

The Gavel



Criminal Justice Section Leadership Message

Katy Haynes Owen, Ph.D.

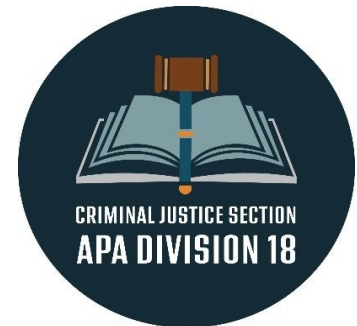
The end of an “APA year” is a time for reflection, celebration, and change. Over the past year, the Criminal Justice section has consulted with federal leaders regarding legislative proposals and changes that impact psychologists who work with justice-involved individuals. The section provided information and support to students during the internship application process and hosting webinars for CE credit on topics such as crisis negotiations and DEI endeavors in the workplace.

Additionally, we have supported research via funding The Gavel Award for the second year in a row. Our two awardees are Dr. Ashley Batastini, Associate Professor of Forensic Psychology at Swinburne University of Technology and Victoria Dennis, MA, Doctoral Candidate at Texas Tech University.



Continued on page 2

Summer 2025



Inside the Issue

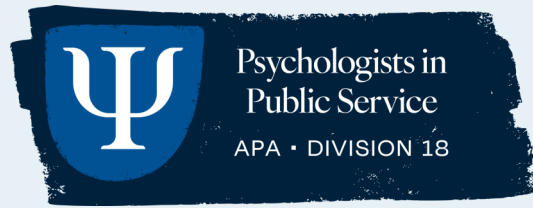
CJ Section Leadership Message.....	1
Self-Directed Violence Training.....	3
APA Poster Spotlight	7
Case Law Brief	9
ACA Conference Wrap-Up.....	10
Meet the Student Section.....	11

Special points of interest

Check out the request from the editors on page 14 for newsletter content.

Submissions can include:

- 1) case law briefs related to issues in the criminal justice system;
- 2) reviews of books/articles;
- 3) training perspectives and developments (e.g., graduate, internship, and fellowship programs); and
- 4) case studies/ conceptualizations.



Continued: Criminal Justice Section

Dr. Batastini is the Principal Investigator for a project seeking to better understand recruitment and retention issues related to mental health careers in correctional settings. Ms. Dennis's dissertation research seeks to identify acute predictors of first-time delinquency to enhance early intervention and prevention efforts. Both endeavors are significant contributions to correctional psychology.

Moving forward, I want to recognize section leaders old and new. A huge thanks to the outgoing Criminal Justice Section leadership team, Dr. Jade Horton (Student Section Chair) and Dr. Morgan Hill (Secretary/Treasurer)! Your dedication and service are much appreciated. To our new leadership team, thank you volunteering your time and effort to our mission. Our incoming leadership team includes:

- Section Chair: Dr. Tomina Schwenke, PhD, ABPP, CI/CT, Assistant Professor, Emory School of Medicine; Senior Psychologist, Psychiatry and Behavioral Health; Director of the Emory Forensic Psychology Fellowship, Psychiatry and Law Service
- Secretary/Treasurer: Dr. Meera Patel, Drug Abuse Program Coordinator, Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Student Section Chair: Sandra Thomas, MS, Northern Arizona University
- Student Section Chair-Elect: Alex Ray, University at Albany, State University of New York

I look forward to the continued growth, innovation, and advocacy from our Criminal Justice Section.

Thank you, Dr. Haynes Owen!

The Gavel editorial team would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Dr. Haynes Owen for her years of dedication and service as the D18 CJ section chair. Your dedication, thoughtful leadership, and tireless commitment have made a lasting impact, not only on our work but the future of the CJ section!

Self-Directed Violence Training: Core Competency Model for Corrections

Lewis J. Peiper, Ph.D.

This article is being simultaneously submitted to the American Correctional Association's (ACA) *Corrections Today* and to the American Psychological Association's (APA), Division 18 Criminal Justice Section newsletter, *The Gavel*, for greater inter-association awareness.

