

Urban Service Track/CT AHEC presents...

Justice-involved patients and communities: a symposium on health and incarceration at the intersection

Join us as we learn about health and incarceration from our
content experts and interest groups.

Gain skills that will help you better care for
patients from a variety of backgrounds!

Don C. Sawyer III, PhD



Opening Keynote Speaker

VP for Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging
Fairfield University

**More information and
registration available at
h.uconn.edu/ct-ahec**



April 26, 2025



9:00 am-12:00 pm



Zoom

Victoria Steele



Closing Keynote Speaker

Board Member
Community Partners in Action



Welcome

Connecticut Area Health Education Center Leadership

Dear esteemed learners, alumni, partners, and faculty,

Welcome to the 5th Annual Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars Interest Group Summit! With approximately two million individuals incarcerated in the United States, the topic is timely and merits attention by ALL health and public health professionals. We invite you to learn with and from our AHEC Scholars, content experts, and partners about “Justice-involved patients and communities: a symposium on health and incarceration at the intersection.”

Recent changes in law enforcement, coupled with a new political administration, are poised to significantly impact populations affected by the criminal justice system. The echoes of the works of these interest groups resonate with the lived experiences from our statewide Connecticut Area Health Education Center (CT AHEC) regional offices, many working with learners, families, and community partners who faced health barriers in the carceral system.

As student-centered and led learning activities, this Interest Group Summit is a culmination of our scholars' exploration of seven patient populations and topics that have names, faces, families, and communities. These include behavioral health, pediatrics, adolescents, women's health, public health, geriatrics, and healthcare advocacy & policy.

As leadership for CT AHEC, we are so proud of our interprofessional learning communities and the journey that our scholars have undertaken this year. In addition to learning about the needs of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, our learners have developed relationships with justice-involved partners and organizations. Guided by alumni partners who are licensed clinical providers, the interest groups have gone beyond simply “talking the talk.” They have written mini-grants and conducted direct fundraising to support individuals transitioning back into the community—such as purchasing backpack supplies for Community Partners in Action and providing sweatpants for recently released women through A Sacred Place – Sacred Sweats. They have also submitted written testimony advocating for quality healthcare for incarcerated individuals and developed health promotion and educational resources to support trauma-informed care for patients, families, and professionals.

The Urban Service Track Interest Group Summit is designed with the busy learner in mind. We invite you to learn more about the amazing work and dedication of Urban Health/AHEC Scholars to inspire similar professional conferences organized and led by interprofessional health profession student groups!

Be sure to peruse the posters which describe the composition, journey, and outcomes of each interest group. With the upcoming 20th anniversary of CT AHEC's Urban Service Track program, be on the lookout for our journal detailing the amazing and relevant work of scholars, alumni, partners, and faculty.

Congratulations to everyone who has contributed to the success of today's summit!



Rev. Cecil Tengtenga, MAR, STM
CT AHEC Associate Director



Petra Clark-Dufner, MA
CT AHEC Director
Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine
Founding Director, Urban Service Track

Welcome

Interest Group Summit Chairs

Welcome, everyone, to the Urban Service Track/Connecticut Area Health Education Center 5th Annual Summit—the culmination of months of student-led original research that we now have the opportunity to present on a national stage.

Our names are Jaydon Kinuthia and Kate Adams, and as the co-chairs of the Interest Group Summit Advisory Committee, we are honored to showcase the hard work of our scholars. This year, our scholars explored the intersection of health and incarceration through the unique lenses of pediatrics, adolescents, geriatrics, women's health, behavioral health, public health, and healthcare advocacy and policy.

Each interest group is made up of Urban Health/AHEC Scholars and guided by peer leaders, senior coaches, and alumni partners—all united by a shared passion for listening, serving, and learning from others' lived experiences in an effort to improve care for underserved populations.

Over the past year, scholars have worked within these groups on diverse and meaningful projects, learning from experts who serve justice-involved communities and making a real impact in their local areas. This summit is the powerful result of their dedication and collaboration.

As the Interest Group Summit co-chairs and Public Health Interest Group members, we've come to deeply appreciate the role these groups play in shaping the summit experience. Through our work, we connected with impactful initiatives, such as those led by Community Partners in Action (CPA), an organization that supports formerly incarcerated individuals. This connection led us to Victoria, a former inmate turned advocate and mental health worker. Her powerful and raw story, made possible through CPA's support, has become an unforgettable part of this summit. It's stories like hers that highlight the real-world impact of community organizations and the importance of interest groups in curating meaningful, transformative learning.

