



**Center for Community Research and Service  
Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration  
University of Delaware**

**Academic Year 2022-2023 Annual Report**

**Stephen Metraux, Director**

# **Center for Community Research and Service (CCRS)** **Academic Year (AY) 2022-2023 Annual Report**

## **CCRS Overview**

Housed in the Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration, CCRS engages in community-based research, development and service activities in Delaware and beyond from offices in downtown Wilmington and on the UD's Newark campus. CCRS was founded in 1972 by Jim Sills (who would go on to be the first African American mayor of Wilmington) as the Urban Agent Program and sought to bring UD's resources and expertise to bear on challenges faced by low-income urban neighborhoods in Wilmington and other Delaware cities. This is echoed in the current CCRS mission statement, which proclaims that CCRS:

*works to create more just and equitable communities and enhance the wellbeing of underserved populations in Delaware and beyond. Our research engages with communities and the health, housing and social service systems serving them, thereby contributing to identifying solutions and improving policy. Our public service strengthens the ability of our partners to improve the wellbeing of their communities. Our teaching and professional development builds and supports community leaders and researchers.*

## **CCRS Achievements: AY 2022-2023**

As will be shown throughout this annual report, AY 2022-2023 has been a successful and productive year for CCRS and its programs. A summary of primary accomplishments on a center-wide level (i.e., beyond the program-level accomplishments that will be described in subsequent sections) includes:

*Financial stability.* CCRS has continued to operate on a firm financial footing, as, in fiscal year 2022-2023, revenues (\$2.4 million) have exceeded operating expenses (\$2.3 million).

*Two new CCRS-funded research faculty positions.* CCRS has welcomed Mary Mitsdarffer, who started as Assistant Research Professor in September 2022, and has developed a second Assistant Research Professor position that will be assumed by Katy Kaplan in October 2023.

*Expanded programmatic activities.* As will be detailed in the remainder of this report, all five CCRS program areas have expanded the amount and breadth of their respective research and service activities within the limitations of staffing capacity.

*Increased collaboration on projects across CCRS programs.* CCRS has expanded collaboration on projects that has involved collaboration of CCRS-affiliated faculty and staff across different program areas.

*Provided hands-on student experiences and opportunities in research and internship positions.* Four of the five CCRS program areas actively incorporated students in their research and service activities. The fifth CCRS program, Public Allies Delaware, recruited, placed and oversaw 30 Allies in placements with community-based organizations. In addition, CCRS facilitated paid internships with public, nonprofit and private organizations external to UD.

### **Looking Ahead: CCRS beyond AY 2022-2023**

In this annual report, each subsequent section will feature, in addition to a summary of the past year's accomplishments, a brief overview of future goals and objectives for the featured CCRS program. Here, we feature center-wide goals that CCRS will take into the current academic year.

*More deliberate CCRS collective identity and activities.* As CCRS program areas engage in more collaborative activities, there is a need for better defining CCRS's identity as an integrated center. A clear need in this area is to develop a CCRS-wide strategic plan.

*Disseminate information on CCRS activities to UD and outside audiences.* Become a hub for disseminating information and facilitating professional interaction within the Biden School and the greater university, as well as with the external community of interested stakeholders. This objective builds upon the policy briefs and webinars that CCRS already provides and includes more in person events and functions that both showcase CCRS work and connect persons and organizations engaged in similar work.

*Improved reporting on the state of CCRS.* Produce a regular detailed annual reports on CCRS activities, as exemplified by this inaugural annual report, and develop an annual budget report.

### **The remaining report**

CCRS activities fall into five programs, which are united in their commitment to enhancing the well-being of people and places, particularly those that experience socio-economic disadvantage relative to other communities. In the remainder of this report, each of the subsequent five sections features the research and/or service activities of one of the CCRS programs in AY 2022-2023, and a brief look ahead at directions and objectives for the program in AY 2023-2024.

## **Child and Family Policy (KIDS COUNT in Delaware & Emerging Projects)**

CCRS's Child and Family Policy program engages in research, education and dissemination activities that promote the development and well-being of children and families in Delaware and beyond. While CCRS's activities in this area have traditionally been anchored by [KIDS COUNT in Delaware](#), in this past year CCRS has expanded its portfolio of projects related to child and family policy.

For over 25 years, KIDS COUNT in Delaware has been engaged in data collection, education, outreach, and advocacy to inform initiatives that improve policy and services to children. The project is part of a national, 50-state effort funded and organized by the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) to track the well-being of children in the United States. KIDS COUNT in Delaware collaborates with over forty local organizations to enrich local and state discussion concerning ways to secure better lives for all children by providing policy makers and citizens with Delaware-specific benchmarks of child well-being. KIDS COUNT in Delaware is supported annually by core funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the State of Delaware.

### **KIDS COUNT in Delaware Projects & Publications**

Under the direction of director Janice Barlow, KIDS COUNT in Delaware maintains all the data that it collects in the online, interactive [KIDS COUNT Data Center](#). This free, online, interactive tool allows users to customize data visualizations and share results in various ways. The program also disseminates a series of annual reports and other products, sometimes in conjunction with nationwide KIDS COUNT initiatives. All current and past KIDS COUNT in Delaware publications can be found on [CCRS's KIDS COUNT webpage](#). In the 2022-23 academic year, specific reports and publications include:

- [2022 What Would it Take](#) (released August 2022), a companion piece to the Annie E. Casey's [National KIDS COUNT Data Book](#), examines what it would take for Delaware to be ranked #1 in the country on sixteen measures of child well-being.
- The [2022 KIDS COUNT in Delaware Legislative Wrap-up](#) (released September 2022), highlights legislation passed in the previous session which affects children and their families.
- KIDS COUNT in Delaware's [2023 Legislative page-a-day style calendar](#) (released in January 2023), shares indicator data and policy solutions related to obstacles to success for Delaware children with a special focus on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. A social media campaign mirrored the daily calendar content via @dekidscount on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.
- The [2023 KIDS COUNT in Delaware FOCUS on Impact of COVID-19](#) (released May 2023) explores outcomes associated with pandemic-related hardships and stress faced by Delaware children. Supplemental materials include a [recording of webinar](#) and [power point slides](#).
- [2023 What Would it Take](#) (released June 2023), a companion piece to the Annie E. Casey's National [2023 KIDS COUNT Data Book](#), examines "what would it take" for Delaware to rank best in the nation for each of the indicators of child well-being.