Current standards from professional organizations like the American Correctional Association (ACA) and the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare (NCCHC) mandate suicide prevention training for all correctional staff (ACA, 2021; NCCHC, 2015). This training, often referred to as "gatekeeper training" (or "caregiver training" in some settings) focuses on foundational skills: recognizing risk factors and warning signs, ensuring immediate safety, and making appropriate referrals. The goal is to create a broad, interdisciplinary safety net, ensuring that everyone from custody officers to medical staff is equipped to identify and respond to potential risks.

While these standards are crucial, more specialized training is necessary for the clinical practice of behavioral health clinicians (BHC). The existing professional standards establish a baseline for care that can be built upon with a comprehensive framework for the core competencies and training methodologies necessary for effective clinical practice in this complex environment (Magaletta et al., 2020). A 2011 resource guide, jointly developed by the NCCHC and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), took a step in the right direction by outlining a training taxonomy for different roles. It suggested that BHCs should receive more advanced training in areas like interviewing, rapport building, and suicide risk assessment, but even this guide didn't fully define the specific skills needed to address the unique realities of suicide and the broader contextual nuances of self-directed violence (SDV) in a correctional setting.

The Evolution of Language and Clinical Practice

The current approach to suicide prevention training needs to be reimagined to better reflect the realities of SDV in corrections and to combat staff burnout. A critical first step is to adopt a more descriptive language. The term "self-directed violence (SDV)" is more comprehensive than traditional terms like "suicidal behaviors" or "self-harm" (Crosby et al., 2011). It encompasses the full spectrum of thoughts and actions—from suicidal ideation and non-suicidal self-injury to behaviors with underlying instrumental motives—providing a shared vocabulary that facilitates clearer communication and more consistent practices across different disciplines (Silverman et al., 2007).

For correctional BHCs, training on risk assessment must be flexible enough to account for this full range of behaviors. It must prepare them to evaluate cases that involve suicidal intent, non-suicidal intent, and even ulterior motives, such as seeking secondary gain (e.g., a transfer to a different unit). This requires training that integrates functional behavioral assessment, a key clinical skill that helps a clinician understand the purpose a behavior serves for an individual. Correctional BHCs must demonstrate cognitive flexibility in their approach to case and risk formulation, and their training should reinforce this (Neal et al., 2022; Neal & Brodsky, 2016). Ultimately, the focus should be on building competencies that help clinicians identify effective interventions and supports, not just on predicting future risk. While risk is important, a universal focus on rehabilitation and helping people find "reasons for living" is a more foundationally sound approach, especially when using a system-based perspective.

The Critical Role of Data and Theoretical Frameworks

Tracking suicide deaths and attempts is essential, but it doesn't tell the whole story. Data from one state prison system, used to develop the Core Competency Model for Corrections (CCM-C) training program (Cramer et al., 2022a; Peiper et al., 2024, 2025; Prowten et al., 2025) provides a compelling reason to rethink our approach. It was found that approximately 65% of all SDV events were "communication-only" (no self-injurious action). Of the smaller group of events that did involve an action, 65% were assessed as having non-suicidal intent (Peiper et al., 2025).

Even more striking, this data revealed that the vast majority of individuals (approximately 80%) who engage in some form of SDV desist over time (Cramer et al., 2024). Only a very small group persists. In this specific sample, a mere 0.4% of the total prison population met the criteria for persistent self-injury, yet this small fraction contributed over 40% of all SDV events over a multi-year period (NC DAC, 2025). This 100-fold impact highlights the critical need for training that focuses on these nuances, especially as it relates to functional behavioral assessment, multidisciplinary teams, system-level considerations, and understanding the socio-environmental context of the person, the place, and the problem (behavior).

For BHCs, training must also be grounded in a theoretical framework. Ideation-to-action theories of suicide (Klonsky & May, 2014; Klonsky et al., 2018), such as Joiner's Interpersonal-Psychological Theory of Suicide (IPTS), provide a powerful conceptual basis for understanding why some people act on suicidal thoughts while most do not (Joiner, 2005; Van Orden et al., 2010). The constructs of thwarted belongingness, perceived burdensomeness, and acquired capability are particularly relevant when training correctional staff on understanding and intervening with suicidal thoughts and behaviors within the correctional environment (Mandracchia & Smith, 2015).