We are thrilled to welcome two incredible speakers, with deep experience in justice-involved communities, who will guide us through the key themes of this summit. As you engage with the findings and stories shared today, we invite you to let the words *vulnerability* and *impact* shape your future approach to caring for justice-involved individuals. These are not just statistics—they are people with unique and powerful stories.

Let this summit inspire you to approach everyone with empathy, understanding, and a commitment to making a lasting difference.

Sincerely,



Jaydon Kinuthia
UConn School of Dental Medicine
Summit Co-Chair

Jaydon Kinuthia & Kate Adams
2025 UST Interest Group Summit Co-Chairs



Kate Adams
Quinnipiac University
Physician Assistant Program
Summit Co-Chair

Agenda

Opening Remarks

Wendy Zhan, DS-1

9:00 am-9:05 am

Opening Keynote Address

Introduction: Kyle Keegan, MS-1

Presenter: Don C. Sawyer III, PhD

On the Inside: Radical Love and Working for/with Justice-Impacted People

9:05 am-9:35 am

Transition to Breakout Rooms

Wendy Zhan, DS-1

9:35 am-9:40 am

Block 1

9:40 am-10:00 am

Block 2

10:05 am-10:25 am

Break/Main Room Survey

10:25 am-10:35 am

Block 3

10:35 am-10:55 am

Block 4

11:00 am-11:20 am

Transition back to Main Room

Kyle Keegan, MS-1

11:20 am-11:25 am

Closing Keynote Address

Introduction: Deborah Rogala, LCSW

Presenter: Victoria Steele

From Lived Experience to Leadership: A Journey of Resilience and Recovery

11:25 am-11:55 am

Closing Remarks

Wendy Zhan, DS-1

Kyle Keegan, MS-1

11:55 am-12:00 pm

Opening Keynote Speaker

Don C. Sawyer III, PhD



On the Inside: Radical Love and Working for/with Justice-Impacted People

Don C. Sawyer III, Ph.D., a Harlem native and first-generation college graduate, is the inaugural Vice President for Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging at Fairfield University and a tenured associate professor of sociology. He has worked in higher education for over 25 years and holds degrees from Hartwick College and Syracuse University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Sociology.

Dr. Sawyer's work is grounded in the belief that education is a force for generational transformation. He teaches sociology in Connecticut state prisons and chairs the board of a nonprofit organization that supports reentry for formerly incarcerated individuals. His philosophy of radical love and applied sociology guides his efforts in and beyond academia.

He co-founded the #HipHopHeals Project, which includes a community center in the Dominican Republic that uses hip-hop, education, and entrepreneurship to unite Haitian and Dominican youth. His forthcoming book, *I Got Nothing but Love: Narratives of Hope, Healing, and Transformation*, captures his work with marginalized communities and offers a vision for research-driven, community-based social change.

Closing Keynote Speaker

Victoria Steele



From Lived Experience to Leadership: A Journey of Resilience and Recovery

Victoria Steele is a dedicated professional in the medical field and a passionate advocate for mental health and addiction recovery. A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, she has overcome immense personal challenges, including a history of trauma, addiction, and incarceration. Now in long-term recovery, Vicky works in inpatient psychiatry with young adults aged 18 to 26 and is currently pursuing a nursing degree to continue serving her community after retirement.

Drawing from her lived experience, she strives to break down stigma and promote compassionate, patient-centered care. Vicky is committed to educating future healthcare professionals on the importance of seeing beyond diagnoses and treating individuals with dignity and respect. Through her powerful story, she challenges biases and encourages providers to recognize the humanity in every patient they encounter.



IG Presentations

Block 1

9:40am-10:00am

Behavioral Health Interest Group
Geriatric Interest Group
Healthcare Advocacy & Policy Interest Group
Pediatric Interest Group

Block 2

10:05am-10:25am

Adolescent Interest Group
Public Health Interest Group
Women's Health Interest Group

Block 3

10:35am-10:55am

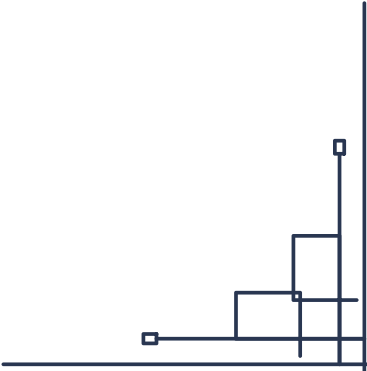
Pediatric Interest Group
Public Health Interest Group
Healthcare Advocacy & Policy Interest Group
Women's Health Interest Group



