

Prison Research and Innovation Initiative Webinar Series

Speaker Biographies

Dana Cafourek has been with the Missouri Department of Corrections for 11 years. She has worked in various roles in several institutions and locations. For the past five years, Dana has primarily been the Prison Research and Innovation Network (PRIN) Manager at Moberly Correctional Center. Currently she is the Missouri Prison Transformation Project Manager, Restrictive Housing Project Manager, and Puppies for Parole Coordinator. Dana received the 2022 Edward J Latessa Practitioner Research Award by the Division of Corrections and Sentencing with the American Society of Criminology for her work with the PRIN project. She also serves as a Critical Incident and Stress Management (CISM) Peer, Peer Action Care Team (PACT), and Wellness Advisory Committee. Dana has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and psychology.

Dr. TaLisa J. Carter is an Associate Professor in the Department of Justice, Law & Criminology at American University and the Director of Inclusive Excellence for the School of Public Affairs. A former correctional officer turned scholar, Dr. Carter's work bridges lived experience and academic rigor to examine criminological theory, accountability, race, and institutional responses within the criminal justice system. Her forthcoming book, *Corrections at Work: A Call for Institutional Accountability* (NYU Press, December 2025), introduces the Institutional Response Model of Social Control, offering a groundbreaking framework for understanding how organizations reward and punish employee behavior. Her work has been published in peer-reviewed outlets including *Race and Justice*, *Sociological Forum*, and *Health and Justice*. Dr. Carter earned her Ph.D. and M.A. in Criminology from the University of Delaware and her B.A. in Criminology from the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to her scholarship, Dr. Carter is a sought-after speaker and consultant, working with public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions to promote data-driven practice, improve organizational culture, and strengthen policy-practice alignment. She teaches courses related to race, justice, corrections, and criminological theory, with a focus on preparing students to engage in applied, socially responsible work. Recognized for her innovative teaching and inclusive leadership, Dr. Carter has organized national conversations, including the American Society of Criminology conference. Her research has been supported by the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. Passionate about building bridges between communities, practitioners, and researchers, Dr. Carter's work challenges conventional narratives and equips institutions to enact meaningful change. Whether in the classroom, in the field, or in public discourse, she remains committed to advancing justice through knowledge, accountability, and inclusion.

Abby Crocker is an Associate Professor of Statistics at the University of Vermont (UVM). She is an applied collaborative researcher with a focus on the intersection of public health and incarceration. Abby partners with the Vermont Department of Corrections to conduct community-engaged research in Vermont's prison facilities and is excited to be expanding their successful Prison Research and Innovation Network (PRIN) pilot effort statewide, to all 6 Vermont prisons. As an interdisciplinary researcher, Abby values a broad range of methodologies and diverse ways of knowing. She believes in the power of good data to bridge silos, ground complex conversations, and advance meaningful change. Abby is the principal investigator for several large grants and has authored more than 50 peer review papers and conference presentations. She is the Director of UVM's Justice Research Center, which serves as the research arm for the National Center on Restorative Justice. In this role, Abby champions capacity-building efforts to help

grow the next generation of justice researchers. She loves living in Vermont, traveling, and spending time in nature with her family and dog, Olive.

Alice Galley is a policy associate in the Justice and Safety Division at the Urban Institute, where she primarily works on project management for the Prison Research and Innovation Initiative, which is focused on transforming the prison system to promote transparency and accountability. Before Urban, Galley worked for the Washtenaw County (MI) Office of the Public Defender where she developed a hands-on understanding of public interest work. She is committed to creating change within the criminal justice system and investing in community supports outside of it with those personally affected. Galley holds a BA in biopsychology, cognition, and neuroscience with a minor in crime and justice from the University of Michigan.

Evelyn F. McCoy is a principal research associate in the Justice and Safety Division at the Urban Institute, where she leads projects on living and working conditions in jails and prisons. Her work has addressed several topics in this area, including health care, sexual violence and the Prison Rape Elimination Act, family visitation, and correctional staff well-being. McCoy has expertise in mixed-methods research, policy analysis, and technical assistance and has worked with criminal legal agencies, community-based organizations, and people involved in the criminal legal system and their families. McCoy earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and earned her master's degree in sociology and public policy at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, where her research focused on victim services and service delivery models for youth who have experienced sex trafficking.