The reality is that most BHCs, regardless of setting, do not receive formal graduate-level training in conceptualizing, assessing, or treating suicide risk (Cramer et al., 2013; Monahan & Karver, 2021) let alone the broader instrumental and non-suicidal aspects of SDV in corrections. This glaring gap, combined with the lack of training on how to manage the clinical impact of working with SDV, underscores the importance of recent efforts, such as the CCM-C, to develop targeted, competency-based training specifically for BHCs in corrections (Peiper et al., 2025*).

Conclusion

The current state of suicide prevention training for behavioral health clinicians (BHCs) in correctional settings is inadequate, as it fails to provide a comprehensive, corrections-informed framework. To close this gap, training programs must evolve to encompass the entire continuum of self-directed violence (SDV). This requires integrating critical skills such as functional behavioral assessment and grounding practice in established theoretical frameworks like Ideation-to-Action. Furthermore, a system-level perspective is essential for understanding the unique socio-cultural dynamics of the correctional environment. By providing training that is both clinically rigorous and corrections-informed, we can not only enhance outcomes for incarcerated individuals but also reduce staff burnout and improve overall professional practice.

**Note: The publicly available toolkit for the CCM-C is located on the Open Science Framework at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/Z9VQ6>*

References

- American Correctional Association. (ACA, 2021). *Performance-based standards and expected practices for adult correctional institutions* (5th ed.).
- Cramer, R.J., Cacace, S., Coffey, A., Robertson, R.A., Hazlett, E., Kaniuka, A.R., & Peiper, L.J. (2024). Latent Profiles and Psychosocial Correlates of Persistent Self-Injury among Incarcerated Adults. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijlp.2024.101967>
- Cramer, R. J., Johnson, S. M., McLaughlin, J., Rausch, E. M., & Conroy, M. A. (2013). Suicide risk assessment training for psychology doctoral programs: Core competencies and a framework for training. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 7(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031836>
- Cramer, R. J., Kaniuka, A. R., & Peiper, L.J. (2022). The core competency model for corrections: An education program for managing self-directed violence in correctional institutions. *Psychological Services*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000624>
- Cramer, R. J., Peiper, L.J., Kaniuka, A. R., Diaz-Garelli, F., Baker, J. C., & Robertson, R. A. (2022). Development of the Self-Injury Risk Assessment Protocol for Corrections (SIRAP-C). *Law and Human Behavior*, 46(3), 227-243. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/lhb0000480>
- Crosby, A. E., Ortega, L., & Melanson, C. (2011). *Self-directed violence surveillance: Uniform definitions and recommended data elements, Version 1.0*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/pdf/Self-Directed-Violence-a.pdf>
- Joiner TE. (2005). *Why people die by suicide*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Klonsky ED, May AM. Differentiating suicide attempters from suicide ideators: A critical frontier for suicidology research. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. 2014;44(1):1–5. <https://doi:10.1111/sltb.12068>
- Klonsky, E. D., Saffer, B. Y., & Bryan, C. J. (2018). Ideation-to-action theories of suicide: a conceptual and empirical update. *Current opinion in psychology*, 22, 38–43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.07.020>
- Magaletta, P. R., Perskaudas, R., & Heigel, C. (2020). Take it from the chiefs: Gold standards for correctional psychologist competency and development. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 51(5), 446-453. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pro0000289>
- Mandracchia, J. T., & Smith, P. N. (2015). The interpersonal theory of suicide applied to male prisoners. *Suicide & life-threatening behavior*, 45(3), 293–301. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12132>
- Monahan, M. F., & Karver, M. S. (2021). Are they ready yet?: A theory-driven evaluation of suicide risk assessment trainings in psychology graduate programs. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 77(7), 1614–1628. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.23171>
- National Commission of Correctional Healthcare. (NCCHC, 2015). *Standards for mental health services in correctional facilities*. <https://www.ncchc.org/mental-health-standards-1>

Continued: Self-Directed Violence Training: Core Competency Model for Corrections

