



DEVELOPING
NEW WAYS
TO THINK
ABOUT
CRIME AND
JUSTICE

The Center for Justice Reform at Vermont Law School provides an education to transform the criminal justice system. The center offers degree and training programs for law and master's students as well as criminal justice professionals, educators, and other community members who seek to develop alternative, less punitive, responses to harm. Academic offerings include a Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ) degree, a joint JD/MARJ degree program, and a Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice.

CENTER
FOR **JUSTICE
REFORM**
at Vermont Law School



Vermont Law School
Center for Justice Reform
164 Chelsea Street | PO Box 96
South Royalton, VT 05068
vermontlaw.edu

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OUR MISSION

The Center for Justice Reform at Vermont Law School is a statewide, regional, national, and international educational and training location for justice reform efforts including restorative justice. The center trains law and graduate students, community members, criminal justice professionals, educators, social service providers, and policy makers in the value of restorative and innovative criminal justice programs.

The current criminal justice system is financially and ethically untenable. Plagued by the unsustainable cost of incarceration, high recidivism rates, the devastating impact on children of incarcerating parents, the burden and collateral consequences of a criminal conviction, a “school to prison” pipeline borne out of excessively harsh academic disciplinary measures, and racial, economic, and geographic inequalities, our communities need alternatives to the predominant, punitive responses to harm.

The Center for Justice Reform is uniquely positioned to address shortcomings in our justice systems and to train the next generation of justice leaders. With residential and online educational programs including a Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ), joint JD/Master of Arts in Restorative Justice, Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice, and experiential learning opportunities, students gain the skills to become agents for change within the justice system.

WHY RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Because justice requires a new way to think about and respond to harm, conflict, and crime. Wrongdoings are not just transgressions against government or institutions; harm involves a breaching of relationships. Responding to harm requires more than punishment—more than retribution—the response requires an opportunity for acceptance of responsibility, amends to the aggrieved parties, and the creation of an environment that promotes healing.

HOW?

By bringing together students committed to developing new ways of thinking about harm with national and international restorative justice leaders, Vermont Law School will educate the next generation of justice reformers; leaders who understand the workings of the existing legal system but who are also educated and equipped to infuse systems and communities with principles of inclusion, tolerance, equity, compassion, and positive change.

WHAT?

Through a 30-credit Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ) degree or a 9-credit Professional Certificate in Restorative Justice. Both the MARJ degree and Professional Certificate may be completed online, on campus, or a hybrid of both. The MARJ and Professional Certificate can also be combined with the JD for a joint degree. Vermont Law School offers an array of courses, conferences, and presentations that will change how you think about harm and social inequality and how you lead your organizations, community, state, and country to a more just place.



OUR TEAM



ROBERT SAND FOUNDING DIRECTOR

Professor Sand JD'87 joined the faculty at Vermont Law School on a full-time basis in 2016, having served as the Vermont Governor's Liaison to Criminal Justice Programs, the former elected State's Attorney for Windsor County, Vt., a position he held for 15 years, and a visiting professor of criminal

law at VLS. Sand has worked with other criminal justice professionals to develop innovative practices in Vermont with a special emphasis on the creation of Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Treatment Courts. At Vermont Law School, he co-founded the school's criminal law clinic and hosts an annual conference on innovative criminal justice programs. In 2017, he founded The Center for Justice Reform at VLS.



STEPHANIE CLARK DIRECTOR

Professor Clark formerly served as a general division magistrate in Ohio for the Court of Common Pleas and later helped launch and coordinate Vermont's first and only DUI treatment court, the Windsor County DUI Treatment Docket. Clark joined VLS in 2017 as the lead organizer for the International Restorative Justice Conference: Global Healing and Unity.

As director of the Center for Justice Reform, Clark now brings experiential opportunities to students through training and participation at Expunge-ment Clinics, and training for students and the community to help offenders reintegrate into their community after a period of incarceration with a local Circle of Support and Accountability (COSA). Clark is a board member of the NEADCP (New England Association of Drug Court Professionals) and the Pearl Dimick Fund Grants Committee.



