

# JOHN JAY

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY



SPRING 22 ISSUE  
BY ALISA THOMAS

## NEWSLETTER

### Statement From Department Leadership

**J**ust as we are beginning to see signs that the pandemic is abating, our hearts are called to show support for the Ukrainian people, 150,000 of whom call New York home, and some of whom attend our campus. Sociology, Criminology and Dispute Resolution have much to contribute to understanding such conflicts and working towards a future where they can be prevented. Our instructors are a light in dark times, helping students find solace and courage through understanding.

Jayne and Bob would like to express immense gratitude for the many ways we have supported each other through the pandemic. Many of our part-time faculty have been especially important in helping us meet our 70% in-person mandate imposed by CUNY Central, later reduced to 55%, even as 80% of our students chose to take courses online.

As a result of the commitment of our full-time and part-time faculty, our majors and minors have grown or remained stable despite a new major in Human Services and Community Justice that draws students with similar interests to our own. In Fall of 2020, we had 1023 majors and 346 minors in Criminology, while those

numbers stand at 1294 and 417 today. In Fall of 2020, we had 161 majors and 180 minors in Sociology, compared to 228 and 223 today. This growth, marking us as the third largest major on campus, is also due to the unfailing support for our students and faculty provided by Alisa Thomas and Theresa Rockett, our orientation sessions at the beginning of each semester that attract over 70 students, and our new part-timer orientations and pedagogy sessions, that routinely attract roughly 30 faculty. Our review of faculty every semester, especially through course observations, helps ensure consistency and excellence throughout our curriculum, and that we are doing our best to meet student needs. Due to our vital importance for the college, we are proud to have received three lecturer lines, primarily to bolster the general education courses we offer to our general student population. Finally, this semester we will be embarking on the external review of the Sociology program, steered by Professor Kontos.

We are looking forward to the insights from our esteemed reviewers as we plan for the future.

We wish all of you a happy and productive Spring semester.

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# Part-Time Faculty in the Spotlight



## Ariany Polo

*John Jay College Alum*

During my college years at CUNY John Jay College, I worked in an afterschool program for 6 years as the Lead Teacher for kindergarten-second grade students. It was there where I learned the value of a quality education and the importance of offering this to all. I then accepted the position of a Court Liaison and eventually a Program Manager at BronxConnect's Alternative to Incarceration program. After graduating with a Master of Arts in International Crime and Justice, I was invited by my former Professor to teach within the Sociology department of John Jay College.

In addition to my current teaching appointment as an adjunct lecturer, I am now a Counselor Advocate at CUNY Herbert H. Lehman College within their Careers in Teaching (CIT) program. CIT is a federally-funded program established to offer academic and financial support to low-income, first-generation college students, and college students with disabilities. These students are pursuing to be qualified Educators in Early Childhood/Childhood and Middle/High School Education. As a Counselor Advocate, my role is to provide support and encouragement as they pursue their dreams of becoming an Educator.

As a first-generation college graduate and raised in a low-income family, I am beyond excited to hold this position. Understanding the power of teaching and the influence it carries, I am honored to pave the way for students and future educators who will empower our generation and the ones to come.

## Antonio Alvarez-Benavides



*Professor Alvarez-Benavide's new monograph came out on December 21st. Contributors from well-known scholars and young graduate students that include John Jay's own **Camila Santibañez**.*

**A** new monographic on far-right ideologues coordinated by our colleague Antonio Álvarez-Benavides and Emanuele Toscano in the Spanish journal "Encrucijadas. Revista Crítica de Ciencias Sociales". This special issue entitled, "Altright, neofascismos y movimientos de extrema derecha del S. XXI", deals with the emergence of new far right political groups in Europe, United States and Latin America. It includes interviews and conversations with Kathleen Blee, Michel Wieviorka, Matteo Albanese, Esther Solano and Breno Bringel, almost 20 different articles from relevant scholars such as Roger Griffin, Almudena Cabezas, Sergio Pérez Castaños or Giselle García-Hípola, among others, the Spanish translation of the classic paper "The dispossessed" (1962) by Daniel Bell, and the participation of one former JJAY student, Camila Santibañez, with an excellent essay: "Investigando a la extrema derecha: desmitificaciones, nuevas tendencias, y oportunidades académicas."