Block 4

11:00am-11:20am

Adolescent Interest Group
Behavioral Health Interest Group
Geriatric Interest Group





IG Presentations Poster Summaries

Adolescent Interest Group

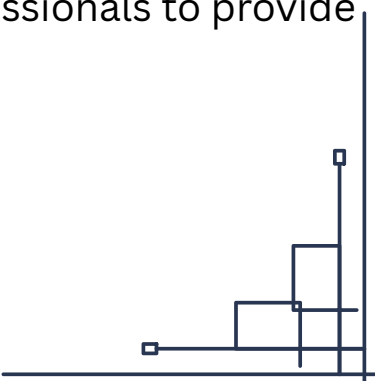
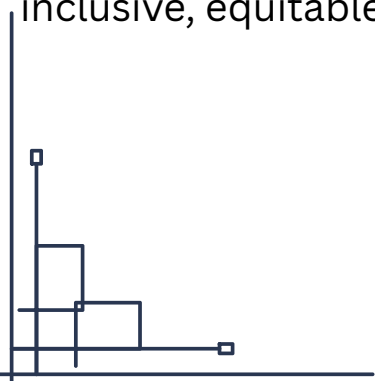
Blocks 2,4

The Adolescent Interest Group's poster explores the intersection of adolescent health and the juvenile justice system through a trauma-informed lens. We hosted monthly meetings in the UST Adolescent Interest Group, where we reviewed literature, led case-based discussions, and invited expert speakers to present on key issues affecting justice-involved youth. Topics included mental health disparities, incarceration's impact on long-term health, and trauma-informed care practices. Our goal was to promote awareness and encourage future healthcare professionals to implement more equitable and effective care strategies for this vulnerable population.

Behavioral Health Interest Group

Blocks 1,4

The Behavioral Health Interest Group is a student-led, interdisciplinary initiative dedicated to advancing trauma-informed care and addressing behavioral health disparities. This year, our focus centered on the theme of Justice in Communities, which explores the impact of systemic inequities and institutional mistrust on behavioral health outcomes. We paid particular attention to the experiences of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, immigrant and refugee populations, individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and those on the autism spectrum. Our mission is to deepen understanding, advocate for inclusive, equitable practices, and equip future healthcare professionals to provide compassionate, justice-oriented care.





IG Presentations

Geriatric Interest Group

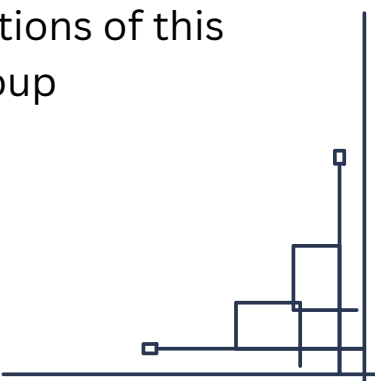
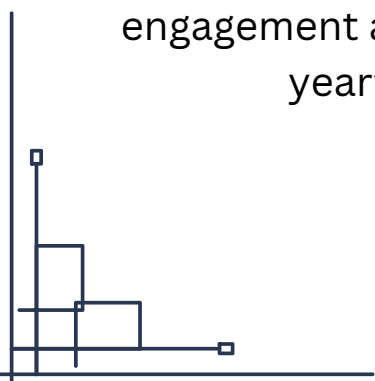
Blocks 1,4

Through our poster, the Geriatric Interest Group explored the unique determinants of health affecting older adults in the justice system and examined strategies to address health disparities within this population. Our work included conversations with experts who serve this community and in-depth group discussions to deepen our understanding and inform our approach.

Healthcare Advocacy & Policy Interest Group

Blocks 1,3

The Healthcare Advocacy & Policy Interest Group's presentation highlighted the unique healthcare challenges faced by justice-involved individuals. Members explored emerging public health issues such as the impact of solitary confinement, barriers to healthcare access post-incarceration, and strategies for effective advocacy on behalf of this population. Our group engaged with community partners through presentations, developed mock legislative testimonials, and even produced an *Urban Service Talks* podcast, episode 39: "Healthcare Disparities for the Recently Jailed or Incarcerated." Through these efforts, we addressed critical public health concerns, fostered community engagement and awareness, and showcased the contributions of this year's Healthcare Advocacy & Policy Interest Group in our poster presentation.