Many of the publications which KIDS COUNT in Delaware produces have annual updates; future editions of the FOCUS book, Legislative Page-a-Day calendar, Legislative Wrap-up, and What Would it Take publication will be issued during the upcoming academic year.

In addition to these publications, KIDS COUNT in Delaware has expanded its activities beyond the traditional deliverables (listed above) aligned with the national KIDS COUNT initiative. In going beyond the program's traditional activities and collaborating with CCRS researchers in other programs, KIDS COUNT in Delaware has expanded and strengthened CCRS's activities in child and family policy.

Examples of this include the following items:

- [Literacy Across the Lifespan](#) (released September 2022), KIDS COUNT in Delaware and an IPA/CCRS collaborative team developed a comprehensive brief examining early literacy and adult literacy. This project was funded by the Delaware Division of Libraries.
- *Two policy briefs.* [Overview of Medicaid in Delaware](#) and [Overview of Poverty in Delaware](#) provide Delaware-specific overviews of the Medicaid program and poverty. MPA student Tatiana Galdamez and undergraduates Miranda Perez-Rivera and Kelly Oberheim, all with assistantships at KIDS COUNT in Delaware, took the lead in writing these briefs.
- *Collaboration.* KIDS COUNT in Delaware is collaborating with [Help Me Grow](#) through a Goal Concordant Care learning community. The mission is to align [Delaware's Help Me Grow](#) goals with those of Delaware families. Currently, staff from KIDS COUNT in Delaware are helping to design an evaluation for use of the [Parent's Assessment of Protective Factors](#).
- *Technical Assistance.* KIDS COUNT in Delaware team members provided technical assistance to community organizations and decisions makers – including legislators and government officials – on a variety of data related issues. This includes:
  - Facilitating a collaboration between the Delaware Early Childhood Council and Delaware Department of Health and Social Services to better understand Purchase of Care data;
  - Working with the First Presbyterian Church of Newark to identify data for a community needs assessment;
  - Working with the Delaware Department of Education on collecting and managing data related to student perceptions of school safety;
  - Working with Delaware's Office of Community Services related to data on poverty.

In April 2023, KIDS COUNT in Delaware welcomed five new [Advisory Board](#) members – Erica Boyle, Gabrielle Gomes, Kiera McGillivray, Mary Mitsdarffer, and Betsy Renzo. These new members succeeded outgoing advisory board members – Kirsten Olson, Kelli Thompson, and Ella Trembanis.

Project director, Janice Barlow works with the project advisory board's fundraising committee chair on multiple development efforts annually (last year raising an additional \$42,000 for the project, including \$16,000 from individual giving, \$11,000 from sponsorship and ad sales, and \$15,000 from Crestlea Foundation).

## Looking Ahead

Since the Fall of 2022, CCRS has begun to diversify the traditional work of KIDS COUNT in Delaware in conjunction with new research faculty member Mary Mitsdarffer (August 2022) and Katy Kaplan (to start in September 2023). This enhanced focus area considers child, adolescent, and family social determinants of health and relevant institutional, local, state, and national policy that influences behaviors and daily experiences. The set of activities listed below have started in 2022-23 and will continue to grow in 2023-24 alongside ongoing KIDS COUNT activities.

- *Understanding and Estimating LGBT Youth's Experiences with Homelessness in Delaware.* In March 2023, CCRS began coordinating a three-phase project funded through the Delaware Division of Public Health to understand the number and need of unaccompanied youth in Delaware, with a special focus on LGBTQ+ youth. Phases 1 and 2 were led by Mary Mitsdarffer and supported by Associate Policy Scientists Becky McColl and Erin Nescott. Award amount for these phases was: \$30,000. Phase 3 of the project will begin in January 2024 with co-principal investigators Erin Nescott, Katie Kaplan, and Mary Mitsdarffer and an award amount of award amount of \$149,987. This project has already led to the publication:
  - Mitsdarffer, M.L., Nescott, E., McColl, R., Bianchetta, J., Layland, E.K. & Tóth, T. (2023). [Understanding and Estimating LGBT Youth's Experiences with Homelessness in Delaware.](#) *Delaware Journal of Public Health*. 80-87.
- In January 2023, Mary Mitsdarffer joined Dean Amy Schwartz's the New York City School Project funded the National Institutes of Health (U01NR020443) COVID-19 Vaccinations and School / Community Resources: Children's Longitudinal Health and Education Outcomes Using Linked Administrative Data as an investigator.
- Wilmington Dover Community Schools Evaluation: Co-PIs, Janice Barlow and Mary Mitsdarffer, and Erin Nescott, Associate Policy Scientist have a grant under review to evaluate the Wilmington Dover Community Schools community school projects. This project aims to measure the effectiveness of a three tier wrap around services model on children's health and educational outcomes as well as family and community well-being.
- [Child and Family Policy Grant Applications. Several funding opportunities have been pursued over AY 2022-2023. Two proposed projects, one for a Spencer Foundation Research Grant for Education and the other for a Delaware CTR ACCEL Program Pilot Grant, while unfunded, received positive reviews and continue to be pursued for funding via alternate sources. Both advocate for a better understanding of the education and policy landscape, particularly for Hispanic/Latino children. This project builds off of a recently published manuscript:](#)
  - Lebron, C. N., Mitsdarffer, M., Parra, A., Chavez, J. V., & Behar-Zusman, V. (2023). ["Latinas and Maternal and Child Health: Research, Policy, and Representation."](#) *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 1-10.