Open access: <https://recyt.fecyt.es/index.php/encrucijadas/issue/view/4213>

# Part-Time Faculty in the Spotlight



**Kimora**



**WBAI RADIO 99.5 FM,  
NEW YORK CITY**

## **Kimora promoted “The Justice Roadmap 2022” on WBAI**

The “Justice Roadmap, 2022” is a group of human rights and social justice advocates, religious leaders, as well as those who are or were involved in the criminal justice system in New York, who stand together to attempt to promote a legislative agenda in the state of New York to address the harms caused by the immigration policies and the criminal justice system. It promotes the following concepts:

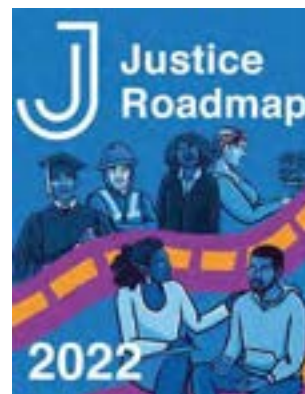
1. Stop criminalizing mental illness, people who use drugs, and workers.
2. Choose community safety over police power.
3. Decarcerate jails and prisons and end perpetual punishment.
4. Protect the dignity and opportunity of incarcerated New Yorkers.
5. End wealth extraction. Invest in communities.

Professor Kimora promoted the “Justice Roadmap 2022” on WBAI radio on Thursday, December 9, 2021 during the 6pm news show with Paul DeRienzo, of WBAI.

## **Here is the link to the radio show:**

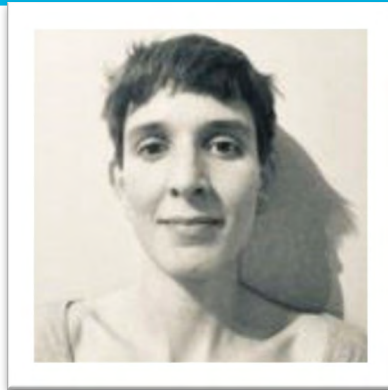
[https://soundcloud.com/user-879607737/120921-tish-james-drops-out-justice-roadmap-2022-omicron-and-vaccinations?si=bb53769162ab49ec86e59736bc91885e&utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing#t=14:04](https://soundcloud.com/user-879607737/120921-tish-james-drops-out-justice-roadmap-2022-omicron-and-vaccinations?si=bb53769162ab49ec86e59736bc91885e&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing#t=14:04)

Kimora begins speaking at the 14 minute mark in the radio show. (Rich Relkin of Media Services of John Jay College also has a copy of this radio show.)



# Part-Time Faculty in the Spotlight

## Marianne Madoré



Marianne Madoré's powerful new article, "**Resisting Surveillance, Practicing/Imagining the End of Grading**", was recently published in the *Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy*.  
Co-authors : Anna Zeemont, Joaly Burgos, Jane Guskin, Hailey Lam and Andréa Stella



## ABSTRACT

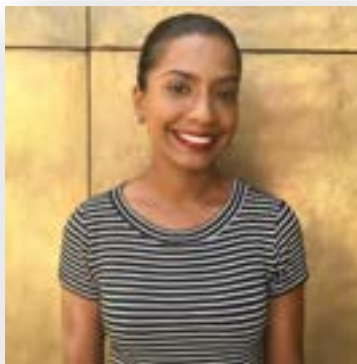
### **Resisting Surveillance, Practicing/Imagining the End of Grading**

We write this piece as a collective of activist students, doctoral teaching fellows, and adjuncts from our home campus of the City University of New York (CUNY) because our varying experiences of surveillance are deeply felt, though profoundly contradictory and asymmetrical. We highlight the deeply rooted, white supremacist, classist, and ableist surveillance practices that have long been in place in higher education in general, tracing the history and legacy of those at CUNY in particular. Our article suggests that grading systems in higher education settings are part of a larger network of surveillance technologies that students and faculty are subjected to and/or enact, reflective of schooling's place in a "carceral continuum" (Shedd) premised on anti-Blackness and colonialism. We do not believe that grading is something that can be made more fair, just, or anti-racist. To resist surveillance in higher education is to embrace the end of grading. After an overview of these contexts and assertions, we offer a series of reflections, tracing juxtaposing moments where we individually or collectively taught, learned, and/or organized outside/against grading systems. Our experiences emerge from a range of contexts—a campus writing center, CUNY's Macaulay Honors College, pre- and post-COVID college classrooms, an adjunct-led campus grade-strike campaign, counter-institutional learning and mutual aid spaces—and offer spaces of overlap and divergence. Ultimately, we aim to not just critique but suggest entry points toward the unthinking and undoing of surveillance toward a truly anti-carceral, liberatory university.