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2022). *Self-harm: assessment, management, and preventing recurrence*. (NG225) Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng225>
- Nock MK, Park JM, Finn CT, Deliberto TL, Dour HJ, Banaji MR. (2010). Measuring the suicidal mind: Implicit cognition predicts suicidal behavior. *Psychological Science*; 21(4):511–517. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797610364762>
- North Carolina Department of Adult Correction (NC DAC, 2025). *Self-injury risk assessment data*. (2017-2024). Unpublished internal review.
- Peiper, L.J., Cramer, R.J., Cacace, S.C., Peters, A., Corral, A.R., Post, A.F., Prowten, S.D., & Moxie, J. (2024). Development and Implementation of a Self-Directed Violence Prevention Training Program for Correctional Behavioral Health Providers: A Clinical Trial Study Protocol. *Pilot and Feasibility Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40814-024-01533-0>
- Peiper, L.J., Prowten, S.D., Cacace, S.C., & Cramer, R.J. (2025). *The Core Competency Model for Corrections (CCM-C) Self-Directed Violence Prevention Training: A Toolkit for Carceral Systems and Professionals*. North Carolina Department of Adult Correction & University of North Carolina at Charlotte Violence Prevention Center. <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/Z9VQ6>
- Prowten, S. D., Cacace, S. C., Moxie, J., Peters, A., Corral, A., Bowman, M., Peiper, L. J., & Cramer, R. J. (2025). Core competency model self-directed violence prevention training program for corrections: a hybrid feasibility-effectiveness trial. *BMC public health*, 25(1), 2655. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-025-23853-3>
- Rose G. (1981). Strategy of prevention: lessons from cardiovascular disease. *British medical journal (Clinical research ed.)*, 282(6279), 1847–1851. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.282.6279.1847>
- Silverman, M. M., Berman, A. L., Sanddal, N. D., O'carroll, P. W., & Joiner, T. E. (2007). Rebuilding the tower of Babel: a revised nomenclature for the study of suicide and suicidal behaviors. Part 1: Background, rationale, and methodology. *Suicide & life-threatening behavior*, 37(3), 248–263. <https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.2007.37.3.248>
- Turner, K., Pisani, A. R., Sveticic, J., O'Connor, N., Woerwag-Mehta, S., Burke, K., & Stapelberg, N. J. C. (2022). The Paradox of Suicide Prevention. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(22), 14983. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192214983>
- Van Orden KA, Witte TK, Cukrowicz KC, Braithwaite SR, Selby EA, Joiner TE. The interpersonal theory of suicide. *Psychological Review*. 2010;117(2):575–600. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018697>

DENVER AUGUST 7-9

APA 2025

APA 2025 POSTER SPOTLIGHT

The implications of occupational risks on the mental health of correctional officers: Behavioral Health Programming for Prevention

Lauren Adams (Nova Southeastern University)

Correctional officers (COs) are considered to be the backbone of correctional institutions. They are the frontline of defense in upholding safety and security for both correctional staff and inmates. Research shows that factors including everyday interactions with the incarcerated population (inmates), the dangers that fall within their occupation, as well as everyday occupational stressors, increase the likelihood of impacting the mental health of COs (Fusco et al., 2021). While the rates of mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder are widely studied in other first responder and law enforcement populations, there have been a limited number of investigations that have focused specifically on COs. Recent research found that CO suicide rates were significantly higher than the general population, with a 41% higher risk of attempting suicide (Violanti, 2017). Additionally, Denhof and Sipinaris (2016) found that rates of PTSD in COs were similar to elevated rates among other law enforcement and first responder populations. Issues related to stigma regarding mental illness not only make it difficult for COs to seek help for their mental health issues but also impact their occupational productivity and skew their views of inmates who also struggle with mental illness. Although there is an increase in attention to the source of resilience and use of interventions for other law enforcement officials, there has been little focus that has attention geared towards the implementation and interventions to mitigate risk factors and foster well-being for COs. This research reviews existing literature to highlight the sources of CO's occupational risks and the benefits of implementing a behavioral health program for prevention.

