



## Members of the Mass Incarceration Task Force

**Sophie Aiyer, PhD.** Dr. Aiyer is a research assistant professor in the African-American Studies Department at the University of Maryland. Sophie obtained her doctorate from the University of Virginia, where she examined processes that promote desistance from crime in male, inner-city youth. She completed her postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan, working in a CDC-funded youth violence prevention center, targeting at-risk children and adolescents. Further, Sophie's interests and experiences share a common theme of examining the etiology, development and prevention of antisocial behavior and youth violence, with a focus on how individual, family, and neighborhood processes contribute to the risk and prevention of juvenile delinquency.

**Jaimelee Behrendt-Mihalski, M.A.** Ms. Behrendt-Mihalski is a policy advocate at the Council for Children's Rights in Charlotte, NC. She is also a fifth year student in the Community Psychology Training program within the Health Psychology Ph.D. Program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Her primary research focuses on the impact of the intersection of marginalized identities on mental health outcomes (e.g., depression). In 2015, Ms. Behrendt-Mihalski was selected to participate in the Behavioral Health Leadership Development Program sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. In recent years, she has partnered with the Mecklenburg County Office of the Public Defender's Involuntary Commitment Team and with a nonprofit organization that provides employment readiness services to individuals reentering the community after incarceration.

**Laura S. Bogardus, PhD.** Dr. Bogardus is a 2017 graduate of Clemson University's International Family & Community Studies program, where she served as project coordinator on the university's suicide prevention program. Dr. Bogardus' career has combined human resources, workforce development, and career services. She is an Aspen Institute Workforce Strategies Initiative (WSI) Sector Skills Marano Fellow. Through her company, Bogardus Research Consulting, she focuses her attention on understanding, researching, and addressing employment barriers. Dr. Bogardus recently served on the Greenville Reentry Coalition and is a current member of Greenville Collaborative Action Network (G-CAN) and the Greenville Society for Human Resource Management's (GSHRM) Workforce Readiness Council.

**Kendell Coker, PhD, JD.** Dr. Coker is an assistant professor in the psychology department and in the criminal justice department at the University of New Haven. He completed his clinical postdoctoral training through Northwestern University at the Cook County Juvenile Court Clinic where he conducted sentencing evaluations on youth involved with the Department of Probation. He served as a council member on the Juvenile Defense Resource Institute at Northwestern University School of Law, which was a project designed to strategize ways to reduce recidivism and improve legal representation of juveniles involved in the criminal justice system. Dr. Coker also completed a National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) T-32 postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University Department of Psychiatry's Forensic Drug Diversion Program (FORDD).

**Jasmine Hedge, PhD.** Ms. Hedge received her PhD in International Family and Community Studies at Clemson University in 2016. She served as a research assistant for a study exploring emotion regulation of children with incarcerated mothers, and her dissertation topic involves research on children with incarcerated parents. Dr. Hedge recently accepted a position as a research associate



for the Strategic Management Division of the DC Courts. Her primary research interest is in the role of communities in preventing common mental health problems.

**Michelle Joy, MD** is a fourth year and chief psychiatry resident at Penn in Philadelphia, PA. Her interests lie in recovery-oriented public psychiatry, ethics and philosophy of mental health, as well as phenomenology and narrative, and she will be pursuing a forensics fellowship during the 2016-2017 year with the intent of continuing to combine many of her interests in that year of training. She is working on several current projects involving the mental health of incarcerated and previously incarcerated populations, including serving on a working group of ethicists focusing on treatment behind bars, working on policy within Philadelphia, and planning several ethics presentations related to ethics and sexual crimes.

**Robin Kimbrough-Melton, JD.** Prof. Kimbrough-Melton is a research professor in the Colorado School of Public Health and visiting professor of education and of family medicine at the University of Virginia. She received multiple grants from the Dept. of Health and Human Services while on faculty at Clemson University to develop and implement mentoring programs and other community support for children of incarcerated parents. She also served as a member of the S.C. Adult and Juvenile Female Offender Task Force. In this capacity, she worked with the task force to produce white papers on the effects of female incarceration on children and on the reentry needs of female offenders. She has consulted extensively with a wide array of state and national organizations and courts on strategies for developing alternatives to traditional court processes, preventing juvenile delinquency, preventing and reducing crime through community capacity-building, and improving community support for children and families.

**Jill McLeigh, PhD.** Dr. McLeigh is a research assistant professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and Symposia Editor for the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. She was involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of a mentoring program for children of prisoners in South Carolina and served on the S.C. Adult and Juvenile Female Offender Task Force. Her principal research interest has been in the development and evaluation of preventive interventions that are intended to strengthen communities' capacity for family support, participation, and mutual assistance.

**Sarah Patarino, JD.** Ms. Patarino received her JD at Loyola University Chicago School of Law as well as certificates in Public Interest Law and Child Law in 2017. She focused her public interest studies on wrongfully convicted persons in Illinois in need of re-entry services. Ms. Patarino worked as a student member of the Life After Innocence Clinic for two years during law school where she drafted a petition for clemency and participated in the annual Innocence Conference in 2016. She is currently studying to take the Illinois and Indiana bars and hopes to work in the field of education law and policy upon passing the bar.

**Wes Sowers, MD.** Dr. Sowers is a psychiatrist at Western Psychiatric Institute Clinic, where he serves as Director of the Center for Public Service Psychiatry. Dr. Sowers is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and served as the Medical Director for the Office of Behavioral Health in the Department of Human Services of Allegheny County for 10 years. He has extensive experience in the provision of treatment and services to special populations such as homeless men, incarcerated offenders, substance users, and sexual minorities. He has also served as the Medical Director for organizations in El Salvador and Sudan.