

Year in Review

The Center for Criminal Justice is the interdisciplinary home for criminal justice research at Loyola University Chicago. We collaborate with government, community partners, and the university on research, teaching, and service to inform and support criminal justice practice and policy reform. This report reviews our work during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Knowledge

23 Reports, newsletters, and data tools published. We take every opportunity to communicate what we learn through our work more broadly — to academic audiences, practitioners, policymakers, the media, and the general public, in the hope that it will make a difference.

7 Summits and educational events hosted or co-sponsored — like the series of Community Conversations held on Loyola's campus as part of our work with [Loyola Stands Against Gun Violence](#).

31 Media mentions of our research, in stories on pretrial reform, gun violence, crime trends, and other issues of concern to the public. Journalists in Texas, Colorado, and California cited our work, and closer to Loyola's home in Chicago, the Chicago Tribune and [Chicago Sun-Times](#), [WBEZ](#) and WGN Chicago, and [NPR Illinois](#) all turned to us for nonpartisan commentary and comprehensive data to inform their ongoing coverage of the state's abolition of cash bail.

32 Presentations made to audiences of academics, practitioners, policymakers, advocates, journalists, and the public, on topics like drug treatment for people exiting prison, [prosecutor transparency](#), focused deterrence as a means of preventing gun violence, and trends in women's imprisonment.

Education

3 New undergraduate classes launched, based on CCJ projects, taught by the Center's staff, and explicitly designed to draw a new generation of student-researchers into the Center's work.

500+ Hours of "service learning" worked by Loyola students enrolled in **Prison Reform 395**, a new class leveraging the Center's many partnerships with nonprofits. Students did everything from data analysis to tabling at events, creating flyers, and collecting and sorting donations. One group visited a state prison with [Aunt Mary's Storybook](#) to make recordings of people in custody reading books to their children back home. Another hosted young men from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice youth facility on a visit to Loyola's campus.

Research

\$2.6M New research funding secured in the last year, from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the [Microsoft Justice Reform Initiative](#), [Arnold Ventures](#), the [MacArthur Foundation](#), and others, that will expand our prosecutorial performance measurement, bail reform, and reentry work.

8 Collaborations with colleges and universities across the country - like our long-running collaborative project with Texas Christian University, aimed at improving access to opioid addiction treatment for people coming home from prison, and funded as part of the National Institute on Drug Abuse's [Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network](#).

933 Pretrial hearings observed in 13 court-houses across Illinois, assessing the various ways counties are dealing with the challenges of implementing a sweeping new reform that not only eliminates cash bail, but changes nearly every other aspect of [pretrial hearing](#) and detention practice.

8,700 Surveys from people in Illinois prisons populating an [interactive data dashboard](#). We worked with the [John Howard Association](#) to analyze survey responses from 28 Illinois prisons as part of what may be the first large-scale attempt to measure quality of life in a state prison system.

27 Criminology majors who now can code in Python — building data scrapers to look at everything from crime to [NYC rat complaints](#) — thanks to a **Criminal Justice Data Science** class taught by the Center's Deputy Director of Analytics Branden DuPont. Center Codirector Don Stemen also taught a new **Bail Reform** class, using real-time data from our large-scale evaluation of the Pretrial Fairness Act.

5 Miscellaneous honors. Three of the Center's student researchers picked up awards at Loyola's end-of-the-year convocation. Center Codirector Don Stemen received Loyola University's Sujack Family Award for Excellence in Faculty Research. And Codirector Dave Olson was named Chair of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.