## Health Services Research (Delaware Medicaid)

CCRS's activities in health services research (HSR) are centered on projects related to analyses of Delaware Medicaid claims data. These Medicaid-related activities are the product of a partnership between CCRS and the [Delaware Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance \(DMMA\)](#). This is facilitated through AcademyHealth's [State University Partnership Learning Network \(SUPLN\)](#) and with support from the State of Delaware and the [Delaware IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence \(DE-INBRE\)](#). Medicaid provides health care coverage to one-fourth of Delaware's population, and by working collaboratively with DMMA and other state agencies, CCRS analyzes Medicaid data to better understand Medicaid-related health care utilization patterns and to enhance the impact of state and federal Medicaid investment.

In recent years, CCRS's HSR activities have expanded beyond topics that solely have involved analyses of Medicaid data. Since Stephen Metraux joining CCRS as director in 2018, this program has taken on projects that involved integrating Medicaid data with other administrative datasets in such areas as homelessness, eviction, and incarceration. With Mary Mitsdarffer joining CCRS faculty this year, CCRS work in health services research has expanded to investigate issues related to health services and equity that, while not involving Medicaid data, did involve vulnerable populations that are typically Medicaid-eligible.

### Projects & Publications

*De/CAN* – This was the final year of the Delaware Contraceptive Access Now (De/CAN) evaluation is a seven-year (2016-2023) evaluation of a statewide initiative aimed at reducing unintended pregnancies and increasing same-day access to contraceptive methods with low or no cost to patients. This work was supported by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, population research infrastructure grant P2C-HD041041, and a research grant from a private philanthropic foundation. The overall PI for the project is at the University of Maryland, with Katie Gifford as the project lead at CCRS.

- *Published:* "[Same-day long-acting reversible contraceptive utilization after a statewide contraceptive access initiative.](#)" *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, April 2023. Authors: Rebecca McColl, Katie Gifford, Mary Joan McDuffie, Michel Boudreaux.
- *Under revision (R&R notice received 8/17/23):* "Postpartum long-acting reversible contraceptive adoption after a statewide initiative." *Health Services Research* in April 2023. Authors: Katie Gifford, Rebecca McColl, Mary Joan McDuffie, Michel Boudreaux.
- *In preparation:* "Births and birth intendedness after using long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) in a state Medicaid population." Authors: Michael Boudreaux, Mieke Eekhaut, Katie Gifford.

*MODRN* – CCRS participates in the [Medicaid Outcomes Distributed Research Network \(MODRN\)](#), a consortium of University-State agency partnerships around Medicaid data analysis that allows for comparing access, quality and costs related to Medicaid across states. MODRN has collaborated on a number of individual projects, and in 2023 CCRS participated in:

- *Improving Racial Equity in Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) treatment.* Currently, Dr. Gifford is the CCRS PI on this NIDA-funded MODRN project (R01DA055585) that started in September 2022. This project examines the role of place, provider, plan, and policy factors in addressing racial and ethnic disparities in medication treatment for OUD from 2016-2021. The first year of work has included estimating trends in OUD by subgroup and preparing for geographic analysis. Funding is for Katie Gifford through February 2026.
- *Improving quality and equity of OUD treatment using a multi-state Medicaid research network.* This is another NIDA-funded project (RM1DA059365) designed to develop OUD quality measures (similar to HEDIS measures) constructed at the provider level that incorporate the patient experience and center health equity. CCRS is participating in this project as a research site with funding for Katie Gifford and Rebecca McColl through Spring 2028.
- *The impact of telehealth on access and quality of OUD treatment among Medicaid enrollees.* Proposal submitted in response to a [NIDA notice of special interest](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-DA-20-058.html) from NIDA (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-DA-20-058.html>). CCRS would participate in this project as a research site.

*Assessing Impact of Homelessness on Medicaid-Reimbursed Health Care Utilization and Costs in Delaware* – Stephen Metraux and Erin Nescott used merged Medicaid and homeless services data in Delaware to assess differences in services use and related cost among homeless and matched control groups. Support for this project came from the federal Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

- *Published:* “[Health & Housing in Delaware: Matching Medicaid Claims and Encounters and the Community Management Information System Databases.](#)” *Delaware Journal of Public Health*, June 2023. Authors: Erin Nescott, Stephen Metraux, Mary Joan McDuffie, Elizabeth Brown.
- *Project Report:* Understanding and Identifying Shared Populations and Their Health Care and Housing Needs Based Upon Matching Medicaid Management Information System and the Community Management Information System databases. Wilmington DE: State of Delaware Division of Medicaid & Medical Assistance. Authors: Stephen Metraux Mary Joan McDuffie, & Erin Nescott.

*DE-INBRE* – The [Delaware IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence](#) (DE-INBRE) network, which is a partnership between UD, Delaware State University, ChristianaCare, Delaware Technical Community College, Nemours Children’s Health, and the Wilmington VA Medical Center. As such, researchers from those institutions can submit research proposals which, if approved by DMMA and INBRE, supply limited funds to CCRS for Medicaid data analysis. Several INBRE projects were completed in the past year, and articles from prior projects were also published. INBRE projects include:

- *Sociodemographic characteristics of adults with Medicaid claims for psychotherapy appointments: Who are we serving and who are we missing?* Rebecca McColl, Erin Nescott &



Mary Mitsdarffer (CCRS) and Nicole Duffy, Shannon Virtue (Helen F. Graham Cancer Center & Research Institute at ChristianaCare).