Emalie Rell, Ph.D., recently completed her doctoral degree at the University of Delaware, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. Emalie's research focuses on the correctional environment, incarcerated populations' health and well-being, and community-based research methods. She is employed as a Research Associate II at the Center for Drug and Health Studies, where she managed the Prison Research and Innovation Initiative (PRII). In her position, she assists with mixed methodological data collection and analysis on a variety of law enforcement and community well-being related grants. In her spare time, Emalie serves as a trauma-informed yoga facilitator for individuals in recovery.

Myles Strid is the Director of Adult Institutions for the State of Missouri. He started in corrections as an officer at a maximum security facility in Jefferson City, Missouri. He worked in general population, and also in the Secure Social Rehabilitation Unit, which houses segregated offenders with serious mental illnesses. He served as a Sergeant and Lieutenant at the Fulton Reception-Diagnostic Center. Myles returned to the Jefferson City Correctional Center as a Captain in 2017, promoting to Major soon after. While in the uniformed ranks, Myles was awarded the Director's Award of Valor and was a member of the Correctional Emergency Response Team for 10 years. He was appointed as the department's Assistant Security Coordinator where he oversaw a statewide security audit program before returning to the Jefferson City Correctional Center as the Deputy Warden. In 2021 Myles was appointed as the Warden of the Moberly Correctional Center, an 1,800 bed medium security facility. He was then appointed Deputy Division Director for Adult Institutions, and was appointed as Division Director shortly thereafter in December of 2023. He oversees the operation of the state's 19 correctional facilities, with more than 6,000 staff, and housing 24,600 residents.

Monir Wood is a PRIN Incarcerated Advisor housed on the East (minimum-restricted) Side of Sterling Correctional Facility—the largest prison in the state of Colorado. He has been incarcerated in the Colorado Department of Corrections for 25+ years straight. While inside, he has earned two

undergraduate degrees, one academic, the other in business finance, and is currently working on a third religious-based degree in Educational Ministries. He is employed as a Chaplain's Clerk in the prison but also function in the roles of a Legislation Inside Advisory Council representative, inmate campus pastor for Journey Christian Church on the Inside, and a 7 Habits Master Facilitator Trainer—certified to train both staff and offenders. However, his real passion lays in his position as an administrator and instructor of the Denver Dream Center's Paradigms biblical education and discipleship program—where he is able, on the ground level, to prepare men inside for successful reintegration and life on the outside. Wood was originally sentenced life without the possibility of parole. However, in December 2018, he was granted a sentence commutation by then Governor Hickenlooper for what he termed as “extraordinary rehabilitation”. Wood now has a parole date of July 2028.

Sarah Rosen Wartell is the third president of the Urban Institute since its founding in 1968. Urban is a nonprofit research organization with hundreds of staff working to provide data and evidence to accelerate solutions and create a future where every person and every community has the power and opportunity to thrive. It serves as a trusted source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decisionmaking, create inclusive economic growth, and improve the well-being of families and communities. Urban has delivered facts that inspire solutions, and this remains our charge today. Before joining Urban, Wartell was the founding chief operating officer and then executive vice president of the Center for American Progress, where her work focused on the economy and housing markets. She also served as deputy assistant to the president for economic policy and deputy director of the White House National Economic Council. At the US Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1993 to 1998, Wartell advised the federal housing commissioner on housing finance, mortgage markets, and consumer protection. She was later a consultant to the bipartisan Millennial Housing Commission. Before her government service, Wartell practiced law with the Washington, DC, firm Arnold & Porter. Wartell serves on the boards of Enterprise Community Partners and is a former board member of Georgetown Day School. She is also a member of the steering committee for the 10-year Roadmap for Public Housing Sustainability, executive board of the National Academy of Public Administration's Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships, and Bank of America's National Community Advisory Council. Her areas of expertise include community development, consumer finance, asset building, and housing finance. Wartell has an AB with honors in urban affairs from the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, a JD from Yale Law School, and an honorary doctorate of public service from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.