Peer Support Training for Correctional Officers: A Model Demonstration Program

Naysha Rivera-Hartley (Nova Southeastern University)

Correctional officers are routinely exposed to a distinct set of occupational stressors, including chronic understaffing, frequent encounters with violence, and the persistent requirement to maintain hypervigilance and authority within volatile and high-risk environments. Empirical research consistently links these stressors to elevated incidences of burnout, anxiety, depression, substance use, and suicidality among correctional personnel.

Despite the evident need for psychological support, the prevailing culture within correctional institutions often discourages help-seeking behaviors. This reluctance is largely attributed to systemic stigma, skepticism toward external interventions (“us vs. them” attitude), and concerns regarding potential career repercussions. In response to these challenges, peer support programs have been implemented as a viable and culturally attuned intervention. These programs equip correctional officers with the skills necessary to offer confidential, empathetic, and culturally informed support to colleagues experiencing acute or chronic stress. The Peers As Law Enforcement Support for Corrections (PALS-C) initiative was developed to address these challenges directly. Structured as a 16-hour training module, PALS-C prepares designated peer supporters to identify early indicators of psychological distress, utilize active listening techniques, and facilitate access to appropriate mental health resources.

Preliminary implementation data suggests that peer supporters not only serve as effective conduits to professional services but also contribute to enhanced morale, reduced isolation, and improved overall well-being among correctional staff. Given the persistent exposure to trauma, workplace violence, and organizational stressors, correctional officers remain at heightened risk for adverse psychological outcomes. Peer support programs such as PALS-C address a critical gap by offering a culturally sensitive and accessible framework through which officers can seek assistance from colleagues who possess firsthand understanding of the occupational context.

By training officers on the “big 6” topics of active listening, depression, substance use, anxiety & PTSD, suicide awareness and resiliency, PALS-C strengthens the institution’s capabilities to respond to mental health needs while promoting a culture of openness and mutual support. Early outcomes indicate broader systemic benefits, including the normalization of mental health discussion and the cultivation of more supportive correctional environments.

The program emphasizes confidentiality, validation, trust, and nonjudgmental support as foundational principles, thus fostering a more compassionate and resilient workforce. Preliminary implementation data suggests that peer supporters not only serve as effective conduits to professional services but also contribute to enhanced morale, reduced isolation, and improved overall well-being among correctional staff. Given the persistent exposure to trauma, workplace violence, and organizational stressors, correctional officers remain at heightened risk for adverse psychological outcomes. Peer support programs such as PALS-C address a critical gap by offering a culturally sensitive and accessible framework through which officers can seek assistance from colleagues who possess firsthand understanding of the occupational context. By training officers on the “big 6” topics of active listening, depression, substance use, anxiety & PTSD, suicide awareness and resiliency, PALS-C strengthens the institution’s capabilities to respond to mental health needs while promoting a culture of openness and mutual support. Early outcomes indicate broader systemic benefits, including the normalization of mental health discussion and the cultivation of more supportive correctional environments.

IQ Testing and the Law: Revisiting the Issue of Multiple IQ Scores in Death Penalty Cases

Alex M. Ray, B.S. and Brandi Diaz, PsyD

Hamm v. Smith (2024)

Supreme Court of the United States

John Q. Hamm, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Corrections v. Joseph Clifton Smith, 604 U.S. ____;
Docket No. 23-167; decided Nov. 4 2024

Nature: Consideration of multiple IQ scores for death-penalty eligibility under *Atkins v. Virginia*.

Facts and Procedure: Joseph Clifton Smith was sentenced to death by the State of Alabama for the 1997 murder of Durk Van Dam. When Clifton was psychologically evaluated, multiple full-scale IQ tests yielded scores from 72 to 78. Clifton claimed to have an intellectual disability, which, under *Atkins v. Virginia* (2002), forbids capital punishment for those with an IQ of 70 or below. As such, the District Court (S.D. Ala.) vacated his death sentence, finding that, considering the standard error of measurement (SEM) for Smith's lowest score of 72, his true IQ could be as low as 69. On that basis, the court deemed him intellectually disabled, with the Eleventh Circuit affirming this decision. However, the State of Alabama, through Alabama Department of Corrections' commissioner John Q. Hamm, appealed this decision. On November 4, 2024, the Supreme Court issued a per curiam opinion [a judicial opinion by a court with multiple judges without citing any single judge as the author (per curiam, n.d.)] vacating and remanding the judgment for the Eleventh Circuit to clarify its reasoning. They stated that the lower court's opinion could be read in two ways—either as applying a per se rule that the lower SEM range of the lowest IQ score is dispositive, or as applying a holistic evaluation of all scores and evidence, including expert testimony.

