visionary educator devoted to fostering equity for all students, was selected as the 18th leader of Kean University by the Kean Board of Trustees on May 11, 2020 following a comprehensive national search.



Repollet has long ties to Kean, having earned his master's degree in educational administration from the University in 2000. He served on the Kean Board of Trustees from 2011 until 2018, assuming the role of secretary as well as chair of the Academic Policy and Programs Committee.

Before becoming Kean's president, Repollet served two and a half years as the Commissioner of Education under New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, overseeing the shift to remote education amid the COVID-19 pandemic and playing a key role in planning for the 2020-2021 school year. Prior to that leadership role, he was superintendent of the Asbury Park School District for more than three years and principal of Carteret High School for more than 9 years. He began his career in education as a mathematics teacher and coach in the East Orange School District.

Opening Remarks

Lyndsay Ruotolo

First Assistant
Attorney General,
Office of Attorney
General, State of
New Jersey



Lyndsay Ruotolo is the First Assistant Attorney General. Ruotolo previously served as Director of the Division of Criminal Justice from July 2021 until May 2022. Prior to her appointment as Director of DCJ, Ruotolo served as Acting Union County Prosecutor, where she launched the “Intelligence-Driven Prosecution Unit” to combat violent crime. She also previously served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of New Jersey, where she worked in the area of violent crime prosecution, and before that as a line Assistant Prosecutor in Union County. Ruotolo has also worked in the area of commercial litigation at the law firm of McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter and clerked for the Honorable Ellen L. Koblitz as the Presiding Judge of General Equity (Bergen County), and then as Judge of the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division. Ruotolo received her B.F.A. from the Tisch School for the Arts at New York University, and her J.D. from New York Law School.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Marc Morial

President and Chief
Executive Officer
National Urban League



Marc Morial, one of the few national leaders to possess “street smarts,” and “boardroom savvy,” is the transformative President and CEO of the National Urban League, the nation’s largest historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization.

He served as the highly successful and popular Mayor of New Orleans as well as the President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Marc was previously a Louisiana State Senator and a lawyer in New Orleans with an active, high-profile practice.

He is a leading voice on the national stage in the battle for jobs, education, housing, health, voting rights, equity, and entrepreneurship.

Marc is a published author; his leadership book, *Gumbo Coalition: 10 Leadership Lessons That Help You Inspire, United, and Achieve*, has been widely acclaimed, and his column entitled *To Be Equal* reaches hundreds of thousands.

He is the host of the weekly syndicated television show *America’s Black Forum*.

A graduate of Georgetown University Law Center and the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Economics and African American Studies, he has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential Black Americans by *Ebony* Magazine, one of the top 50 Non-Profit Leaders by the *Non-Profit Times*, one of the 100 Most Influential Black Lawyers in America and he has also been inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in Atlanta, GA.

Marc and his father, the late Ernest “Dutch” Morial, are history makers as the first African American father/son mayors in the U.S. and were the subject of a Double Jeopardy question on the legendary Jeopardy television game show in the 1990s.



Panel Moderator

***Joseph
Youngblood, II
PhD, JD***

Senior Vice President, Transformational
Learning and External Affairs
Kean University

Dr. Joseph Youngblood, II, is the founding Senior Vice President for Transformational Learning and External Affairs at Kean University, where he also oversees the urban policy and research portfolio. With over 25 years in higher education, he is a dynamic, entrepreneurial leader recognized for his work in academic affairs, e-learning, public relations, international partnerships, innovation, and university advancement.

Dr. Youngblood was pivotal in establishing the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean. His approach to policy development integrates research, communications, and environmental change, a perspective that has fostered collaboration with leaders and policymakers at the local, state, federal, and international levels—including engagements with the past six NJ Governors, the NJ Legislative Black Caucus, NJ Legislative Latino Caucus, and the NJ Congressional delegation.

As a senior policy adviser to the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association, he delivers applied research and analyses to meet the public policy needs of 32 urban municipalities, state and local nonprofits, and grassroots organizations. Additionally, Dr. Youngblood spearheaded the creation and launch of Kean's Global Education and Resource Campus, which encompasses Kean Online (KOL), distance education, degree completion programs, and continuing professional studies.

