

spotlight on our students

MANN CHILD POLICY EXTERN **Emily Garvey** Pursuing a dual-degree in Management and English with a minor in Childhood Studies, senior Emily Garvey applied for a Mann Child Policy Externship in hopes of connecting her varied interests. Her placement at Voices for Ohio's Children provided the opportunity to put her business communication skills to work toward a number of important issues affecting children and youth.



The majority of Emily's work at Voices for Ohio's Children focused on the juvenile justice system. Through different research projects, Emily came to understand many of the challenges of the current system and several of the laws and initiatives that aim to address these challenges. She was able to use her communication skills to take that research and frame the writing for different audiences and purposes. The ability to hone a message for varied target groups is extremely important in the public relations and journalism industries, two careers that Emily is strongly considering. Emily enjoyed her exposure to the field of advocacy and spent her time focused primarily on the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.

POLICY RESEARCH: THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act ("JJDPA") was first passed in 1974 to improve states' juvenile justice systems and, in particular, treatment of youth in correctional facilities. The JJDPA is up for reauthorization during the 2009-2010 Congressional session as Senate Bill 678. Among other things, the reauthorization includes evidence in the findings based on more current social research about child development and the needs of youth in the juvenile justice system, and seeks to expand the availability of programs to address the needs of at-risk youth and youth in the juvenile justice system.¹

Each year, juvenile courts handle an estimated 1.6 million delinquency cases and adjudicate youth delinquent in nearly 7 of every 10 petitioned cases. The daily census of youth under age 18 who are incarcerated is 97,000.² Restricting a youth's freedom through placement in a secure, juvenile residential facility is one of the most severe sanctions available to juvenile courts (in some

cases, a youth may be transferred to adult criminal court due to the serious nature of the alleged offense and would then be subject to increased sanctions). Removing youth from home impacts both the individual youth and the juvenile justice system overall. Youth placed out-of-home are separated from their family and social networks, no longer attend their regular school and may undergo significant stress and anxiety in a correctional environment. The juvenile justice system is responsible for the custody and rehabilitative treatment of youth under its supervision, which includes providing education, mental health and substance abuse treatment, among other services. Recognizing the challenges of adequately supervising and treating youth in confinement, the JJDPA requires states to minimally comply with four basic principles in order to be eligible for federal grant funding.³

1. Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders. Any youth who breaks a law that would not be an offense if he or she was an adult is considered a status offender. The JJDPA holds that status offenders should not be detained because these crimes are not sufficiently serious to warrant confinement. Instead, the JJDPA requires that these youth be served through community-based treatment and programs.

2. Adult Jail and Lock-up Removal. Youth who are placed in adult jails are often in danger of being preyed upon by adult inmates. Research demonstrates that children in adult institutions are five times as likely to be sexually assaulted, twice as likely to be beaten by staff, 50 percent more likely to be attacked with a weapon, and eight times as likely to commit suicide as children confined in juvenile facilities.⁴ The JJDPA seeks to prevent putting youth at risk of harm by requiring states to place youth in separate facilities from adults.

3. Sight and Sound Separation. There are certain cases, however, where youth are alleged to have committed an offense severe enough that they are tried and convicted as adults. In such instances, the JJDPA requires that youth in adult prisons still be protected by being separate from adult inmates, out of seeing and hearing range.

4. Disproportionate Minority Contact ("DMC"). A significant problem in the juvenile justice system is the disparate treatment of minority youth. Studies have found that African-American and Hispanic youths are often treated more harshly than Caucasian youth charged with comparable crimes at every step of the juvenile justice system. For instance, one study found African-American youth with no prior admissions were six times more likely to be incarcerated than Caucasian youth for similar offenses.⁵ The JJDPA asks states to attempt to reverse this trend through research and education.

As part of her externship, Emily extensively researched the background and facts regarding the passage of the JJDPA in order to help Voices for Ohio's Children better advocate on its behalf.

POLICY RESEARCH: THE JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative ("JDAI") is a systems reform project that was launched in 1992 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to reduce the unnecessary use of secure confinement and address DMC by reducing racial disparities and bias in the juvenile justice system.⁶

More than two-thirds of youth in detention are being held for non-violent crimes, primarily status offenses. Nevertheless, their presence in juvenile detention centers has led to problems such as overcrowding of facilities and financial strain to the system as a whole. Further, juvenile detention has negative consequences to the detained youth, who upon release have a much higher probability of returning to the system with another infraction than their non-detained counterparts.⁷

The JDAI promotes cost-effective alternatives that provide different levels of supervision and structure to youth. In general, these alternatives are community-based practices and reduce the use of secure detention facilities, which can cost as much as \$150 per youth per day. Instead, for example, a non-violent youth may be placed in home detention with electronic monitoring or occasional staff monitoring through random phone and face-to-

