



Western Association of Criminal Justice

Thursday, October 8

8:00am-12:00pm REGISTRATION/HOSPITALITY DESK Bordeaux/Claret

8:30am MORNING REFRESHMENTS Bordeaux/Claret

Sponsored by: Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

9:00am - 9:50am EVENT # 6 Bordeaux/Claret

PANEL: Badge to Degree: Credit for Prior Learning and California's Path to Modern Policing

Sigrid Williams, California Community Colleges Credit for Prior Learning Initiative

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is helping transform higher education by recognizing college-level learning gained through law enforcement training, workforce experience, military service, and industry credentials. California's AB 992 supports a new era of professional education by requiring peace officers to earn a college degree or certificate. Through statewide CPL credit recommendations, officers can receive up to 30 units of college credit for academy training and professional experience, reducing time and cost to completion. To date, 36 California community colleges have adopted/adapted the recommendation. This presentation highlights California's model and encourages other states to expand CPL opportunities that strengthen education, workforce development, and professional advancement for public safety personnel.

10:00am - 10:50am EVENT # 7 Bordeaux/Claret

PANEL: "On the Docket: Recent Supreme Court Cases Impacting the Criminal Justice System"

Chair: Dan Fetsco, University of Wyoming

Discussant: Stephanie Mizrahi, California State University, Sacramento

This presentation will provide an overview of significant United States Supreme Court decisions from the past year that pertain to criminal law, criminal legal procedure, corrections, and issues related to criminal justice. The discussion will highlight key rulings, discuss their implications for the criminal justice system, and provide analysis relevant to practitioners, policymakers, and scholars. By examining recent trends and doctrinal developments, I aim to offer a clear and accessible synthesis of the Supreme Court's impact on the evolving landscape of criminal justice in the United States.

11:00am-11:15am EVENT # 8 Bordeaux/Claret

Remarks on Behalf of the ACJS Past President

Stephanie Mizrahi, Sacramento State University



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11:15am

EVENT # 9

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BUSINESS MEETING

Future Directions by WACJ Executive Board

Financial Report by Andrew Giacomazzi, Treasurer

Organization Updates by Marianne Hudson, Secretary

*****ALL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES ARE INVITED TO THE BUSINESS MEETING*****

12:00pm – 1:30pm

EVENT # 10

Tuscany/Chardonnay

WACJ Luncheon

Guest Speaker: Dr. Lisa Smyth-Roam, Washoe County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Division

Featured Sponsor: The University of Nevada, Reno

1:30pm-3:30pm

REGISTRATION/HOSPITALITY DESK

Bordeaux/Claret

1:30pm

COFFEE AND DESSERT

Bordeaux/Claret

Sponsored by: University of Wyoming

1:30pm-2:20pm

EVENT # 11

Bordeaux/Claret

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Programs and Initiatives at the Reno Police Department

Chair: Emmanuel Barthe, University of Nevada, Reno

2:30pm-3:30pm

EVENT # 12

Bordeaux/Claret

PAPER PRESENTATIONS: Emerging Trends and Systemic Reform

Chair: J. Mitchell Miller, University of North Florida

Specifying Necessary Size of Force: An Overview of the US COPS Staffing Analysis Model

J. Mitchell Miller, University of North Florida

Brenda Vose, University of North Florida

Wesley Jennings, University of Mississippi

The lingering "Defund the Police" movement and ongoing controversy associated with ICE have intensified recruitment and hiring during challenging times for law enforcement. Toward empirical specification of necessary size of force, the US COPS Staffing Analysis Model (SAM) provides a 9 stepwise arithmetic process by which to calculate the number of sworn officers/deputies needed (supply) to address calls for service/CFS (demand) as adjusted by shift relief factors (e.g., vacation, sick leave, desk duty, court days). Developed through two US COPS Office grants, the model specifies an agency's immediate hiring and, through measurement of agency attrition trends and jurisdiction population growth, near future (5 years)



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hiring recommendations. Findings constitute scientific evidence supportive of funding requests to county commissions, city councils, and federal hiring grant opportunities.

Beyond the Myth: What Can Be Done About White-Collar Crime?

Nayeli Nuno-Ledezma, Sonoma State University

Bryan Burton, Sonoma State University

White-collar crime causes substantial financial, physical, psychological, and social harm, yet it remains widely misunderstood. One persistent myth is that little can be done to prevent or respond to these offenses. This project challenges that assumption by examining how individuals, communities, organizations, and government institutions can reduce white-collar crime and its harms. Drawing on empirical research, historical cases, contemporary examples, and interviews with experts in the field, we identify strategies for prevention, accountability, and reform. The goal is to provide individuals with ways to protect themselves while empowering communities to demand greater accountability and action from institutional and political leaders.