Dr. Youngblood holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and a J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law.



Symposium Hostess

***Barbara
George Johnson,
MPH, JD***

Vice President, External Affairs and
Urban Policy, John S. Watson Institute
Kean University

Barbara George Johnson is Vice President of External Affairs focused on Urban Policy and Applied Research at the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean. Barbara has more than 30 years of experience as a public policy professional in New Jersey and has been a leading voice in shaping health and social policy in the region. Barbara's expertise is expansive; she was recently appointed as Board Chair of the newly established New Jersey Maternal Infant Health Innovation Authority, dedicated to cutting-edge research in perinatal health, public policy interventions, and environmental change. She also serves as co-PI on several state research grants, including a current study for the NJ EDA on Black /Latinx maternal health in the City of Trenton and a previous RWJF-funded study on interventions to reduce childhood obesity in 5 targeted New Jersey cities. Barbara honed her public policy skills as a Public Health Adviser for the Department of Health in New York City; she worked with infants born at risk for developmental delays due to drug exposure. Later, as the Director of the Family Life Institute of Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan New Jersey, she focused on teen pregnancy prevention, reproductive freedom, and HIV/AIDS prevention and education. Barbara also created the Newark Kids Initiative project for the Newark Health Department, which focused on healthcare and social services for children exposed to domestic violence. In her role at Kean, Barbara oversees the six policy centers housed at the John S. Watson Institute focused on early childhood education, urban environmental issues, public health, civic engagement and leadership development, and municipal government and nonprofit capacity building. Barbara lends her talents to several civic organizations and boards. She currently serves on the boards of the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan New Jersey, as Board Vice-Chair, and Deborah Heart and Lung Medical Center, where she is Board Chair Emeritus. Barbara earned a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and Technology from Cornell University, a Master of Public Health degree from Columbia University's School of Public Health, and her Juris Doctor from Rutgers-Newark Law School.



KEAN
John S. Watson Institute for
URBAN POLICY & RESEARCH

Event Management Team



Keisha Griffin, EdD

Dr. Keisha Griffin is the Senior Operations Manager for External Affairs and Urban Policy and the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean University. With over 20 years of experience in higher education leadership, she specializes in managing complex, high-impact projects at the intersection of research, education, and innovation. Dr. Griffin oversees operations, business services, procurement, and grant management, ensuring the seamless execution of research-driven initiatives and policy-focused programs. She earned her Doctor of Education with a concentration in higher educational leadership from Saint Peter's University. She is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Symposium Manager



Kaylyn Kendall Dines, MBA

Kaylyn Kendall Dines, the Divine Nine News columnist from The New York Amsterdam News, has more than 18 years experience in marketing, communications, public affairs, strategic planning and project management. Articles Kaylyn wrote have been published in Black Enterprise magazine; The Positive Community; and The Courier News, a Gannett daily newspaper in Bridgewater, NJ, and PULSE magazine, of Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. Kaylyn earned her MBA degree from Rutgers University, a Bachelor's degree in Journalism from Delaware State University, and she completed Leadership Newark and Lead NJ Public Policy Fellowship Programs. Fun facts: Kaylyn, a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., enjoys quality time with family and friends, the theater, movies, museums, concerts, simulated and actual skydiving.

Consultant



Dianthe Dawn Brooks

With over 30 years of leadership experience, including 20 years in government. Dianthe Dawn Brooks is a seasoned administrator, consultant, and faith leader committed to social justice and community empowerment. She has mobilized diverse communities, built interfaith coalitions, and secured millions in grant funding for social services, violence prevention, reentry programs, and youth initiatives.

A licensed preacher and church administrator at Union Chapel AME Church, she bridges faith, policy, and activism to combat racial injustice, Christian nationalism, and economic inequality. Her expertise in public engagement, nonprofit management, and digital advocacy has driven impactful policy change at local, state and national levels.

Consultant

Brooks is a proven leader in advocacy, ministry, and public service, dedicated to making faith a force for justice and inclusion.

Panelist



The Honorable Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter

Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter entered the New Jersey General Assembly in 2012. She has served in the executive leadership as Deputy Speaker and Majority Conference Leader. Assemblywoman Sumter currently represents the 35th Legislative District that includes parts of Bergen and Passaic Counties.