- *Violent Injuries and subsequent healthcare utilization by Delaware Medicaid clients before and during the COVID pandemic.* Erin Nescott, Rebecca McColl & Mary Mitsdarffer (CCRS) and David Chen (ChristianaCare).
- *Linking Evictions, Homelessness, and Pediatric Health.* Erin Nescott & Stephen Metraux (CCRS) and JJ Cutuli (Nemours Children’s Hospital). This project led to the publication: [“Evaluating Approaches to Linking Evictions Records: Assessing the Feasibility of Research with Integrated Data.”](#) Published in *Delaware Journal of Public Health*, June 2023. Authors: J.J. Cutuli, Mary Joan McDuffie, Erin Nescott.
- *Children with Hypertension in Delaware.* Erin Nescott & Mary Joan McDuffie (CCRS) and Carissa Baker-Smith (Nemours Children’s Hospital). This project led to the publication: [“Association of Area Deprivation with Primary Hypertension Diagnosis Among Youth Medicaid Recipients in Delaware.”](#) *Journal of the American Medical Association*, March 2023. Authors: Carissa M. Baker-Smith, Wei Yang, Mary Joan McDuffie; Erin Nescott, Bethany J. Wolf, Cathy H. Wu, Zugui Zhang, Robert E. Akins.
- *Examining Health Literacy, and Medication Adherence among African Americans with Hypertension.* Erin Nescott & Mary Joan McDuffie (CCRS) and Yendelela Cuffee (University of Delaware). Project led to the publication: [“Impact of Health Literacy on Medication Adherence Among Black Medicaid Beneficiaries with Hypertension in Delaware: A Cross-Sectional Study.”](#) *Population Health Management*, April 2023. Authors: Michael Butzner, Christiana Oyekanmi, Mary Joan McDuffie, Erin Nescott, Asli McCullers, Ermiyas Woldeamanuel, Elena Lynn, and Yendelela Cuffee.

**SUPPORT** – Delaware’s Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) was awarded a Demonstration grant from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicaid Services (CMS), as a follow-up to a planning grant, under section 1003 of the Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities (SUPPORT) Act. With this project, CCRS uses Delaware’s Medicaid claims and encounter data set to generate quarterly reports of trends in substance use disorder-related claims. These trends are reported overall and for demographic sub-groups. The investigators for this project are Katie Gifford and Erin Nescott.

*Medicaid clients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)* – This project is a collaboration with UD’s Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) and the State of Delaware’s Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDDS). This project looks at the prevalence of behavioral health diagnoses and related health services use patterns, based upon Medicaid claims, among Medicaid recipients diagnosed with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The investigators for this project are Erin Nescott and Katie Gifford.

*Health Equity and Community Engaged Work.* – This focal area is largely built around the research of Mary Mitsdarffer, who joined Biden School as faculty this year. Her scholarly activity in this area over the previous year includes:

- Mitsdarffer, M.L., Alang, S., & Lyttle Storrod, M. (2023). [Minoritization, mental health, and law enforcement](#). In Friedman, H.S. & Markey, C.H. (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Mental Health*, vol.2. Elsevier, Academic Press.
- Tolley, A., Scott, V., Mitsdarffer, M.L., & Scaccia, J.P. (2023). [The Moderating Effect of Vaccine Hesitancy on the Relationship between the COVID-19 Vaccine Coverage Index and Vaccine Coverage](#). *Vaccines*.
- Mayberry, K. M., Scaccia, J. P., & Mitsdarffer, M. L. (2023). [Analyzing Twitter for Community-Level Public Health Messaging](#). *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, 29(2), 174-177.
- Alang, S., Haile, R., Mitsdarffer, M. L., & VanHook, C. (2022). [Inequities in anticipatory stress of police brutality and depressed mood among women](#). *Journal of racial and ethnic health disparities*, 1-10.
- Mitsdarffer, M.L. & Alang, S. (2023). Factors Associated with Perceptions of Respect in Healthcare Settings. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*. (Forthcoming).
- Alang, S.M., Letcher, A.S., Batts, H., Moeller, C., Biery, N., Mitsdarffer, M., Kieber-Emmons, A.M., Rivera, J., Johnson, M. (2023) Community-Engaged Research Partnerships as Healing Spaces for Health Professionals and Researchers. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships*. (Forthcoming.)
- Mitsdarffer, ML. (2023). [Radical Welcome in Health Care Settings: Increasing Health Care Utilization and Health Equity](#). Christiana Care: iREACH Institute for Research in Equity and Community Health. Presentation, January 12.
- Mitsdarffer, ML. (2023) Factors Associated with Perceptions of Respect in Healthcare Settings. Delaware-CTR ACCEL Junior Investigator Network.

## Looking Ahead

In recent years, CCRS's HSR activities have expanded beyond topics that solely have involved analyses of Delaware Medicaid data. As examples of this, since Stephen Metraux joined CCRS as director in 2018, this program has taken on projects that involved integrating Medicaid data with other administrative datasets in such areas as homelessness, eviction, and incarceration. With Mary Mitsdarffer joining CCRS faculty this year, CCRS activities in health services research have expanded to include issues related to health services and equity that, while not involving Medicaid data, did involve vulnerable populations that are typically Medicaid-eligible. In fall 2023, Katy Kaplan will work with CCRS as a new Biden School faculty and will bring a deep Medicaid expertise in conjunction with her research on family supports for people with psychiatric disabilities and autism. CCRS's HSR and Child & Family Policy programs will also continue to collaborate on projects on topics that fall into the domains of both programs. Finally, the HSR program is seeking to incorporate more students, and especially predoctoral students, into its projects.

## Homelessness & Housing Research

CCRS's homelessness and housing research program is centered upon research, evaluation and engagement activities related to affordable housing and homelessness. CCRS has a long history of applied scholarship in this area, including work by former CCRS director Steven Peuquet that was instrumental in laying out the nature and extent of homelessness in Delaware in the 1980s and 1990s as homelessness was emerging as an issue of national concern. Currently, this program centers on work undertaken by CCRS's current director, Stephen Metraux, who has done pioneering work with using administrative and survey data to assess housing outcomes; on how people experiencing homelessness use services in the mental health, criminal justice, child welfare, health care and veteran systems; and how receiving housing and related services interventions impacts homeless and formerly homeless households. Metraux, like his predecessor, is very engaged with homeless and housing services providers in Delaware. Several CCRS staff also participate on projects in this program, as do staff from the Biden School's Institute for Public Administration. Finally, anywhere from two to five students typically work as research assistants on projects in this program.