# Research Activities

## Popy Begum



**Congratulations Popy!**



Popy has been chosen as the 2022 recipient of the ACJS Victimology Section Outstanding Graduate Student Award! This is what they wrote:

**"Your work in the areas of arranged marriages and the influence of religion on the routines and practices of sex workers in India was very impressive. The global impact you are already having to improve the lives of women is fantastic and we are excited to see where your career takes you upon your upcoming graduation!"**



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ASSOCIATION®

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## Maria Volpe

**Congratulations Maria!**

The AAA-ICDR Foundation has approved Dr. Maria Volpe a grant this Spring in the amount of **\$95,000.00** for Empowering Mental Health Communication Platforms for US Law Enforcement.



# STUDENT VOICES

## BEATING THE ODDS by Mackenzie Dowling, *Criminology Major*

I grew up never thinking that I was smart enough to pass a test, graduate middle school or high school, let alone even go to college. No matter how hard I tried, I still failed. School just wasn't easy for me. Everyone would tell me I need to put work in, and I tried but when I got a homework, quiz or test grade back, it was always a failing grade. We all have memories that stick with us from our adolescent years, mine is from 7<sup>th</sup> grade. My friend and I were talking during class, as almost all 14-year-olds do. She made me laugh which resulted in my teacher pulling me aside after class. I vividly remember this conversation because she told me, "You know Mackenzie, you are never going to graduate high school and even if you do, you'll never make it to college." I didn't show her, but that hurt me. I acted like the tough kid I thought I was and laughed in her face. Obviously, it upset me though because I always felt deep down, I wouldn't make it but when she said that, it validated my feelings of failure.

Middle school was so hard for me, but high school wasn't any better. I got to high school and I still had the same issues, I failed my quizzes and tests, I couldn't read, or focus. I had a lot going on at home and in school, so I acted out and I decided to just give up trying to learn and pass school. I had a teacher call me "a lost cause." Everyone just thought I'd rather act out than learn, but the truth is, I just had so much trouble learning and understanding. But, I had one teacher out of the whole school that wouldn't let me give up. She was the second teacher in the classroom at the time, and she

wouldn't let me sit in class and not do anything. When it was time for our midterm, she took me to the library and sat with me while I took my test. She would read the questions to me and when I got frustrated, she moved the test away from me and gave me a break. We sat in the library for 4 periods. She truly cared about me and believed in me and that's just what I needed to begin to believe in myself. I passed with a 70. It wasn't enough to bring my class grade up to passing, but I actually passed and that's all I cared about. She pulled me into a classroom and told me, I nearly cried. It was because of Mrs. G that I began to believe in myself. High school was a very crazy experience, as I'm sure it was for most people.

In May of freshman year my high school sent me to an alternative school that provides shared educational services. They thought that my high school was not the right learning environment for me and at first, I disagreed but now, I see that was the best thing that my school district could have ever done for me. I finally got the help with schoolwork, learning and reading that I needed. The teachers there were so caring and patient and without them I wouldn't be where I am today. I learned to love school and learning. I still have a love/hate relationship with reading because it is hard for me, but I do still try. I learned that I love to learn about Marine Biology, I even won a science award for Marine Bio during my senior year. I never won an academic award in my life until that moment. Come June 2018, I Graduated. I couldn't believe it. I was so beyond proud of myself, I never ever thought I would be walking down the aisle, receiving my diploma, but I did it and it was the proudest moment of my whole life. After that, in July, I received a letter in the mail that said I was accepted to Suffolk County Community College. I couldn't believe it. I graduated high school and

got accepted into college! College was a lot harder than high school, but I went to tutoring, and extra help with my professors, and after 3 years of putting so much hard work in, I graduated class of 2021.

As I look back, I remember all my struggles, all the times I came home from middle school and high school crying to my mom that I wasn't smart enough and that I was a failure, and I remember what my teacher said to me and how I just wanted to give up. I am so grateful I didn't quit, because I have come so far, and this journey was so worth it. To add on to my accomplishments, I am now a student at my dream school, John Jay College of Criminal Justice. I proved my teacher in middle school, all the high school staff that just thought I was a lost cause and myself wrong. I had so much help along the way and truly amazing teachers whom I will be grateful for forever. I now know that I am capable of any and everything. The next time I feel like giving up, I won't because the reward is always worth the struggle.



# STUDENT VOICES

## **WORK HARD PLAY HARDER** by Adonia Escalona, *Dispute-Resolution Certificate*

During the fall semester, I worked 30 hours including my SOC 381 Internship for my Dispute Resolution Certificate. I had planned to go to Costa Rica for a vacation after the semester was over, during the first week of January with my cousin and her friend's 21st birthday. It was stressful because of the workload I was doing during the semester and thinking about how much money I had to dish out for the trip; paying half for the room, the excursions, the flight and transportation, and some money for photos.