It's a lifesaver! Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) in a Carceral Setting

Roger Schaefer, Central Washington University

Sara Toto, Central Washington University

The current study employs an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to provide an in-depth understanding of the lived experience of incarcerated individuals participating in MOUD treatment. Our qualitative data were gathered through 22 face-to-face interviews, which were conducted at the Kittitas County Jail. Interview transcripts and field notes were analyzed, leading to the identification of three primary themes, each with multiple and intersecting subthemes. The three primary themes are fear, pain, and compassion. The narratives illustrate how fear and pain are related to opioid use, while MOUD coupled with compassion creates pathways to recovery, and recovery empowers long-term desistance from crime.

3:40pm-4:40pm

EVENT # 13

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PAPER PRESENTATIONS: Criminal Justice Perspectives on Victim Support, Violence, and Reentry

Chair: Sriram Chintakrindi, California State University, Stanislaus

Examining the Relationship between Low Self-Control and History of Violence among Female Parolees

Sriram Chintakrindi, California State University, Stanislaus

In this paper, I am interested in examining the relationship between Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) low self-control theory and its ability to predict violent offending behavior among female parolees. I will be conducting a secondary data analysis of a pre-existing dataset on female parolees (Morash et al., 2018). More specifically, an additive scale for measuring low self-



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control among female parolees will be used to predict history of violence and other non-violent offending behaviors while controlling for available demographic data, drug use history, and size of social network (Social Learning Theory). The findings from this study will add to the scholarship on criminogenic risk factors and may have policy implications for developing more reliable risk-assessment tools for inmate classification.

Predicting Public Opinions of Victim Support in the Criminal Legal System

Britni L. Adams, University of Nevada, Reno

Mia Holbrook, University of Nevada, Reno

Adam Dunbar, University of Nevada, Reno

Research on victim support has focused on access to resources and protections for victims of crimes, notably for victims of violent crimes. Less is known about public opinions regarding victim prioritization within the criminal legal system. This study investigates how trust in the criminal legal system and favorable view of the courts predicts specific views about how the system and courts integrate victims into the criminal legal process. Findings indicate that general views and victimization predict opinions about victim support, but not always in expected ways. This study identifies areas of improvement for victim support within the criminal system.

From Charges to Chances: Aligning Education, Expunction, and Employment Pathways for Students with Records (Presentation Style)

Julia Stotts, Alamo Colleges District (Higher Education)

Yousef Kassim, Easy Expunctions LLC

Across the United States, nearly one in three adults has a criminal record, yet higher education and workforce systems remain largely unaligned in addressing the legal and structural barriers that limit postsecondary and employment outcomes for these individuals. This presentation introduces a scalable, cross-sector model designed to remove legal barriers while simultaneously aligning education-to-employment pathways for students with records.

Drawing on the Expunction & Opportunity Program implemented within a large, multi-college district, this session examines how integrating legal services (expunction, record sealing, and eligibility assessment) with academic advising and career pathway alignment can improve student persistence and workforce outcomes. Early pilot results demonstrate measurable impact, including the successful identification and clearance of eligible charges, alongside improved retention outcomes compared to the general student population.

The model emphasizes collaboration across higher education, legal service providers, community based organizations, workforce agencies, and employers, reframing barrier removal as a core student success and workforce development strategy rather than a peripheral support service. Particular attention is given to aligning academic programs with career pathways that are



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accessible given background check and licensure constraints, thereby reducing the risk of students completing credentials that do not translate into viable employment.

This presentation contributes to the conference theme of “Collaborative Pathways in Criminal Justice Research, Education, and Practice” by offering an applied framework that bridges systems traditionally operating in silos. Attendees will gain actionable insights into implementing cross-sector partnerships, designing student-centered interventions, and leveraging data to inform equitable education and workforce strategies for justice-involved populations.

5:00pm

EVENT # 14

Bordeaux/Claret

WACJ Quiz Bowl

Emcee: Andrew Giacomazzi, Boise State University

Sponsored by: University of Wyoming

Do you have what it takes to be crowned the 2026 WACJ Quiz Bowl champs? Form a team, then get ready for a face-paced game of knowledge, speed AND anticipation! Your answer could be the difference between moving your team to the bonus round, or letting your opponents take over! Questions include criminal justice trivia, as well as how well you know our organization and host city. See you at WACJ QUIZ BOWL, and let's have some fun!