### Projects & Publications

Specific projects focusing on homelessness and housing in the previous year included:

[A Needs Assessment for Repairs to Low-Income Owner-Occupied Housing in Delaware](#). This project was funded by Delaware Community Foundation, and Stephen Metraux led a team of CCRS and IPA researchers in partnership with Delaware's three Habitat for Humanity chapters. A [2023 UDaily profile of this project](#) described how this partnership served as:

a launching point for the Habitat for Humanity affiliates' grant applications and new programming to directly provide healthier housing for Delaware residents. "This data will help the collaboration amongst the three Habitat for Humanity programs to provide citizens with the ability to remain in their homes for the long-term without having to be displaced," [Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County Director] Kevin Smith said.

This project also received [news coverage](#) and resulted in an article in the Delaware Journal of Public Health (see next project).

[Delaware Journal of Public Health \(DJPH\) special issue on homelessness, poverty and public health](#). Stephen Metraux, Roger Hesketh, CCRS research assistant Mimi Rayl, and IPA policy scientist Sean O'Neill collaborated on guest editing this special issue that came out in June 2023. With 21 articles using a variety of data sources and approaches to examine homelessness and related issues, this issue represents the most comprehensive compendium of Delaware-specific research on homelessness and housing ever. The issue also showcases CCRS's research agenda on homelessness, housing and poverty with seven articles written by CCRS-affiliated authors and co-authors:

- “Homelessness in Delaware: An Assessment.” Stephen Metraux & Steven W. Peuquet.
- “Health & Housing in Delaware: Matching Medicaid Claims and Encounters and the Community Management Information System Databases.” Erin Nescott; Stephen Metraux; Mary Joan McDuffie; & Elizabeth Brown.
- “Evaluating Approaches to Linking Evictions Records: Assessing the Feasibility of Research with Integrated Data.” J.J. Cutuli; Mary Joan McDuffie; & Erin Nescott.
- “Homelessness Among Persons on Delaware’s Sex Offender Registry.” Stephen Metraux & Alexander C. Modeas.
- “An Overview of Poverty in Delaware.” Erin Nescott; Janice Barlow; & Miranda Perez-Rivera.
- “Gauging and Responding to the Need for Home Repair Assistance in Delaware.” Katharine Millard & Stephen Metraux.
- “LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness in Delaware: Building a Case for Targeted Surveillance and Assessment of LGBTQ+ Youth Needs and Experiences.” Mary Louise Mitsdarffer; Rebecca McColl; Erin Nescott; Jim Bianchetta; Eric K. Layland; & Tibor Toth.

*Evictions among Persons Experiencing Homelessness.* This project matched homeless services data provided by Housing Alliance Delaware with eviction data from Delaware’s Justice of the Peace court system to examine a group of homeless adults who stayed in Delaware homeless shelters in 2019 and the extent by which their homelessness is preceded by an eviction filing. Funded by Delaware Community Foundation and led by Stephen Metraux, in conjunction with students James McGuire and Olivia Mwangi. Results appeared in [Delaware Journal of Public Health](#), and were featured in a [Delaware Public Media news story](#).

*Facilitators and Barriers to Services Use by People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness in Philadelphia.* Stephen Metraux is Principal Investigator (with coinvestigators Dennis Culhane and Meagan Cusack at the University of Pennsylvania) of this ongoing project funded by the City of Philadelphia’s Office of Homeless Services. The project uses both administrative data from the City’s integrated database and interviews of services recipients who have experienced unsheltered homelessness, as well as services providers, to assess facilitators and barriers to accessing City homeless services and exiting homelessness to housing. Research assistants for the project have included UD graduate students Corinne Bogan, Tiffany Gallup and Michael Donohue. Projected completion date is Spring 2024.

*Evaluation of Resiliency Bridge Pilot Program.* Stephen Metraux is co-investigator, and Mimi Rayl is a research associate for this project, led by consultant Barbara Poppe, which evaluates process and outcomes for a Columbus OH housing support program for people undergoing short-term job training. Projected completion date is Summer 2024.

*Research Handbook on Homelessness.* Stephen Metraux is co-editor under Guy Johnson (editor) and with co-editors Dennis Culhane, Suzanne Fitzpatrick, and Eoin O’Sullivan. A collection of chapters on all aspects of homelessness from an international perspective under contract with Edward Elgar Publishing. Metraux, with PhD student Alexa Timmreck, co-authored the chapter “Homelessness and Institutional Settings: An Overview and an Odyssey.”

*Veteran Homelessness.* Stephen Metraux and graduate student Emily Moore wrote a book chapter “Veteran Homelessness” that appeared in [Routledge Handbook of Homelessness](#), edited by Joanne Bretherton and Nicholas Pleace.

*Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment.* Ongoing project with Stephen Metraux leading a CCRS team that includes Mary Mitsdarffer & Becky McColl) working in partnership with Brandywine Counseling & Community Services(Matthew Shalk, Molly McCusker and Michael Donohue). Project is funded by the Delaware Division of Substance Abuse & Mental Health, with a projected completion date of October 2023.

*Probation Reform in Delaware.* Stephen Metraux and undergrad student Hannah Rigoglioso are putting together a report on this topic to assess possible impacts of pending legislation in the Delaware Legislature (Senate Substitute #1 for Senate Bill #4). Funded by Delaware chapter of American Civil Liberties Union. Projected completion date of November 2023.

*Fines and Fees Collections by the City of Wilmington.* Conducted as part of Biden School Summer Fellows program (Stephen Metraux supervising undergraduate student Hoda Bazzi), funded by Wilmington Fines and Fees Justice Team. Projected completion October 2023.