In this current session, Assemblywoman Sumter serves as Chair of assembly committee, Community Development and Women's Affairs, where she looks forward to tackling important issues such as community blight, the wealth gap and upscaling the needs of New Jersey's small businesses. She also serves as Vice Chair of the Environmental, Natural Resources and Solid Waste committee and is a valued member of the committee on Labor. In addition, Asw. Sumter is the first woman to serve as the chair of the New Jersey Legislative Black Caucus.

Assemblywoman Sumter recognizes that her legislation transcends her district and affects the 9 million people in the state of New Jersey. She is a staunch advocate for job growth, women's health, voting rights, civil rights, and criminal justice reform. Assemblywoman Sumter has championed legislation addressing Black Maternal & Infant mortality in the state. In 2020, Governor Murphy signed her voting rights legislation into law, restoring voting rights for more than 80,000 individuals who were on probation or parole.

Assemblywoman Sumter received her Master's in Business Administration from the Fairleigh Dickinson University Silberman College of Business and attended Kean University for her undergraduate degree in Political Science. The opportunity for her to excel was a result of the generous funding support of state programs, such as the Education Opportunity Fund, and corporations that financed her education. Shavonda is a staunch advocate for access to health care services including mental health care. Her career in mental health services spans over 20 years working with health systems throughout the state that included Hackensack Meridian UMC Mountainside. Currently, Assemblywoman Sumter is the President and CEO of Children's Aid and Family Services. She prides herself on the hard work that her parents Charles and Bonnie Williams instilled in her.

Assemblywoman Sumter has been married for 25 years to Kenneth; together they have two children, a daughter, Tyler and a son, Kenneth. She continues to work hard with a purpose because she believes to whom much is given, much is required.

Panelist



Rev. Dr. Charles Boyer

In January 2022, Adrian O. Mapp was sworn in for an historic third term as Mayor of the City of Plainfield. An aggressive agenda marks his leadership, focused on rebuilding the city's economy and ensuring opportunities for all residents. This has led to a renaissance in Plainfield, characterized by over a billion dollars in redevelopment projects. He has successfully implemented progressive legislation focused on fairness, diversity, equity and inclusion, including new laws requiring paid sick leave for workers and a \$15 minimum wage that seeks to address economic inequality as well as educational and health disparities through several significant initiatives. Mayor Mapp's partnership with the Latino community led to the Consulate General of Ecuador, in NJ, honoring him for bringing about change to the diverse cultures in the Plainfield community.

He served 11 years as the Director of Finance and QPA for the City of Orange. He was a former Commissioner on the Local Finance Board for the State of New Jersey, and is the current President of the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association. Mayor Mapp was recently appointed to the African American Mayors Association Board of Trustees.

Mayor Mapp is married and has two daughters and two grandchildren. He holds an M.B.A. in International Business from Fairleigh Dickinson University, and a B.S. in Accounting from Rutgers University. He is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), a Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO), and a Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA).

Panelist



Adrian O. Mapp

In January 2022, Adrian O. Mapp was sworn in for an historic third term as Mayor of the City of Plainfield. An aggressive agenda marks his leadership, focused on rebuilding the city's economy and ensuring opportunities for all residents. This has led to a renaissance in Plainfield, characterized by over a billion dollars in redevelopment projects. He has successfully implemented progressive legislation focused on fairness, diversity, equity and inclusion, including new laws requiring paid sick leave for workers and a \$15 minimum wage that seeks to address economic inequality as well as educational and health disparities through several significant initiatives. Mayor Mapp's partnership with the Latino community led to the Consulate General of Ecuador, in NJ, honoring him for bringing about change to the diverse cultures in the Plainfield community.

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Panelist

Jennifer Webb-McRae



Jennifer Webb-McRae is a native of Vineland, New Jersey. She is a proud graduate of the Vineland Public School System, Glassboro State University and Rutgers – Camden School of Law (where she earned her law degree in 1994).

She is also a graduate of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers College in Macon, Georgia. She is admitted to the bars of the State of New Jersey, United States District Court and the State of Pennsylvania. Jennifer was an Assistant Deputy Public Defender for the State of New Jersey for six years.