Issue: How should courts evaluate multiple IQ scores when determining eligibility for capital punishment? Should the lower bound of the standard-error range of the lowest IQ score be treated as dispositive? Or should courts conduct a more holistic analysis, considering all valid scores and other evaluation evidence?

Holding: The Supreme Court has not made a definitive legal ruling on the underlying issue. Instead, the Court vacated the Eleventh Circuit's judgment and remanded for clarification, indicating the case does not yet resolve the question whether a per se rule or holistic approach applies.

Rationale: The Supreme Court's brief explanation emphasized uncertainty about the Eleventh Circuit's reasoning—whether the lower end of the SEM for the lowest IQ score was treated as conclusive evidence of an intellectual disability diagnosis, or whether the court considered the aggregate of multiple scores and additional evidence. Because *Hall v. Florida* (2014) and *Moore v. Texas* (2017) require evaluation of multiple IQ scores “jointly” and consideration of standard error without prescribing a precise method, the Court remanded to obtain clarity about the standard applied by the Eleventh Circuit.

Implications: Forensic examiners should continue to rely on previous case law regarding the consideration of multiple IQ scores when assessing capacity to be executed.

References:

Hall v. Florida, 572 U.S. 701 (2014)
Hamm v. Smith, 604 U.S. ____ (2024)
Moore v. Texas, 137 S. Ct. 1039 (2017)
per curiam. (n.d.). LII / Legal Information Institute.
https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/per_curiam



Alex M. Ray, B.S.



American Correctional Association's (ACA) 155th Congress of Correction Conference Wrap-Up



Key Topics and Workshops

- **Mental Health Roundtable:** A collaborative forum with the International Association of Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP) to discuss current challenges, solutions, and best practices for enhancing mental health services in correctional facilities.

- **Opioid Summit:** A multi-disciplinary training on opioid use disorder (OUD) and medications for OUD (MOUD). The goal was to reduce stigma, promote empathy, and encourage coordinated care among various correctional staff.

- **Documentation in Mental Health:** A workshop on best practices for accurate, concise, and goal-oriented documentation to improve treatment planning and meet legal/ethical standards. It also addressed challenges like high caseloads and security restrictions.

- **Dementia in the Incarcerated Population:** A presentation on the growing number of elderly inmates with cognitive impairment. It provided statistics and discussed methods for diagnosis, treatment, and improved care practices.

- **Suicide and Self-Harm Assessment:** A workshop for mental health professionals on assessing and addressing suicidality and self-directed violence. It focused on identifying risk factors, applying clinical judgment, and developing collaborative safety plans.

- **Mental Health Emergencies and Medical Mimicry:** A workshop that helped attendees distinguish between genuine mental health emergencies and medical conditions that can mimic psychiatric symptoms. The goal was to prevent delayed medical treatment.

- **Staff Misconduct:** A joint presentation by a Correctional Psychologist and a Security Expert that examined the psychological factors, warning signs, and interventions to reduce the risk of professional misconduct among staff.

- **Continuum of Care Units:** A presentation on specialized residential mental health treatment programs for individuals with serious psychological impairments who struggle in the general population.

- **ADHD and the Criminal Justice System:** A presentation on the overrepresentation of individuals with ADHD in correctional settings. It explored issues of misdiagnosis and underdiagnosis, and proposed integrated care models for better identification and treatment.

- **Constitutional Challenge to Restrictive Housing:** A workshop on the legal and clinical issues related to restrictive housing, including decision-making processes and enhanced mental health services for those in these units.

- **Hunger Strike Consultation Team:** Developing a multidisciplinary team (Security, Medical, Mental Health, Food Service) to effectively manage and intervene in hunger strikes within a correctional setting.