MANN CHILD POLICY EXTERNSHIPS The Schubert Center for Child Studies and the Childhood Studies Program at Case Western Reserve University collaborate with community policy organizations to offer undergraduate students a practical hands-on experiential learning opportunity. Students work directly with professionals who design and implement policies that impact the lives of children and families, and have the opportunity to apply concepts learned in the classroom to local and national policy work. Students can use their externship to fulfill their *SAGES Capstone* experience in some disciplines. For more information, visit <http://www.case.edu/artsci/schubert/>

face contact checks, an alternative that can lower costs to as little as only \$10 per youth per day.^{vi}

The JDAI is a systems change reform that relies in part on a uniform assessment tool to better ascertain the individual needs of each youth and appropriate program and placement options. Effective implementation of the JDAI approach requires a system-wide commitment with significant training and education. However, the overall benefit for both youth and the community in general is remarkably positive. Counties piloting the JDAI across the U.S. resulted in lowered detention populations and over time led to substantial drops in juvenile crime.^{vii}

As part of its Juvenile Justice Initiative, Voices for Ohio's Children is investigating different ways to sup-

port the potential for a JDAI site in Ohio. Emily contributed to this process through background research on the JDAI and by collecting demographic data from Ohio's juvenile detention centers in order to establish a baseline of the number of youth who could be impacted by a JDAI project.

ADVOCATING FOR IMPROVEMENT

During her externship, Emily became very familiar with the current structure of the juvenile justice system and many of its challenges. She conducted extensive research on many topics related to the system that will help Voices for Ohio's Children to shape their advocacy agenda concerning juvenile justice legislation issues. While much of her research will be used primarily for internal decision-making

processes, she also drafted an article for the organization's newsletter detailing the JDAI.

Emily also attended various educational meetings and presentations and was able to see first-hand how Voices for Ohio's Children actively engages with the community. One of the most influential experiences for her was attending a Cleveland Youth Summit where she was able to speak with many local youth about their feelings regarding the juvenile justice system. Emily was especially impressed by their positive suggestions for change and desire to make an impact. Participating in this process enabled Emily to help ensure young people had a voice in the advocacy work of Voices for Ohio's Children.

VOICES FOR OHIO'S CHILDREN is a non-partisan collaborative of private, public, and non-profit sector organizations and individuals who advocate for public policy that improves the well-being of Ohio's children and their families. The work done at Voices results in public policy to ensure that Ohio's children are well-educated, healthy, and safe. For more information about Voices for Ohio's Children visit www.vfc-oh.org.

Yvonne C. Hunnicutt, Director of Operations and Policy Associate at Voices for Ohio's Children, reported on her experience working with Emily as a Mann Child Policy Extern: "I am pleased to say that Emily's externship with Voices during the summer resulted in a new outlook on the world of juvenile justice and policy issues for her studies as well as additional leadership and content for our organization. Emily successfully helped us navigate the possibilities for new projects and endeavors that would greatly impact the statewide community and we were pleased to have had her as a member of our team."

Emily's experience as a Mann Child Policy Extern with Voices for Ohio's Children helped her to further understand how her varied interests can all be applied toward her career. Her knowledge of business organizations paired with her writing skills and passion for children could be easily translated into a successful career in advocacy. Overall, Emily views her work at Voices for Ohio's Children as part of something much bigger. She hopes that her contributions toward improving policy in the areas of juvenile justice, the earned income tax credit, and the state budget, among other issues, will make a positive impact on the future of Ohio's families and children, and that she will get the opportunity to contribute further in the future. Emily reflected on her experience: "This externship was an eye-opening experience to the problems with children's issues in this country. I had never thought about a career in advocacy before or believed my interests and skills to be transferrable to this industry, but after working with Voices for Ohio's Children, it is definitely something that I would consider."

ⁱ Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2009, S. 678, 111th Congress. Sections 101-102 (2009).

ⁱⁱ Snyder, Howard N. and Melissa Sickmund (2006). Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

ⁱⁱⁱ Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, 5633 U.S.C., Section 223 (1974).

^{iv} Children in Adult Facilities Fact Sheet (2009). Building Blocks for Youth; Washington, DC. (<http://www.buildingblocksfor youth.org/issues/adultjails/factsheet.html>)

^v Poe-Yamagata, Eileen and Michael Jones (January, 2007), And Justice For Some. National Council on Crime and Delinquency; Oakland, CA. (http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2007jan_justice_for_some.pdf)

^{vi} Major Initiatives: Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Major Initiatives (2009). The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (<http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative.aspx>)

^{vii} About the JDAI: Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (2009). The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (<http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative/AboutJDAI.aspx>)

^{viii} DeMuro, Paul (July, 2009). Pathways to Juvenile Detention Reform: Consider the Alternatives. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (<http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/consider%20the%20alternatives.pdf>)

^{ix} Results from the JDAI: Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (2009). The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (<http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative/JDAIResults.aspx>)

THE SCHUBERT CENTER FOR CHILD STUDIES in the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University strives to bridge research, practice and policy and to promote educational initiatives across disciplines. Our focus is on children and childhood from infancy through adolescence and in local, national, international and global contexts.

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