Jennifer ventured into private practice between 2002 and 2009. Her practice concentrated in the areas of Criminal & Municipal Court Defense, Business & Real Estate and Wills & Estates. She also served as Child Support Attorney for the Cumberland County Welfare Board, Solicitor for the Fairfield Township Land Use Board and Public Defender for Maurice River Township.

Jennifer's professional affiliations have included: the Superior Court of NJ -Vicinage XV Minority Concerns Advisory Committee, serving as a trustee and officer for the Cumberland County Bar Association and being a member of the County Prosecutor's Association of New Jersey and the Cumberland County Human Relations Commission. Prior to being appointed Prosecutor, Jennifer was active in the community (as a past member of the Vineland Planning Board and Vineland Board of Education).

Jennifer currently serves on the National District Attorney's Association (NDAA) Executive Committee. Jennifer is also a proud member of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) and the National Black Prosecutor's Association (NBPA).

In January of 2010, Jennifer was nominated by Governor Jon S. Corzine to be the first African American, first female Prosecutor of Cumberland County. In her capacity as Prosecutor, Jennifer is the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of the county. She is responsible for overseeing the 115 person office which prosecutes indictable crimes throughout the county.

Prosecutor Webb-McRae preaches that while prosecuting crimes and keeping Cumberland County residents safe is her primary responsibility, helping people make positive choices is equally important. Prosecutor Webb-McRae has continued her work with the community by launching an Annual Back to School Initiative where the office attends 30+ Back to School events per year to let parents know that the office has a Speaker's Bureau that can educate them about topics that keep kids safe (such as Anti-Bullying, Internet Safety and Gang and Drug Awareness).

In November of 2016, Governor Chris Christie nominated Prosecutor Webb-McRae for a second five year term as Cumberland County Prosecutor. In January of 2017, Prosecutor Webb-McRae was sworn in becoming the first full-time Prosecutor in Cumberland County to serve a second term. In 2017, she helped to launch the Cumberland C.A.R.E.S. (Compassionate Addiction Recovery Equals Success) Peer Recovery Coach Program and continues the work by supporting the Recovery on Wheels (ROW) initiative.

Since 2017, Jennifer has shepherded over \$5.4 Million in grant funds to Cumberland County to steer youth away from gangs, address trauma, treat mental health and battle opioid abuse. In 2021 Jennifer eagerly welcomed Cumberland County serving as the pilot county for the New Jersey Attorney General's ARRIVE (Alternative Responses to Reduce Instances of Violence and Escalation) Together initiative with the New Jersey State Police. ARRIVE Together is a co-responder model (police and mental health screeners arrive together) which responds to calls for mental health crisis in order to deescalate and reduce the need for Use of Force. She later helped implement the program across all police departments in Cumberland County.

In 2022, Jennifer was re-nominated by Governor Phil Murphy for a third term as Cumberland County Prosecutor. She was confirmed by the Senate in December of 2023 and began her third term as Cumberland County Prosecutor in January of 2024.

Prosecutor Webb-McRae's motto for her work is "I will go anywhere, at any time to help the citizens of Cumberland County make healthy, positive choices."

Panelist



Jerome Hatfield

With over 30 years of experience in law enforcement, emergency response, and public safety leadership, Jerome Hatfield has a proven track record of solving complex challenges and managing critical resources. His expertise spans security operations, crisis management, and risk mitigation, making him a trusted leader in safeguarding communities and institutions.

Throughout his distinguished career, Hatfield has held multiple leadership positions within the New Jersey State Police, the Department of Public Safety at Kean University, and FEMA as a Regional Administrator. These roles have honed his ability to develop and lead teams, enhance operational efficiency, and implement strategic safety initiatives that improve security, health, and wellness in diverse environments.

Recognized for his strong communication, problem-solving, and relationship-building skills, Hatfield has successfully collaborated with law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and community stakeholders to advance public safety strategies. He approaches every challenge with a continuous improvement mindset, ensuring innovative and effective solutions.

Breakout Rooms

Overview

The breakout sessions for the Symposium on Policing and Public Safety are structured to ensure all participants engage in multiple discussions while maximizing exposure to different perspectives. This method allows small groups to rotate through facilitated discussions, promoting diverse insights and collaborative solutions.