*Research Assistantship (Donohue).* Ongoing, master’s student project led by MPP student Michael Donohue under supervision of Stephen Metraux, in partnership with The Springboard Collaborative. Student is collecting interviews with previously unsheltered homeless individuals staying at a “tiny homes” village in southern Delaware. Project funded under a Gilman Fellowship Award.

## **Looking Ahead**

In partnership with the Biden School’s Institute of Public Administration, CCRS is working to transform CCRS-Housing into a more formal Biden School entity that focuses on Delaware-specific housing topics and issues. To lay groundwork for this, CCRS and IPA staff have collaborated to establish an ongoing series of webinars. This series initially started in 2020 as a means to disseminate information on COVID-specific impacts on housing in Delaware, and now feature topics relevant to affordable housing and homelessness to a Delaware-wide audience. These webinars have been well attended (regularly 300+ attendees) and have been important sources of information for the state’s housing and service provider community. Currently, CCRS and IPA directors are actively pursuing funding, mostly from state sources, to establish this more formal housing-focused entity. The vision for these housing efforts and activities were featured in 2022 in a second *UDaily* article, in which I elaborated on how:

“We see ourselves on the one hand as being a clearinghouse of information and, on the other hand, being a community bringing people together around affordable housing and homelessness in a context that takes a step back,” said [Metraux].

“We are here to facilitate more effective solutions, put information out there and address this larger problem.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Full *UDaily* article is reproduced in Appendix Service-1, pps. 1-6, and can be accessed at: <https://www.udel.edu/udaily/2022/may/biden-school-center-for-community-research-service-ending-homelessness-affordable-housing/>.

## **Public Allies Delaware (PADE)**

Public Allies is a social justice organization committed to changing the face and practice of leadership by recruiting and training talented emerging leaders, with a passion for social impact, to create meaningful change in our community. Our Allies are diverse, equity-centered, innovative problem solvers, dedicated to mobilizing community assets to develop solutions to local challenges. In partnership with nonprofit partners, we deliver our nationally recognized, values-driven, results-led apprenticeship to advance our mission to create a just and equitable society and the diverse leadership to sustain it. Allies work as volunteers (provided with a stipend) in year-long placements with Delaware nonprofit organizations. Agencies that host Allies are building the capacity of their organizations by expanding the scope, scale and/or reach of their work in program development & delivery, technology adaptations, outreach and/or volunteer management. PADE is made possible through funding from AmeriCorps.

### **PADE Programs and Partnerships**

*Partner Organizations:* In the 2022-23 program year, 30 AmeriCorps members (“Allies”) extended and built the capacity of 20 Delaware partner nonprofit organizations. There was an 83% retention rate, which exceeds the national goal of 75% retention. The partner organizations included:

\* Be Ready CDC \* ChristianaCare \* Community Collaboration of Delaware \* Delaware Art Museum \* Delaware Center for Horticulture \* Delaware Humanities \* Delaware Nature Society \* Easter Seals \* First State Squash \* Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County \* Interfaith Power & Light \* Jefferson Street Center \* Mental Health Association in Delaware \* Philanthropy Delaware \* SOAR, Inc. \* United Way of Delaware \* Westside Family Healthcare \* West Side Grows Together \* Wilmington Sudsbury School \*

*Collective Ally Profile.* Some features of the Allies in PADE’s Class of 2023 were:

- 57% Female; 39% Male; and 4% Non-Binary/Gender Fluid/Gender Queer.
- 46% Black; 21% Hispanic/Latino; 20% White; 10% Multiracial; 3% Native American.
- 71% had some college (of that 38% were first generation college students), and 29% held a GED/HS diploma.
- 42% of the class had been unemployed for more than 3 months, prior to joining PADE.
- 39% were receiving government assistance.

Outcome Goals for Allies at the end of their participation include:

- Allies will receive 200+ hours of leadership and career development training to accelerate their individual career and education goals, coordinated by CCRS staff, and in conjunction with their site placements.
- Allies will select a career and/or education pathway and develop an action plan to achieve this pathway.

- After graduation, at least 95% of Allies will be enrolled in higher education, employed in a career advancing position, engaged with a national service fellowship program or some combination; within 90 days of program completion.
- 80% of Allies will report experiencing growth in all short-term 21st century skill outcomes, including: collaboration, leadership, self-confidence, resilience, and civic knowledge.
- 85% of nonprofit partners will report that Allies improved the level and/or quality of services that their organizations provide.

*Community Engagement.* PADE Allies participate in annual Team Service Projects that focus on expanding the knowledge and implementation of Antiracist practices throughout communities. All funds raised through “I Heart UD Day” were directed towards these projects. This year, there were four Team Service Projects (TSPs) executed by the PADE Class of 2023:

- Describing themselves as the Wellness Warriors, our Second Year Allies continued the work of a project from the Class of 2022: decolonizing wellness. This team organized several workshops and tabling events to engage their fellow Allies and the broader community in de-centering whiteness in wellness spaces—nutrition, gardening, art, etc.
- A team of first-year Allies engaged the broader community in conversation around a similar topic--the appropriation of food culture. The Allies facilitated a workshop that explored ways in which foods from east Asian, Caribbean, and Latin American cultures have been appropriated. Workshop participants got to try foods made by the people from which they originated and discussed ways to fight the appropriation of food culture, like supporting BIPOC-owned restaurants.
- Another team organized a public screening and discussion of the documentary *Who We Are*, which chronicles the history of racism in America.
- The fourth team partnered with The Warehouse to engage their teens in two activities to reflect on race in American and its impact of their lives—The Privilege Walk and the creation of a self-portrait.

In addition, in another community engagement activity, an Ally placed within Westside Grows Together (an organization founded through a PADE Team Service Project) in Wilmington organized their annual MLK Day clean-up and Peace Walk.