ALANNA OJIBWAY
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Ms. Ojibway received her BA in sociology at the University of California, Santa Cruz with a focus on international human rights and sustainable development. Ojibway also studied in Morocco, Vietnam, and Bolivia through the School of International Training in a comparative-study program focusing on the politics of food, water, and energy. Before joining the VLS "RJ Team," she worked within the

nonprofit sector both in Vermont and New York City, focusing on program management and services for issues related to homelessness, substance abuse, domestic violence and abuse, mental health, incarceration, and youth education. Working directly with families and children as well as the other community partners, restorative justice played a consistent role in bridging the gap between the individual trauma of clients and the broader structural inequities of society.



LINDSEY POINTER
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Dr. Pointer is the associate director of the National Center on Restorative Justice at Vermont Law School. She has a PhD in restorative justice from Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and is a former Fulbright Fellow and Rotary Global

Grant recipient. Pointer has worked as a restorative justice facilitator, community program manager, educator, and researcher. She has published multiple peer-reviewed articles as well as two books on restorative justice: "The Little Book of Restorative Teaching Tools" (Good Books, 2020) and "The Restorative Justice Ritual" (Routledge, 2021).



TAYLOR LONG
COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA COORDINATOR

Ms. Long joined the National Center on Restorative Justice as the communications and media coordinator in 2021. She received her BA in

Journalism at Hofstra University. Before joining the NCORJ at VLS, she worked in editorial and marketing communications in New York City and the Upper Valley, Vt. with clients in publishing, entertainment, sports, and higher education. She lives in Vermont.



AGENTS OF CHANGE

At Vermont Law School, students who are committed to developing new ways of thinking about crime and justice are brought together with national and international restorative justice leaders to become the next generation of justice reformers.

Students wishing to specialize in restorative justice will combine traditional law courses with restorative justice courses, simulations, and experiential learning opportunities. Graduates are prepared to become forceful and articulate agents for change in law and restorative justice.





RESTORATIVE JUSTICE COURSES INCLUDE

- Restorative Justice Theory and Practice
- Origins, Evolution, and Critical Issues in Restorative Justice
- Adversity, Trauma, and Victimization
- Criminal Law
- New Approaches to Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Restorative Justice in Educational Institutions
- Advanced Victim Rights Seminar
- Improv for Advocates
- Ethics and Restorative Justice
- Advanced Criminal Law Seminar: Alternative Criminal Justice Approaches
- Restorative Justice in Indigenous Communities
- Communication, Advocacy, and Leadership
- Clemency, Pardon, and Expungement
- Global Restorative Justice
- Juvenile Justice
- Principles of Restorative Justice
- Advanced Restorative Practices
- Narrative Writing Seminar
- Peacemaking Courts
- Race, Crimes, and Restorative Justice
- Police Use of Force
- Teaching Restorative Justice
- Applied Criminal Justice
- Pleas, Sentencing, and Accountability
- Drug Policy Reform

MARJ HIGHLIGHTS

SUMMER 2021

ONLINE TERM 1: MAY 10 to JUNE 27

Adversity, Trauma, Victimization
Origins, Evolution, and Critical Issues
Global Restorative Justice
Communication, Advocacy, and Leadership

SUMMER 2021

ONLINE TERM 2: JULY 5 to AUG. 22

Narrative Writing
Juvenile Justice
Principles of Restorative Justice
Clemency, Pardons, and Expungement

SUMMER 2021

RESIDENTIAL COURSES

Restorative Justice in Indigenous Communities
New Approaches to Domestic/Sexual Violence
Special Topic: Truth and Reconciliation
Clemency, Pardons, and Expungement



FALL 2021

ONLINE TERM 1: AUG. 30 to OCT. 17

Principles of Restorative Justice
New Approaches to Domestic/Sexual Violence
Drug Policy Reform
Restorative Justice in Educational Institutions
Communication, Advocacy, and Leadership

FALL 2021

ONLINE TERM 2: AUG. 30 to OCT. 17

Origins, Evolution, and Critical Issues
Narrative Writing
Restorative Justice in Indigenous Communities
Police Use of Force
Adversity, Trauma, and Victimization