Objectives

- Facilitated dialogue on critical policing and public safety issues
- Examine the implementation or impact of Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 of the 21st Century Policing Report
- Gather qualitative insights on strategies for reform, oversight, and community trust
- Document discussions for inclusion in the final symposium report
- Attendees will participate in each of the six breakout rooms

Format

- Six Breakout Rooms (Three for each Pillar)
- Each breakout room has a designated facilitator, notetaker and timekeeper. Questions will vary.
- Attendees will rotate to new discussions when instructed, approximately every 20 minutes
- Facilitators, Notetakers, and Timekeeper stay in assigned rooms•

Schedule

First Facilitation

11:30 AM - 12:50 PM

Lunch Break

1:00 PM

6th Floor

Second Facilitation

1:30 PM - 2:45PM

Breakout Room/Facilitators & Locations

PILLAR 1: Building Trust And Legitimacy Between Law Enforcement And The Communities They Serve

Pillar 1: Building Trust and Legitimacy

Pillar 1 of 21st Century Policing Report emphasizes the importance of trust and legitimacy between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Trust is essential for ensuring public safety and effective policing, requiring agencies to adopt policies and practices that prioritize transparency, accountability, and community collaboration.

Key Focus Areas for Pillar 1: Building Trust and Legitimacy

Transparency and Accountability

Law enforcement agencies should openly share policies, procedures, and data on the use of force to foster trust and ensure accountability.

Public access to information and independent oversight mechanisms strengthen legitimacy.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

Encourages proactive, non-enforcement interactions between officers and community members to build strong relationships.

Implementing community policing strategies and inclusive decision-making to address public safety concerns.

Fair and Impartial Policing

Officers should apply procedural justice principles, treating all individuals with dignity and respect.

Training on implicit bias and cultural competency ensures equitable treatment and improves public perception of law enforcement.

PILLAR 1: FACILITATOR/LOCATIONS

Facilitator	Room#
Dr. Ketty Fernandez & Alexander Sepulveda, JD	109
Liza Chowdhury, PhD & Ana Berdecia	115
The Honorable LaKeesha Eure, LCSW	139

Breakout Rooms/Facilitators & Locations

PILLAR 2: Policy And Oversight

Pillar 2 of 21st Century Policing emphasizes the need for clear, transparent, and accountable policies to guide law enforcement practices. Effective policy and oversight help ensure that policing strategies align with democratic values, protect civil rights, and foster public trust. This session will explore strategies to strengthen law enforcement policies, promote oversight mechanisms, and enhance public trust through transparent policing practices.

Key Focus Areas for Pillar 2 Breakout Discussion:

Use of Force Policies: Law enforcement agencies should establish comprehensive, publicly accessible policies that outline use of force procedures, including training, investigations, prosecutions, data collection, and information sharing.

De-Escalation and Alternatives: Training programs should emphasize de-escalation techniques and alternative responses, such as diversion programs, when appropriate to minimize unnecessary arrests.

Independent Oversight: Agencies should implement external oversight mechanisms, such as civilian review boards, to ensure accountability and fairness in policing practices.

PILLAR 2: FACILITATOR/LOCATIONS

Facilitator	Room#
Jiles Ship	206
Dameon Stackhouse, MSW, LSW	207
Jim Sullivan	208

Breakout Room Facilitators



Pillar 1 - Room 109

Alexander Sepulveda

Professor Sepulveda and his sister, Esmerita were raised by their mother in Harlem, New York after their parents immigrated from the beautiful island of the Dominican Republic.

He received a JD from the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University in 1997. He was a HEOP scholar at Syracuse University where he holds a BS in Producing for the Electronic Media and a BA in Spanish Language, Literature and Arts in 1993.

He joined the Kean University Criminal Justice Department in the Fall of 2016 after serving as an adjunct since 2011. He is a member and campus advisor for Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc and also for the Kean Sports Business Club. Professor Sepulveda was awarded the EOF faculty award in 2019 and the President's award in excellence in teaching in 2023. Prior to teaching at Kean University, he taught full-time at Monroe University where he founded the Sports Business Club and has held adjunct positions at Georgetown University, Saint Peter's University, St. John's University and Metropolitan College of New York.