*Public Allies Network Engagement.* PADE coordinated strategic networking engagements for Allies with AmeriCorps CEO Michael Smith, AmeriCorps Board Chair Cathy McLaughlin and Senator Coons’ office, as a lead supporter of national service. The annual “Meet the Allies” launch event engaged approximately 100 in-person attendees, in addition to online participants. Cathy McLaughlin, Biden Institute Director, and AmeriCorps Board Chair served as the keynote speaker.

*PADE On a National Level.* Public Allies Delaware continued to be the highest performing site within the national Public Allies network during a nation-wide organizational restructuring. As the longest tenured team in the nation, we were called upon for leadership throughout the nation during this time. Public Allies Delaware Director, Tina Morrow, continues serving at a national level to re-



envision Public Allies Inc. through the development and implementation of Antiracist Responsibility Based Accountability practices and national business model.

## Looking Forward

Public Allies Delaware has several goals for the next academic year. The program wants to rehire the open PADE Program Manager position on file utilizing income generated from an effective implementation of a new budget model in the past year which allows PADE to retain unused funds from host organizations. By doing so, the PADE team will return to pre-COVID capacity. This will offer the ability to execute the following 23-24 strategic goals:

- *30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.* Every five years PADE celebrates its anniversary and impact with a large gathering. Typically, 250 – 300 people are in attendance. The attendees are comprised of PADE alumni, local community members, nonprofit and government agency representatives, and national guests. We also celebrate throughout the year with service projects.
- *Restoring the PADE Alumni Council.* PADE has more than 700 local alumni and there are more than 8,500 alumni nationally. Prior to COVID a healthy and thriving council was active. The council engaged with current Allies and general community outreach. They mobilize and organize around causes that impact Public Allies at a local and national level.
- *Reinstate and expand the “Leadership Acceleration Program (LAP).* LAP is a program which modifies the Public Allies curriculum and its leadership development model to meet the needs of the private corporate sector. The program was very successful, but we were unable to continue its evolution once our staff capacity decreased when our second Program Manager resigned.
- *Build and/or expand strategic partnerships with:*
  - UD’s VP of Enrollment Management to develop a dynamic community-level plan to assist in the diversification of UD applicants.
  - CHILD Inc and the DE Department of Labor to explore the development of a nonprofit rotation program to meet the capacity needs for nonprofit organizations and community groups, while also supporting those who are experiencing joblessness.
  - media sources through leveraging our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.
  - Leadership for Educational Equity (LEE) to assist in supporting PA alum as they pursue elected position following their graduation from Public Allies.

## Community and Nonprofit Leadership and Development

This program area largely features the work of CCRS policy scientists Signe Bell and Roger Hesketh, who provide a variety of technical assistance, training, teaching and consulting services to nonprofit and community-based organizations and government entities. This includes working with organizations on internal topics such as board governance, strategic planning, and fundraising, as well as on more outward facing topics such as community organizing, needs assessment, and facilitating change. This involves, both directly and indirectly, engagement with social and economic issues that affect lower-income communities. Students are directly involved in many of the CCRS projects in this area, and under this program CCRS also facilitates internships that place undergraduate and graduate students with nonprofit and governmental organizations.

### Certificate Programs and Community Training Sessions

CCRS has been a regional leader in professional development education for over 30 years. We have a long history of providing training programs targeted to the needs of community and nonprofit leaders working in the field. During the 2022-23 academic year, we offered the following programs, which are both flagship programs in the region.

*Nonprofit Leadership Certificate Program.* The Center for Community Research & Service (CCRS) has been supporting Delaware nonprofits since 1990 by providing valuable and needed training to nonprofit leaders so they may lead their organizations efficiently and effectively. The 15-week noncredit Nonprofit Leadership Certificate Program--NLCP (formerly known as the Nonprofit Management Certificate Program—NPMCC) has more than 500 alumni locally and regionally. In addition to receiving relevant and critical content from accomplished trainers in the sector, participants build on the course modules to assess their organizations and develop action plans in the strategic areas of their choice. The peer-to-peer sharing and networking aspect of the course is a great benefit of the cohort model of the NLCP. Graduates of the program have gone on to lead organizations of every size and in every sector of the nonprofit industry. In 2022 the program was shifted to a hybrid model to meet the changing needs of professionals post-pandemic and was moved to the Fall semester. CCRS Policy Scientist Signe Bell serves as program director for the NLCP.

*Community Development Institute (CDI) Mid-Atlantic.* CDI is a three-year national certificate program that advances individual and community leadership skills through a comprehensive, applied approach to community and economic development. CDI Mid-Atlantic was launched in July 2022 following affiliation with the Community Development Council, which coordinates a national network of CDI sites. CCRS Policy Scientist Roger Hesketh serves as the site Director for CDI Mid-Atlantic. In July, 2023, CCRS hosted its 2nd CDI, with a total of 31 of community development practitioners registered for the 2023 institute, and 13 instructors for 22 workshops offered during the 4-day institute. Support for CDI was provided by an ongoing partnership with the University of Delaware's Healthy Communities Delaware (HCD).

*Nonprofit and Community Consulting Projects.* CCRS works with a number of nonprofit and community organizations locally, regionally and nationally. The Nonprofit and Community Development team of CCRS has been working to grow this area of practice over the last 18 months. We have been adding projects from a diverse cross-section of organizations across geographic areas and subsectors and the program has grown significantly. Roger Hesketh and Signe Bell, who co-lead this focus area, have been adding and developing skills to enhance the program's value to the constituencies served through a commitment to professional development and the addition of specialized skills and certifications. In 2022-23, Policy Scientists Signe Bell and Roger Hesketh, along with undergraduate and graduate Biden School students worked on the following community consulting projects:

- *Creative Vision Factory.* Signe Bell and Roger Hesketh facilitated a stakeholder listening session as part of the Strategic Planning process for Creative Vision Factory in August of 2022. Ms. Bell is continuing to work with CVF moving into the 2023-24 year through a Wilmington Community Engagement mini-grant to help CVF become an independent 501(c)3 organization.
- *Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition.* Signe Bell developed and facilitated a board and staff retreat to update the strategic plan for the Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition in Spring of 2023. Ms. Bell worked with organizational leadership to review, refine and revamp their strategic initiatives moving into their next three year plan.
- *Friendship House Delaware.* Utilizing the principles of Strategic Doing, Signe Bell and Roger Hesketh worked with the leadership team of Friendship House to develop an action plan for the planning, marketing and opening of their new empowerment center in Dover.
- *In Trust Center for Theological Schools.* Signe Bell serves on the Resource Consulting Team for the In Trust Center. This team of expert consultants assists the organizational leadership team in addressing the concerns and challenges of their members institutions. Ms. Bell serves in the role of governance expert and nonprofit generalist, as the other team members are experts in theological education. Ms. Bell also serves on the scoring team for the Resource Grant program of the In Trust Center, scoring grant applications and working with the committee to allocate funds annually. This engagement with the In Trust Center has been in place since 2015.
- *Serviam Girls Academy.* Roger Hesketh and Signe Bell facilitated focus groups as part of the Serviam Girls Academy's Strategic Planning process in the Fall of 2022. Hesketh and Bell worked with the school's leadership to review and refine focus group questions, facilitate 6-7 virtual and in-person stakeholder focus groups, take notes with the support of a Graduate Research Assistant, and provide a final report which included session notes, a summary of key findings and recommendations.
- *National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS).* Signe Bell worked with the leadership of NAPHSIS to develop virtual governance training for their board and plan and facilitate an in-person board retreat in Fall of 2022. At the completion of the project, NAPHSIS leadership requested that we work with them in the spring to manage the updating of their board policy handbook in the Spring of 2023.

- *National Association of Tax Professionals (NATP)*. Signe Bell was brought onto a team of three consultants nationwide to design listening sessions for NATP members at regional conferences. Ms. Bell worked with the other consultants to design a structure for the series of events which was carried out in three different regions of the U.S.. Ms. Bell facilitated the East Coast session which was held in Atlantic City, NJ. in September 2022.

### **Conference Presentations and Leadership Positions**

- *“Unpack Your Gifts: Incorporating Your Team’s Authentic Gifts into Your Flightplan”*. Signe C. Bell. Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations 2022 Annual Collaborative Conference, October 2022.
- *“Connect, Care and ENGAGE: Incorporating your board’s authentic gifts into the path forward.”* Signe C. Bell. Maryland Nonprofits 2022 Annual Conference, October 2022.
- *“Panel: The Uncertain Future of Nonprofit and Philanthropy Education?”* John Casey (Baruch College, CUNY), Signe Bell (Biden School, University of Delaware), and Margery Daniels (Executive Director, International Society for Third Sector Research-ISTR). Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) Biennial Conference, July 2023
- *“Round Table: Current Trends in Nonprofit Professional Development Education”* Signe C. Bell. Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) Biennial Conference, July 2023.
- Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) Board of Directors. Signe Bell has served on the Board of Directors for NACC since February 2020.
- Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) Executive Committee. Signe Bell has served as the Vice President for Membership for NACC since November 2021.

### **Student Internships**

In addition to the many projects described in CCRS’s program areas, CCRS also facilitates paid internship opportunities for students in conjunction with their academic studies that lets them applied what they learn in classroom settings to “real world” situations that embodies the Biden School’s [Delaware Model](#). Recent student placements have been with organizations such as Wilmington City Council, Delaware State Housing Authority, Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement, LNWA and Associates, and Housing Alliance Delaware. CCRS personnel (Bell and Metraux) also teach UAPP 300 (Public Policy Field Experience) and UAPP 472/672 (Nonprofit Organizations: Scope, Framework, and Dynamics), respectively, and CCRS partners with the Biden School’s Institute for Public Administration in running the Summer Policy Fellows program.

### **Looking Ahead**

Bell and Hesketh have made substantial strides in this past year in expanding, both individually and collaboratively, CCRS activities in community development and nonprofit leadership and development. Looking ahead, they will lead CCRS’s twin objectives of being responsive to community needs while being better positioned to receive support from external funding sources. Specific goals here include

leveraging relationships made through CDI to extend the community development consulting work that CCRS offers, particularly in the area of community planning support through Strategic Doing workshops, early planning support (visioning, community assessments, etc), focus group facilitation, and similar approaches that would help to jumpstart community planning initiatives. This would also be a great opportunity to give our students additional field work experience. In a similar manner, the Nonprofit Leadership Certificate Program both provides a community service and establishes and maintains relationships with individuals and nonprofit community organizations that figure in other CCRS community engagement activities. Bell has, in the past few years, also built an ongoing portfolio of consulting activities to nonprofit organizations that have generated increasing amounts of revenue. An additional objective is to better coordinate CCRS's community-based engagement with nonprofit organizations with the Biden School's MPA program and its concentration in nonprofit administration.

## **2022-2023 CCRS Personnel**

- Stephen Metraux, CCRS Director and Associate Professor
- Signe Bell, CCRS Associate Director and Policy Scientist
- Janice Barlow, Policy Scientist and Program Director - KIDSCOUNT Delaware
- Katie Gifford, Policy Scientist and Program Director - CCRS Medicaid
- Roger Hesketh, Associate Policy Scientist
- Candace Jusino, Program Coordinator (Public Allies Delaware)
- Kristie Marmo, Administrative Assistant
- Rebecca McColl, Associate Policy Scientist (CCRS Medicaid)
- Mary Mitsdarffer, Assistant Professor
- Tina Morrow, Director - Public Allies Delaware
- Erin Nescott, Associate Policy Scientist (KIDSCOUNT & CCRS Medicaid)
- Rachael Romond, Program Manager (Public Allies Delaware)
- Sarah Warkinton, Grants Analyst
- Jennie Yeow, Program Manager (Public Allies Delaware)