FALL 2021

RESIDENTIAL COURSES: AUG. 30 to DEC. 12

Principles of Restorative Justice
Narrative Writing
Adversity Trauma Victimization
Advanced Criminal Law Seminar
Legislation and Regulation Survey

SPRING 2022

ONLINE TERM 1: JAN. 10 to FEB 27

Adversity, Trauma, Victimization
Principles of Restorative Justice
Advanced Victim Rights
Race Crimes and Restorative Justice
Communication, Advocacy, and Leadership
Legislation Regulation Survey

SPRING 2022

ONLINE TERM 2: JAN. 10 to FEB 27

Youth Justice Reimagined
Applied Criminal Justice
Narrative Writing
Origins, Evolution, and Critical Issues
Legislation Regulation Survey

SPRING 2022

RESIDENTIAL COURSES: JAN. 10 to MAY 2

Juvenile Justice and the Law
Pleas, Sentencing, and Accountability
Communication, Advocacy, Leadership
Teaching Restorative Justice

VLS

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



KAREN TRONSGARD-SCOTT

Q What inspires you most about being involved in restorative justice work?

A This is the world I want to live in - I won't live to see this world, but I'm invested in creating it on behalf of my descendants. A world where we practice Ubuntu, where we harness everyone's humanity for the greater good. Restorative justice - the values and principles, are one pathway to that world.

Q Why do you teach for VLS?

A I couldn't be more excited and more delighted to be a small part of the educational opportunity presented by VLS. The groundbreaking MARJ program is an embodiment of a worldview that promotes mutuality, respect, humanity, cooperation, and compassion. I am, at every turn, struck by the commitment to principles and the integrity of the program. Additionally, the students with whom I get to interact are talented, insightful and inspirational.

Q What advice do you have for prospective MARJ students?

A Be open to possibilities - and by open, I mean open your heart as well as your mind!

FOR FULL FACULTY BIOS VISIT:
vermontlaw.edu/academics/centers-and-programs/center-for-justice-reform/faculty



VLS

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

VANESSA NELSON-KNOX MARJ'20

Q What do you think prospective students should know about the MARJ/Professional Certificate?

A I think that prospective students should know that restorative justice is not a career choice performed during the banking hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but serves foremost as a mindset to restore societal and individual harm. One must be conscious of social justice issues, especially victim, offender, gender and racial harms. Restorative Justice is at its best when the connection of law and compassion is understood and used together.

Q What drew you in to joining the VLS community through the MARJ program?

A What drew me into the VLS community and MARJ degree is that there was no Master's degree that involved law and fit what I did on a daily basis with community activism. This was perfect!

Q How has your work been impacted by the MARJ?

A My work as has been impacted by my master's in restorative justice because I have more of an incite as to what is needed to prevent and maintain better spaces for people and communities that are suffering. I do not have to rely as much on others to remedy the harms, I can do more myself and plant seeds for future organizers to share in reforming the legal system that is a set up to fail for poor and marginalized people, especially the reentry community.



NATIONAL CENTER ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

ABOUT THE CENTER AND ITS PARTNERSHIPS

The National Center on Restorative Justice will serve as the premier education, training, and research location for the advancement of restorative justice (RJ) principles and practices, focusing on less punitive responses to harm, substantial input by victims, accountability, opportunities for people who cause harm to make amends, stronger and more resilient individuals and communities, and broader academic options for those under court supervision or sentence.

Three partnering academic institutions bring considerable strengths to the Center. VLS is the only law school in the nation to offer a master's degree in RJ as a stand-alone degree or in conjunction with a law degree. UVM brings research expertise and an established program of educating incarcerated individuals. USD provides geographical diversity and extensive experience in delivering national RJ trainings and curriculum design.

Leveraging the strengths of these three diverse, accredited institutions, the Center will provide justice systems education and training through semester-long and two-week summer courses delivered residentially and online. The Center will host two RJ Institutes annually deepening the RJ knowledge base for justice professionals. The Center will expand educational opportunities for those under sentence and in a court-supervised substance abuse program. Through research and evaluations, the Center will disseminate reports on the impact on attitudes, recidivism, and costs of the educational initiatives.



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