Professor Sepulveda began his legal career as an associate at Bozeman & Trott, LLP. He has also worked in New York Supreme Court for Justice Donna Mills, the New York Board of Education Legal Department, New York Quadel and the New Jersey Nets. He was also a certified Major League Baseball agent.

His interest in research includes solitary confinement, gentrification, the treatment of minors in jail and sentencing disparities among minority athletes.

Professor Sepulveda lives in South Orange, New Jersey with his always supportive wife, Delta and their talented daughter, Zoe.



Pillar 1 - Room 109

Ketty Fernandez

Dr. Fernández received her Ph.D. in Sociology (Crime & Deviance) from the University of Central Florida (UCF 2022). She is an EOF alum from Caldwell University where she obtained her B.A. in Psychology (2014). Prior to coming to Kean, she taught at Valencia College and at UCF. She also worked on various research projects related to crime and deviance with an emphasis on violence against women and human trafficking. She has published research articles and book chapters. Her work can be found in Policing: An International Journal, The New School Psychology Bulletin, Criminal Justice Policy Review, Sociation Today, and the Journal of Mass Violence Research.

Breakout Room Facilitators



Pillar 1 - Room 139

LaKeisha Eure

A native of Newark, Deputy Mayor Eure is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with more than two decades of experience in the field. Appointed the first Director of OVPTR, Ms. Eure's guidance enabled the office and its public safety ecosystem to make significant strides in creating safer communities. OVPTR, with its collaborative network, has helped achieve a remarkable reduction in violent crime, bringing Newark's crime statistics to levels not seen since the 1960s. As a staunch advocate for community investment, community policing, and police reform, she worked to create alternatives to traditional policing methods.

Having been directly affected by crime and violence herself, Ms. Eure was motivated to join the Newark Antiviolence Coalition and served as its Chair until 2022, providing support to affected families, educating the community on violence prevention, and mediating conflicts.

As deputy mayor at the intersection of public safety, public health, and municipal government, her new position will foster a pinpoint focus on community-based public safety strategies, protocols, systems, trainings, and investment sustainability, while allowing the state and federal networking necessary to share Newark's policies, move legislation and garner appropriations funding.



Pillar 1 - Room 115

Dr. Liza Chowdhury

Dr. Liza Chowdhury, the Executive Director of Reimagining Justice Inc/Paterson Healing Collective, has pioneered Passaic County, NJ's premier hospital-based violence intervention program in partnership with St Joseph's University Medical Center. Her visionary leadership has resulted in a 50% reduction in new emergency room admissions for gunshot victims and the provision of over \$500,000 in victim compensation services provided directly to victims in Passaic county since its 2021 inception. Dr. Chowdhury's statewide advocacy and collaborative efforts have significantly enhanced investment and awareness in Community-based violence intervention work. She has successfully secured over \$4 million in funding to bolster local initiatives in Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIP), Community Violence Interruption (CVI), and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) projects, directly benefiting more than 500 community members and assisting over 25 gunshot victims.

Dr. Chowdhury's transformative approach centers on addressing violence and victimization through restorative and transformative practices. Her groundbreaking initiatives have garnered prestigious recognition, including the Giffords Life Savers Award in 2023 and Everytown for Gun Safety's Community Safety Fund award since 2021.

Beyond her impactful work in violence intervention, Dr. Chowdhury is a distinguished scholar-activist and certified yoga instructor with a wealth of experience in community corrections and higher education. She has served as a Criminal Justice Assistant Professor at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), City University of New York (CUNY), and as an Assistant Professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University, guiding students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. Chowdhury's commitment to providing educational opportunities extends to her roles at Rutgers University-Newark and the NJ Step program within state correctional facilities, reflecting her dedication to empowering incarcerated individuals nationwide through education. Her unwavering passion for her students and her belief in their potential drive her advocacy initiatives. In addition she has published several peer review and OP-Ed pieces relating to mass incarceration, social justice, restorative justice and CVI efforts.