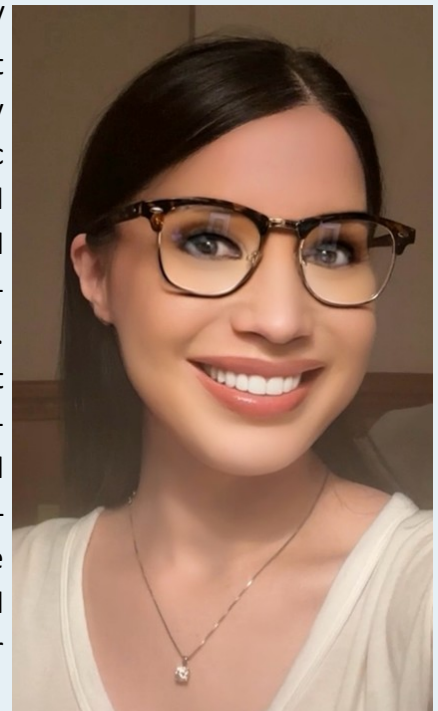
Criminal Justice Student Section

*Meet the extraordinary members
of our Criminal Justice Student Section!*

We are so thankful for the energy and engagement they bring!

Our Student Section demonstrates just how bright our future is!!!

My name is **Susan Victoria Hundley**, and I am a third-year PhD student at Liberty University's School of Behavioral Sciences. I also serve as the Membership Co-Chair for the SMI/SED subsection of Division 18 and have found the Criminal Justice Student Section to be an invaluable extension for fostering a sense of community between my professional and academic pursuits. Working with forensic populations was instrumental in my decision to pursue my doctorate, and this committee has provided a bridge between my clinical practice and dissertation devoted to improving the rehabilitative experiences of individuals who have been found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI). Looking forward, I hope to see more student representation throughout APA, and encourage others not to be afraid to reach out and seek guidance from others in our division. This is a critical time for our field, and the sense of community demonstrated in *The Gavel*, along with the connections shared amongst the Student Section, is an incredible resource for those committed to improving the lives of individuals involved in legal systems. It is an honor to be part of this committee, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share my experiences.

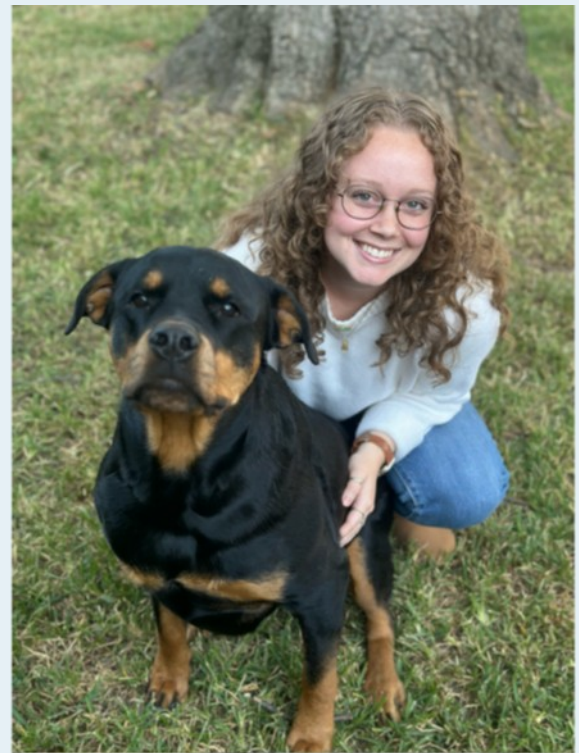


My name is **Jade Horton**. I graduated from the counseling psychology PhD program at the University of Memphis. As I wrap up my PhD, my clinical interests center on providing mental healthcare for individuals who are incarcerated. I'm particularly passionate about working with people who have serious mental illness (SMI) and those housed in restrictive settings, where access to care is often met with barriers. I am also interested in how local criminal justice policy efforts can support better mental health services within the justice system as well as meet the needs of those who are incarcerated. Many of my research interests connect with what I am most interested in regarding criminal justice policy: restrictive housing, misconduct while incarcerated, and challenges faced by the rural criminal justice system. More specifically, better understanding the use of restrictive housing in these environments as well as how misconduct is addressed in these settings and the broader implications for mental health and institutional outcomes. I'm also interested in the unique challenges faced by the rural criminal justice system, including disparities in access to resources and services for incarcerated individuals.

