

**Occasional Series on Reentry Research**  
**Sponsored by the Prisoner Reentry Institute**  
**at John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

**“The Impact of Positive and Negative Victim and Nonvictim Input on  
Parole Release Decisions”**

**Panelist Biographies**  
**November 12, 2010**

**Joel Caplan** is an Assistant Professor at the School of Criminal Justice and the Assistant Director of the Rutgers Center on Public Security. Before joining Rutgers’ faculty in 2008, Dr. Caplan was at the University of Pennsylvania Cartographic Modeling Lab (CML). At the CML, he collaborated with faculty in various disciplines to bring Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and spatial analysis to bear on wide range of topics including juvenile gun violence, emergency medical services, disaster management, mental illness, prisoner reentry, and crime control.

Dr. Caplan has consulted with the New Jersey State Police, State Parole Board, Attorney General’s Office, and the Director of the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy about the use of GIS for decision support. He has also presented to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Prisoner Reentry Initiative and the National Institute of Justice’s Mapping and Analysis for Public Safety program. Current projects focus separately on parole board decision-making; the impact of mental illness on prison program participation and community reentry; the use of GIS for parolee caseload allocation, case management, and community supervision; and geographic risk assessments for violent crime forecasting and tactical police responses. In addition to his academic accomplishments, Dr. Caplan has professional experience as a police officer and emergency medical technician.

**Commissioner Christina Hernandez** serves on the Board of Parole at the New York State Division of Parole. From 1995 to 2006, she served as Commissioner of the New York State Crime Victims Board. Commissioner Hernandez has also served as a Commission Member of the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the government authority charged with investigating complaints against judges within the State unified court system.

In 2009, Ms. Hernandez was selected as one of nineteen parole board commissioners from across the United States to participate in a pilot training, “Integrating Evidenced-Based Principles into Parole Board Practices,” created by the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. Throughout her career, Ms. Hernandez has served on a number of task forces and committees including the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence Advisory Council, the Capital District Coalition for Crime Victims Rights, and the New York State Commission on Domestic Violence Fatalities.

Ms. Hernandez holds a Bachelor of Arts from Buffalo State College; a Masters in Social Work from the School of Social Welfare and a Certificate of Graduate Study in Women and Public Policy from the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, at the University at Albany. Additionally, she

has completed all course work towards a PhD at University at Albany-SUNY School of Social Welfare.

**Yael Shy** is the Director of Development and Education at New York University's Center on Violence and Recovery. In this role she coordinates the Center's relationships with its community partners and donors, and is responsible for the Center's public education and outreach efforts. She is an alumna of Northeastern University School of Law, where she won the PS Law Net *Pro-Bono Publico* Honorable Mention award for founding and chairing the Society for Restorative Justice – one of the most active and community-engaged organizations on campus.

Ms. Shy has done restorative justice work in the District Court of Auckland, New Zealand and Milwaukee's District Attorney's office. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Shy worked for three years at the Third Wave Foundation in New York City. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from New York University, with a B.A. in Sociology and Gender Studies.