Right after the Fall 21 semester was finished, I was relieved because it was my first semester juggling being a full-time student, working two part-time jobs, and an internship. Fortunately, I managed to pass all my classes and maintain my 4.0 GPA. I was proud of this trip because I paid for everything myself and I did everything on my own. While I was in Costa Rica I stayed in an all-inclusive resort and it was so beautiful; the pool, the music everything was fantastic. I had a hot tub on the balcony and I could see over the resort and I even had room service for the first time in my life.

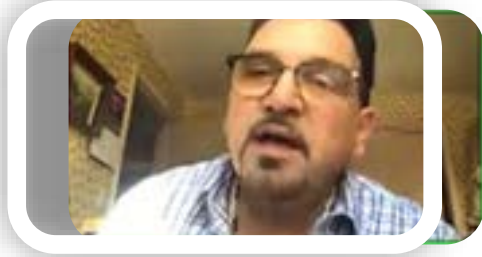
During my time there I did the Adventure Pass and I had to wake up really early like 6 a.m. to do the whole day of the activities. The first activity was horseback riding and I had never done that before so it was my first time doing it. It was a bit nerve-wracking at first but eventually, I got the hang of it. I almost got injured on the horse because my friend's horse kicked mine in the face and it almost made the wrong turn at some point. Then I

did tubing which I have never done before either so it was my first time. It was really fun although at some point it was getting cold just being in the river. The last thing I did was ziplining. I was a little nervous at first because I've never done ziplining either, but unlike the other activities, it was more height-based. I have a fear of heights to a certain extent, but I always wanted to do zip lining and I was so happy I did it.

I'm glad after a stressful semester I was able to take a very long break, enjoy myself, and indulge in self-care. What last semester showed me was that I'm capable of doing a lot of things and anything is possible as long as I have the right mindset to achieve what I set out to do.







## Charles "Charlie" Grosso

### **Briefly discuss the state of prison education today and how CUNY's Prison-to-College Pipeline (P2CP), college-in-prison program has assisted you in completing your college degree?**

The CUNY Prison-to-College Pipeline Program contributed to my release as well as my reentry process. When I was accepted into the John Jay's P2CP, I had no idea how breaking free from a prison court yard/and cell would be transformative. Based on the long list of opportunities that inmates receive in the class room, the majority with a college degree do not return to prison.

### **According to the nonprofit organization, Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), 600,000+ individuals come home from prison every year.**

Currently, while completing my degree at John Jay, CEO provided me with the opportunity to work full time as direct support staff at a homeless shelter.

### **As a Policy Fellow, CEO is committed to reducing the harms of incarceration and helping people achieve socioeconomic mobility, what is your role as a CEO Policy Fellow?**

Since then, I have been hired to also conduct policy work on a part-time basis where I am currently working on policies impacting prison reform. CEO work supports individuals impacted by incarceration and on advancing racial and socio-economic justice. This is one of the reasons why the SSC 325, Research Methods course is so important.

### **As a Policy Fellow, what policy issues are you currently working on that will impact prison reform?**

On March 1, 2022, *The Less Is More Act* (LIM) went into effect and places limits on sanctions for technical parole violations and higher burdens of proof. What it does is provide earlier release for some individuals currently on parole. For instance, for each 30 days, an individual is doing the right thing on parole, the individual will get 30 days removed from their sentence. In addition, the Law hopes to stop parole officers from using technical violations (e.g., dirty urine tests and parole curfew violations). We also have a grassroots campaign, *Communities not Cages*, that introduces additional reform bills that will impact incarcerated individuals, *The Treatment Not Jail Act* and the *Clean Slate Act*. Also, as a Fellow, I am an advocate and recent met with an Assembly member regarding the *Treatment Not Jails Act* regarding access to a court for those suffering from various impairments. In order to get appropriate treatment there needs to be legislation that addresses adequate treatment through the court system. In 2014, I

addressed this issue through the Inmate Grievance Program (IGP), Dir. 4040, and advocated for changes to ensure that inmates on behavior medication are not passed through the grievance process, without first being represented by a doctor.

### **Although the national incarceration rate is reported to be at its lowest, the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, briefly comment.**

Although arrests for drug possession and minor crimes has decreased, the Prison Policy Initiative reported that formerly incarcerated people were almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.