I am currently the chair of the criminal justice student section committee. I joined the committee in 2020 as a first-year doctoral student. At that time, I was looking to get involved with people who have shared interests and various experiences (and the committee offered that)! Being on the committee, first and foremost, I get a sense of support and encouragement from being in the committee. While the majority of our meetings are focused on moving the committee forward, planning potential webinars, discussing how to increase social media engagement, we also do check-ins during our meetings to see where everyone is at and what some people may need support with (e.g., applying to graduate school, applying to internships, dissertations). I think we have a relatively wide variety of interests and experiences as a student committee, so I would like to see more of those come to light through conversations within the committee but also expanding our presence on social media! Maybe throw in a webinar or two! The piece of advice that I have for other students is to stay connected to those with similar clinical and research interests. Working within the criminal justice system is challenging work, and I have found it to be helpful to be surrounded by peers with shared experiences and also fresh perspectives! A fun fact about me is that While in graduate school, I learned the basics of how to code to help with the creation of an app for those on probation (Shoutout to Dr. Ashley Batastini for that opportunity)!



Kaylee Cook graduated from the counseling psychology PhD program at the University of Memphis. Her clinical interests include substance use treatment, and medication assisted treatment, while her research interests include program evaluation, stigma against those reentering society post release, and employment barriers. Kaylee is currently a member of the student committee and has served previously as the outreach liaison, vice chair, and chair. She joined the student committee to get more connected with others with similar interests and goals. Her favorite part of the student committee was getting to talk with students around the country! Being in a generalist program, it can feel a little isolating at times. It's also a great reminder that there are other people out there like me and who have the same goals and passions! In the next year, she hopes the student committee can do more collaborations, whether that be with other sections, divisions, professionals, students, etc. Not only is it fun to make connections, but it's a great opportunity to expand knowledge and perspective! Her advice for other students is to get as involved as you can! In your program, university, professional organizations, everything. It's helpful to have a network to collaborate with and hear other perspectives. It's also a great way to grow your support system, which is so important in graduate school! Now is the time to get involved, because it could get a lot more difficult once you establish your career. A fun fact about Kaylee is that she began crocheting during the pandemic, and makes things for friends! She has made blankets, plushies, beanies, wall art, and more!



Hello, my name is **Sandra Thomas**. I am a third-year student in the Northern Arizona University Clinical Psychology Psy.D. program. I am the Division 18 Criminal Justice Section Student Committee Chair Elect. My clinical interests include forensic and legal psychology with a focus on the use of psychology in the courtroom. I joined the committee to meet other students with similar clinical interests and build my professional network. I love meeting new people across the country and getting to help facilitate informative events such as webinars and our internship panel. I would love to be able to make the internship panel a regular event as new students are preparing for internships each year, and we can even include previous members of the committee on the panel. My advice for other students is to really review your self-care routine and make sure it satisfies your needs and not just what you think self-care is supposed to be. A fun fact about myself, I shoot archery as a hobby.

Call for Submissions

The editors of *The Gavel* are accepting ongoing submissions for bi-annual publications of *The Gavel*.

Submissions can include;

- 1) case law briefs related to issues in the criminal justice system,
- 2) reviews of books/articles,
- 3) training perspectives and developments (e.g., graduate, internship, and fellowship programs), and
- 4) case studies/conceptualizations.

Authors should highlight implications on clinical practice in the pieces they write.

Please send submissions, as Microsoft Word documents to:

drbrandidiaz@gmail.com and
lewis.peiper@dac.nc.gov

CJ Section Leadership Team:

- **Tomina Schwenke**, Section Chair
- **Meera Patel**, Secretary/Treasurer
- **Sandra Thomas**, Student Section Chair
- **Alex Ray**, Student Section Chair Elect
- **Brandi Diaz**, The Gavel Co-Editor
- **Lewis J. Peiper**, The Gavel Co-Editor
- **Alex Ray**, The Gavel Student Editor

Welcome to the new leadership team!