Prior to her distinguished academic career, from 2004 to 2014, Dr. Chowdhury excelled as a Probation Officer, rising to the role of Senior Probation Officer with the New Jersey Judiciary in Paterson. As a Senior Probation Officer, she executed her responsibilities diligently while pioneering innovative, evidence-based, trauma-informed strategies to enhance community well-being and rehabilitation efforts. She has continued to partner with the judiciary by serving on board of the presiding Judge's Gun Advisory committee. In addition, her program provides support to Justice involved youth through programming and advocacy so they can have the community supports they need in order to avoid detention.

Her goal is to continue using her platform and expertise to support survivors of violence and communities like the ones she grew up in have access to resources and equitable treatment.

Breakout Room Facilitators



Pillar 1 - Room 115

Ana Berdecia

Children's Ana I. Berdecia, M.Ed., and Certified Coach, is the Director of the Center for the Positive Development of Urban Children at the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean University. Ana has worked in six critical areas throughout her career: support for women in crisis; early childhood education; higher education; coaching; leadership, and culturally responsive practices. She began her career as New Jersey's first bilingual statewide 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline Coordinator at Womanspace, Inc., and then provided crisis counseling at the YWCA of Trenton's Rape Crisis Program. Ana also directed the Puerto Rican Community Day Care Center in Trenton, New Jersey, a bilingual/multicultural child development center for eight and half years.

Ana spent 17 years in the nonprofit sector and the last 19 years in higher education teaching and working on educational public policy at Thomas Edison State University and Kean University. She has also served as an adjunct professor at Mercer County Community College, teaching undergraduate students three early childhood courses. At the Watson Institute, Ana examines the vulnerabilities and resilience of urban children to advance their health, well-being, and educational outcomes. Her work entails policy development, professional development, and research on culturally responsive practices, social-emotional learning, racial disparities, teachers' resilience/burnout, shortage of bilingual/ESL teachers, and creating pathways for students to consider careers in teaching and social work. She has written extensively on the topic of culturally responsive practices and has created a learning institute for educators on the topic of courageous conversations about race (The New Jersey Cultural Competency and English Learner Institute and Mentoring Program).

Ana earned a master's in education with a concentration in early childhood and a BA in Sociology with a minor in women's studies, both from the College of New Jersey. She has a New Jersey Standard teaching certificate in Preschool to Third grade and a post-graduate certificate in Infant Mental Health. Ana is a Maxwell Leadership certified coach and speaker and operates her own coaching practice. In addition, Ana has received four awards for her work in early childhood education: the Children's Future Bright Light Award; Aletha Wright Excellence in Early Care and Education; the YWCA Tribute to Women Award; and the Montclair State University Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health Root's and Wings Award as their Luminary Speaker.

Jiles Ship

Jiles Ship is a Commissioner of the New Jersey Police Training Commission and has spent over 25 years in law enforcement - as a police officer in Edison, New Jersey, an Emergency Response Team member, and an instructor at the Middlesex County Police Academy. Ship was previously the Lieutenant and Administrator of Investigations in the Division of Criminal Justice at the State of New Jersey Office of the Attorney General. Ship also served as the Director of Public Safety for the City of Plainfield, New Jersey. As the Chief Executive officer of the Department of Public Safety, Ship oversaw the Police Division, Fire Division, the Office of Emergency Management and was responsible for 254 sworn personnel and 51 civilian employees. Ship is a past president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives and has been recognized for his service and innovation in policing by multiple civic associations, the State of New Jersey, Congress, the Department of Justice. He holds a M.A. in Educational Administration and Supervision from Seton Hall University and a B.S. in Administration of Justice from Thomas Edison State University. Ship now teaches as an adjunct professor at Rutgers University's School of Criminal Justice.



Pillar 2 - Room 206

Breakout Room Facilitators



Pillar 2 - Room 207

Dameon M. Stackhouse, MSW, LSW, CPRS, LCADC Intern, LCSW Intern

Dameon M. Stackhouse is the Community Police Alliance Supervisor for Somerset County, where he leads efforts to support individuals in mental health crises and provide resources to residents in collaboration with local law enforcement. Through his work, Dameon advances equitable access to care and support, ensuring that every community member—regardless of background—has access to necessary resources and a voice in their well-being. His role exemplifies the Alliance's commitment to human dignity and fostering a more just and equitable world.

