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BRENNAN
CENTER
FOR JUSTICE
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CONTACT:

Miriam Aroni Krinsky
Executive Director, Fair and Just Prosecution
krinskym@krinsky.la; cell: 818 416 5218

Criminal Justice Groups to Create New Training Approaches For Prosecutors to Promote Prevention and Diversion over Incarceration

*Fair and Just Prosecution and the Brennan Center at NYU Law
team up to develop a reform-minded curriculum for prosecutors*

NEW YORK, NEW YORK — Two of the nation’s leading organizations in criminal justice reform announced a partnership today that will focus on developing an innovative training model for the offices of newly-elected prosecutors committed to a justice system that moves away from past incarceration-driven practices and towards principles of equity, fairness, and compassion.

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) (FJP) — a national network of elected prosecutors committed to change and innovation — will work with the Brennan Center, a think tank at the NYU School of Law, to devise and implement a new curriculum that will help attorneys move away from our nation’s past punitive and incarceration-driven approaches. The partnership comes at a pivotal time in the fight for criminal justice reform as a growing number of elected prosecutors from across the country pursue reforms that address systemic injustices in our courts and prisons.

“For too long, elected prosecutors have defaulted to a ‘tough-on-crime’ approach that has failed to address overincarceration and that criminalizes too many individuals struggling with mental illness, drug addiction or the manifestations of poverty,” said Miriam Krinsky, FJP’s Executive Director. “This partnership will develop needed training for prosecutors to promote engagement in prevention, alternatives to incarceration, and a deeper understanding of the life experiences of those who find their way into the justice system.”

As part of these efforts, Lauren-Brooke Eisen will be joining FJP as a Training and Curriculum Advisor, in addition to continuing her work as a Senior Fellow at the Brennan Center.

“We look forward to working with Fair and Just Prosecution to design this curriculum that will help move offices past incarceration-driven practices,” said Lauren-Brooke Eisen, Senior Fellow at the Brennan Center. “Prosecutors across the country [are recognizing](#) it’s time for change. We

should be reorienting work towards goals built from decades of lessons learned, like reducing the number of people behind bars while improving public safety. As criminal justice reform groups continue to push for sentencing reform to fix our nation’s overly-punitive culture, we believe that the work can begin right now with the lawyers on the front lines of this broken system.”

The Brennan Center and FJP have been leading national voices on the urgent need for culture and practice changes and [recently joined together](#) to speak out on these issues and the need for reform. Prosecutors have historically focused on obtaining convictions and advocating for incarceration-focused responses to the drivers of crime. The goal of this training curriculum is to model a more proactive, prevention-oriented, and community-focused conception of the prosecutor’s role in the justice system and to prioritize more effective ways to reduce recidivism and improve community safety and well-being. It will be an outgrowth of both the ongoing work of Fair and Justice Prosecution to bring research, experiential learning, technical assistance and expert thinking to a new generation of elected prosecutors, and the Brennan Center’s two seminal reports, [Federal Prosecution for the 21st Century](#) — the first effort led by prosecutors to reform their own practices — and [Criminal Justice: An Agenda for Candidates, and Activists, and Legislators](#).

Elements of the training will include:

- Putting more emphasis on efforts to redirect individuals to treatment services and rehabilitation programs;
- Promoting measures that improve accountability and integrity within offices;
- Encouraging prosecutors to consider the impact of incarceration on individuals struggling with poverty, substance abuse and mental illness; and
- Facilitating the reentry into society of individuals previously incarcerated.

The two organizations will also cosponsor “Reimagining Prosecution in the 21st Century,” a convening of recently elected prosecutors this August at NYU, where prosecutors and advocates, practitioners, researchers, and criminal justice policy experts will spotlight new initiatives, discuss [a national initiative](#) around building out new measures of “success” and data tracking, and share ideas about the pivotal role prosecutors play in reshaping the criminal justice system.

Read more in [The Atlantic’s CityLab](#).

Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit www.fairandjustprosecution.org or follow us on Facebook [@FairAndJustProsecution](#).