

CSSD Chronicle

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
Court Support Services Division
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JB/CSSD Participates in 16th Bi-Annual Adult and Juvenile Female Offenders Conference



Keisha Henry, Bridgeport Deputy Superintendent

The Adult and Juvenile Female Offenders (AJFO) Conference is held bi-annually with the Association on Programs for Female Offenders (APFO), and is the only conference of its kind to focus exclusively on women and girls in the criminal justice system.

For 2015, the APFO selected Connecticut, and The Women's Consortium (CWC), to organize and host the event. The Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division (JB/CSSD) was a collaborating partner, and Deborah Fuller, Director of Juvenile

and Family Services, and Erica Nowakowski, Court Planner II were selected as members of the AJFO national steering committee.

Participants at the AJFO Conference represented a diverse array of practitioners, state administrators, program directors, women with lived experience, advocates, researchers, program developers, and experts in reentry, incarceration, juvenile justice, trauma and gender from the United States, Canada and other countries.

The AJFO event was held at the Downtown Hartford Marriott and Connecticut Convention Center for three full days, October 13, 14, and 15, 2015 and drew 600 participants from across and outside of the United States. Multiple special events were included in the conference including a performance by the Judy Dworin Performance Project, a book signing by Deborah Jiang-Stein, author of *Prison Baby*, a display of Women Living in Prison Artwork from Community Partners in Action's: Prison Arts Program, and the presentation of the *Power of One* Award. Keisha Henry, Deputy Superintendent in Bridgeport Juvenile Detention Center, was recognized as a Power of One nominee and was presented with a certificate. The Power of One award recognizes what one person with one idea or action has done to improve services to female offenders. Ms. Henry leads the girls services unit in Bridgeport Juvenile Detention.

JB/CSSD staff led two workshops at the conference and participated on panels of two additional workshops. Erika Nowakowski, Court Planner

II was the lead presenter for "*How Multi-System Collaboration Positively Reinforces Clients Resiliency and Builds Self-Efficacy.*" The workshop included adult probation staff Lauren Vicente, Megan Clifford, and Yesenia Arrieta, along with an adult offender with lived experience. It focused on "teaming," one of the core practices of the *Women Offender Case Management Model* (WOCM). Positive outcomes were demonstrated across the state and emphasis was placed on the purpose of the multisystem team approach. A JB/CSSD WOCM client presented her story, her experience working with her WOCM team, and her current success.

Nowakowski was also a presenter with the Connecticut Department of Correction and University of Cincinnati in the workshop, "*Paving New Paths: The Development of an Agency Wide Approach.*"

Patricia Nunez, Program Manager I was the lead presenter for "*Promoting Girls' Resiliency in Connecticut's Juvenile Justice System.*" The workshop included juvenile probation staff Kimball Robbins, and Kimberly Annette Pabey-Rivera, along with Juvenile Residential Services staff Keisha Henry and Community Solutions Inc. staff Jessica Fraser. The workshop focused on providing participants with a practical, hands-on approach to developing and implementing effective and quality girls' services. The workshop highlighted ongoing quality assurance and the integral part it plays in promoting resiliency. Nunez also presented with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Love 146 and Yale University's School of Medicine in the workshop "*Human Trafficking and CSEC: A Collaborative Response.*"

General sessions featured keynote speakers in the study of gender responsive programming and research. Presenters included



(L to R) Jessica Fraser, CSI; Keisha Henry, CSSD Bridgeport Deputy Superintendent; Kimball Robbins, CSSD Juvenile Regional Manager; Kimberly PabeyRivera, CSSD Supervisor I

Stephanie S. Covington, PhD, LCSW, an internationally recognized clinician, author, lecturer and organizational consultant. Dr. Covington is well-known for her pioneering work with gender-responsive and trauma-informed treatment. Dr. Covington spoke about her research and lessons learned from other countries in working with girls and women.



(L to R) Erika Nowakowski, CSSD Court Planner II; Lauren Vicente, CSSD APO II; Linda Crownshaw, WOCM client; Megan Clifford, CSSD APO II; Yesenia Arrieta, CSSD APO I; Lourdes Ortiz, AIC Case Manager

In addition, Meda Chesney-Lind, PhD, discussed the role that media has in stereotyping and demoralizing women in the criminal justice system. Dr. Chesney-Lind teaches Women's Studies at the University of Hawaii and has been recognized for her work on women and crime. She testified before Congress which resulted in national support of gender-responsive programming for girls in the juvenile justice system.

Karl Alston, CSSD Deputy Director of Juvenile Residential Services attended the conference and stated, "It was nice to have so many distinguished professionals come together to highlight the importance of providing gender-responsive services." Alston went on to say, "I am particularly proud of the CSSD workshops put on by both juvenile and adult services. We have many dedicated staff who work tremendously well to meet the specific needs of our clients."

For more information on the AJFO Conference, please contact Patricia Nunez, CSSD Program Manager I at Patricia.Nunez@jud.ct.gov.

The CSSD Chronicle is a regular publication of information and news about the Court Support Services Division. Questions or comments on this edition, or suggestions for future articles, can be directed to Linda.Grzeika@jud.ct.gov



Patricia Nunez, CSSD Program Manager I