A Justice Fellow with the Democracy Justice Program at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, Dameon is deeply committed to advocacy and civic engagement for incarcerated and previously incarcerated individuals. He actively supports expanded educational opportunities in prison, underscoring the value of higher education as a pathway to empowerment and successful reentry.

Dameon's work is rooted in a belief that everyone deserves equitable treatment and the chance to transform their lives and as a Youth Advocate at heart he believes that when you change the trajectory of our kids' lives we change the trajectory of community life.



Pillar 2 - Room 208

Jim Sullivan

Jim Sullivan is the Deputy Policy Director at the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, where he leads the development and implementation of policy campaigns, particularly on police and prosecutorial reform.

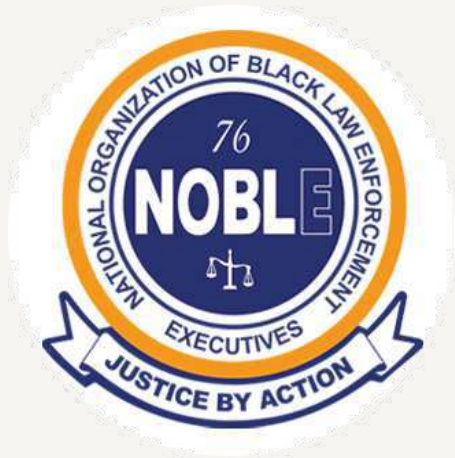
Jim is a formerly incarcerated person that comes to this position from the Culinary Workers Union in Las Vegas where he was the political director. During his time with the Culinary, he focused on developing and passing policies that advanced workers' rights, immigration reform, and housing justice. He also spearheaded the union's criminal justice reform program that supported and helped pass multiple police and prosecutorial reform bills, including bills that provide compensation for falsely incarcerated people and restoration of voting rights for those with criminal records. Before that, he was active in the movement for economic and racial justice in the Philadelphia area. Jim holds a Bachelor's degree in economics from Temple University in Philadelphia.

Partners



About the John S. Watson Institute of Public Policy and Research

With more than 30 years of experience, the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research is committed to linking people to policy by conducting research, analyzing critical issues, building strong relationships, and working with community members to enact solutions. The Watson Institute comprises six (6) integrated policy centers and initiatives that support informed public policy, serving as a vital, non-partisan resource for New Jersey decision-makers and supporting the development and implementation of real-world solutions. To learn more, visit <https://www.kean.edu/watson-institute>



About NOBLE

The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives™, also known as NOBLE®, consists of community leaders united in our mission to promote justice, equity, and excellence in the administration of justice. Since 1976, NOBLE has been providing solutions to issues in Black law enforcement. Today, we are more than 4,800 strong, and our reach extends beyond the 60 chapters in the United States to Canada, the Caribbean, and Africa. To learn more, visit, <https://noblenational.org/about-noble/>



About The Positive Community

The Positive Community is the only faith-based lifestyle magazine targeted at African American consumers in the dynamic New York/New Jersey market. As its tagline denotes, the magazine focuses on the "Good News from the Church and the Community." About 22 years ago, the co-founders created a balanced medium that reflects the community-building efforts of churches, small businesses, corporations, and concerned citizens. To learn more, visit <https://thepositivecommunity.com/>



About NJUMA

Established in 1991, the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association (NJUMA) works with state and federal lawmakers and officials to develop appropriate and effective public policy measures that benefit the state's urban centers and help lawmakers understand how public policy affects New Jersey's cities and municipalities. The John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research, which has managed the NJ Urban Mayors Association (NJUMA) for over 30 years, remains committed to driving policy change and advocating for community-driven solutions to urban challenges. To learn more, visit, <https://www.kean.edu/new-jersey-urban-mayors-policy-center>

Exhibitors

NJ Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) City of Newark, NJ
Kean Online
KeaNetwork
National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) and John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research
Urban League of Union County Reentry/Outreach
Office of Graduate Admissions Kean University
Kean University Career Services
NJ State Police Recruitment Unit
LegalShield Business Resources
Alpha Drones USA, Inc.
New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs NJ OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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The Positive Community

Tracking Sheet

Round#	Pillar	Room #	Notes and Key Takeaways
1			
2			
3			

Round#	Pillar	Room #	Notes and Key Takeaways
4			
5			
6			

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