IG Presentations

Pediatric Interest Group

Blocks 1,3

Throughout the academic year, the Pediatric Interest Group focused on addressing healthcare disparities affecting justice-involved youth. Our efforts centered on raising awareness of their complex health needs, building advocacy skills among members, and promoting systemic change to reduce disparities and improve long-term outcomes for this underserved population.

Public Health Interest Group

Blocks 2,3

The Public Health Interest Group focused on supporting individuals recently released from incarceration as they re-enter society. In partnership with a local nonprofit, Community Partners in Action, we provided essential items and contributed to addressing the public health crisis of high recidivism rates in Connecticut.

Women's Health Interest Group

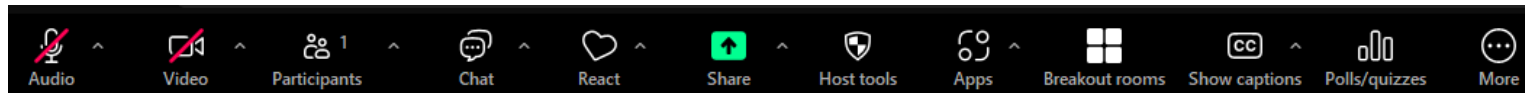
Blocks 2,3

The Women's Health Interest Group implemented a student-led, interprofessional approach to develop educational and impactful programming focused on the intersection of women's health and the justice system. Our events included documentary screenings, a legislative advocacy workshop, and guest speakers from York Correctional Institution and A Sacred Place. In addition, we launched a fundraising campaign that raised over \$400 to purchase sweatsuits for women recently released from York.

Commonly Asked Questions

How do I turn on Closed Captions?

At the bottom of your Zoom screen there is a tool bar.
You may already have show captions on your bar.
If not, click More and you should have the option to add closed captions.

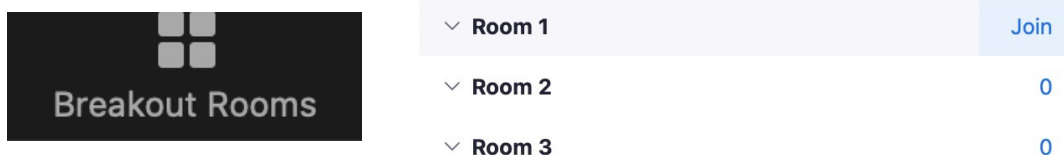


How do I select a breakout session?

Participants can "move" themselves to different breakout rooms. This requires using the Zoom application, not the web client, **having the most current Zoom update** and clicking on the icon at the bottom of the screen that says "breakout room." Most current version is 6.4.6

To leave the breakout room and return to the main session, maximize your screen, click the **blue button- leave room**

You can also pick your next breakout room by pressing Breakout Room , then click join which will be to the right.



How much time do I have to travel between Zoom rooms?

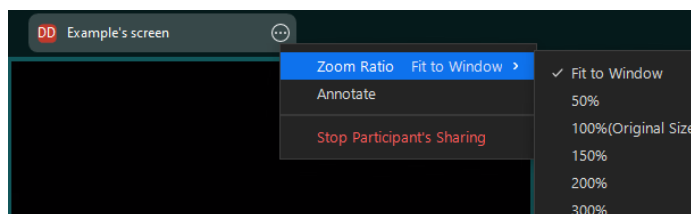
We have set aside 5 minutes between each presentation for attendees to move between the breakout rooms. Should you have any issues, please return to the main room and our technical support staff will help you.

How do I participate in a virtual platform?

Unlike an in-person conference, participants are encouraged to "ask" questions of presenters and share insights on topics through the use of the Zoom "chat" tool. A volunteer moderator has been assigned to each session and they will alert presenters to questions in the chat. We know that all participants will pose questions in a collegial and civil manner. We also encourage you to turn your camera on and remain in the presentation room, till it is time to travel to the next block.

Can I zoom-in on a poster to make it more read-able?

Yes! At the top of your screen you should a bar with the user's name and three dots.
Click the dots, then hover over Zoom Ratio.



How do I enter the Watercooler raffle?

During the Watercooler/Break, enter the main room.

A poll will be live and you may participate.

Scan the QR code on the screen or click [here](#) to enter the raffle!

Where can the evaluation form be found after the Summit?

(Another raffle! Entry form is at the end of the evaluation.)