### **After serving several decades in prison, what experiences would you like to share with the Department of Sociology and the John Jay College community?**

After serving 40 years and now working as an authority figure at a shelter has humbled me, as opposed to the way I was viewed by correctional staff in prison. I have taken the approach in wanting to correct an individual who is down on its luck, so to speak. Rather, than add to their misery like some prison guards love to do. Returning to college as a free man has been a humbling experience for me. The faculty at John Jay, as well as students have both been so accepting of me. Their commitment in helping me learn how to navigate Blackboard, Zoom and other computer tools has provided me with the necessary support to take online classes while completing my work responsibilities. Oftentimes, I am reminded of the Librarian character in the movie, *Shawshank Redemption*, and the importance of libraries for conducting research.

### **Why did you register for SSC 325, Research Methods in Criminology and Sociology, an online synchronous course?**

Since I reside up in Albany, I wanted the opportunity to take a Saturday research course, work full-time and meet with other P2CP students from John Jay via zoom every two weeks. The course provides insight into the research methods, statistics and trends while providing information related to social justice. As a Policy Fellow, the course is beneficial and will be invaluable when addressing the state legislature. Currently, in addition to learning key terms related to criminological and sociological research, one of the numerous writing requirements is to draft a Research Memorandum on *The impact of the global pandemic on prison education in the state of New York*.

### **How has your life changed?**

At 60+ years of age, life has a clearer meaning right now. My involvement in theater groups, non-profit organizations and *The Streets Got Talent*, a theater workshop is occupying a lot of my time and energy.

# STUDENT VOICES

## Jheyleinnies (Jhey Jhey) Guerrero,

*Criminology & Forensic Psychology B.A, '25*



Poem -

And I think the scariest part is  
to become human

Being human doesn't make  
you normal

Our species is anything but  
normal

We are all variants of the same  
mirror

In different pieces

To be human is to be soft  
It is to bleed

It is to surrender and still sur-  
vive

To be human is to be a walking  
heart who's cognitive

Yet I am more scared of myself  
than the things that are unseen  
in the dark.

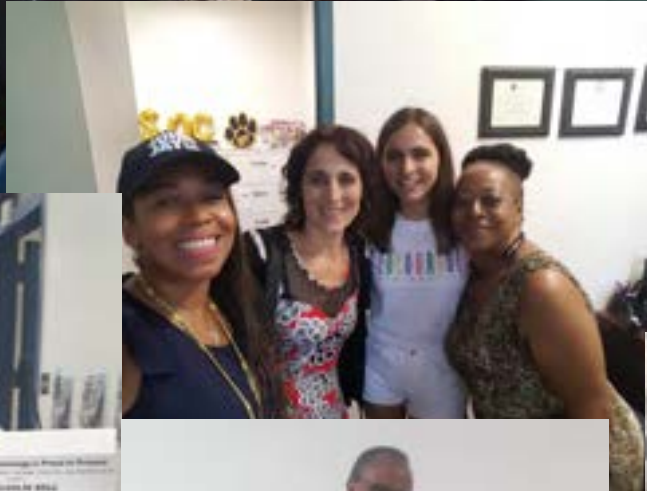
-Jhey Jhey Guerrero



# BLAST FROM THE PAST!

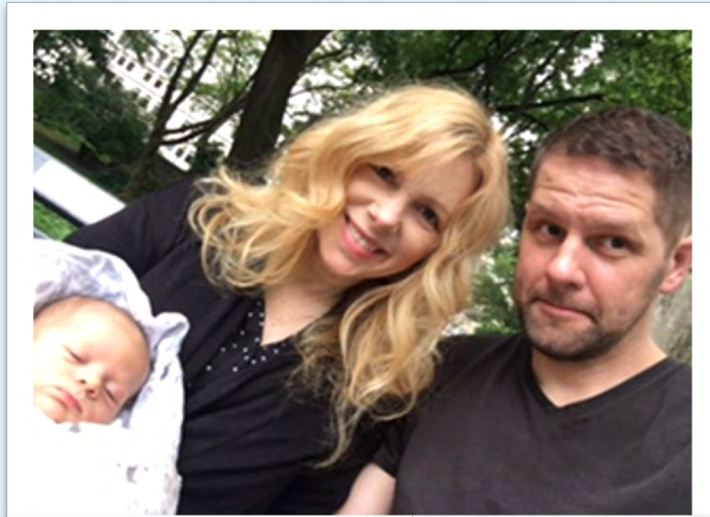


# BLAST FROM THE PAST!



# BABY NEWS!

**Congratulations to Professor Amy Adamczyk & Donald on the birth of their beautiful son *Clarence Carol Adamczyk!!!***



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