If you missed the evaluation in the chat, please visit this website by Saturday at 8 pm.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IGSummit25>

Summit Advisory Committee



Kate Adams
Quinnipiac PA Program
Summit Co-Chair



Jaydon Kinuthia
School of Dental Medicine
Summit Co-Chair



Caroline Berberian
School of Medicine
Vice Chair: Marketing



Molly Brett
School of Nursing
Vice Chair: Logistics



Stephanie Chinwo
School of Medicine
Vice Chair: MC Committee



Kayla Barca
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Acknowledgments

Interest Group Leadership Teams

Adolescent

Team Co-leads: Daniel Kotait, DS-2, Hannah Martin, MSW '25
UST Alumni Partners: Stacy Lalor, LCSW, LMSW, Jessica Weeks, MD

Behavioral Health

Team Co-leads: Jakob Lattanzi, MS-2, Hannah Odom, MSW '25
UST Alumni Partners: Roshni Patel, MD, Lisa Vallee, LCSW

Geriatric

Team Co-leads: Abby Card, BSN '25, MaryKate Staunton, MS-2
UST Alumni Partners: Trish Bowen, JD, LMSW, Zachary Yannes, PA-C

Healthcare Advocacy & Policy

Team Co-leads: Julia Cassano, BSN '25, Jasmine Morris, MSW '25
UST Alumni Partners: Christian Gronbeck, MD, Gabriela Resto, PharmD, MPH

Pediatric

Team Co-leads: Monique Asselin, MSW '25, Alexandra Hill-Ricciuti MS-2
UST Alumni Partners: Brianna Mangano, LCSW, Lauren Presti, DMD

Public Health

Team Co-leads: Phoebe Bergstraser, BSN '25, Alison Chamberlain, PA-S2
UST Alumni Partner: Chinenye Anyanwu, PharmD, MPH
Coach: Emma Bergstrom, DS-4

Women's Health

Team Co-leads: Claire Chang, MS-2, Ashley Shafran, PA-S2
Alumni Partners: Maggie Manning, PsyD, Candice Quarella, MD

Acknowledgments

Special recognition to:

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Leslie Bumpus, DDS, MPH, Department of Corrections,
Rocio Chang, PsyD – UConn Assistant Professor of Psychiatry,
Jacqueline Corcoran, LCSW,
Jessica DeRing, LNHA,
Barbara Fair, LCSW – Stop Solitary CT,
Allison Fresher – A Sacred Place,
Sean Genden – Community Partners in Action,
Katherine Kennedy, MD – Yale School of Medicine,
Deborah Rogala, LCSW – Community Partners in Action

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Anthony Messina, PA-C

Members of the CT Area Health Education Center Program Office:

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Ellen Ravens-Seger, Administrative Program Coordinator
Helen Wu, PhD, CT AHEC Evaluator
Shyan Weir, Administrative Program Assistant
Joanna Moon, AmeriCorps Member
Yasmin Mohammed, CT AHEC Consultant
Bruce Gould, MD - Emeritus Faculty, UConn School of Medicine

UST Podcast Production Team:

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Melissa McCann, MS-2, David Tusia, Podcast Editor

UST Interest Group Coach and Interest Group Summit Coach:

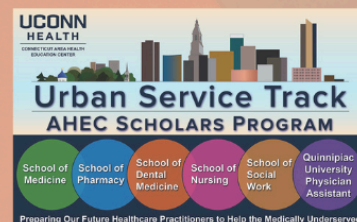
Emma Bergstrom, DS-4

Finally, thank you to the members of the 2024-2025 UST/AS Interest Groups

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URBAN SERVICE TALKS



Urban Service Talks is a student centered, student-run podcast series developed and produced by Urban Health/AHEC Scholars, and is sponsored by CT AHEC.

Urban Service Talks explores issues and answers questions important to today's and tomorrow's healthcare workforce.

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- 34. Immigrant and Refugee Health
- 33. Jevaia Foundation: Nepal Oral Health Project
- 32. A Physician's Response to a Humanitarian Crisis
- 31. The Ingredients of Cultural Differences: A Physician Assistant in Ireland in a Post-Pandemic World
- 30. Mental Health and Advocacy
- 29. Una Flor Marchita: Sexual and Reproductive Disparities in Guatemala
- 28. Changing the Landscape in Primary Care
- 27. Community Based Primary Care

Urban Service Talks Podcast can be found on PodBean, CT AHEC website, or wherever you listen to your Podcasts!

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