

41st Annual InterCourt Conference



Session 4A:
Supervising Gun—
Involved Youth

March 14, 2025
8:15 a.m.—9:45 p.m.

Hilton Columbus at
Easton Town Center
Columbus, OH

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FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

JONATHAN KULICK, PHD, is deputy director for research and programs at the NYU Marron Institute and co-director of the Swift Certain Fair Resource Center. He manages a portfolio of research and technical-assistance projects in criminal justice, drugs, and governance. He was a member of the New York Governor's Workgroup on Cannabis Legalization and co-author of "United States federal drug policy" in *Addiction Medicine: Science and Practice*; "The politics of pot," in *The American Middle Class: An Economic Encyclopedia of Progress and Poverty*, and "Treaties (probably) not an impediment to 'legal' cannabis in Washington and Colorado," in *Addiction*.

SANDY F. MULLINS, JD, is a senior research scholar at the New York University Marron Institute and co-director of the Swift Certain Fair Resource Center and the Family-Based Justice Center. She assists government agencies and community organizations in designing and implementing programs, policies, initiatives, and legislation to improve public safety and well-being. Prior to joining NYU, she served Washington Governor Inslee as senior policy advisor for public safety and government operations. She has also served as director of the Washington State Department of Corrections Office of Executive Policy, executive director of the Washington State Sentencing Guidelines Commission and Sex Offender Policy Board, and executive director of the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar. She was involved in developing marijuana policy in Colorado and implementing legalization and regulation in Washington, and she continues to advise jurisdictions that have recently changed their marijuana laws.

MEGHAN PATTON is currently the Specialty Courts Administrator for the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court in Cleveland, Ohio. Meghan has been with the Court since 2007 and has served in the administrator capacity since 2020. This role allows her to supervise the management of multiple docket coordinators for the Adult Drug Court programs, High Risk Domestic Violence Court, Veterans Treatment Court, the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (MHDD) Court, Violence Intervention Program, along with Mental Health Liaison Specialist and administrative staff while working closely with criminal justice and behavioral health stakeholders. This collaborative approach allows Meghan to foster innovative and dynamic programming among stakeholders to serve participants while increasing community safety.

Previously, Meghan was the coordinator for the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (MHDD) Court Coordinator for six years, in which she managed the operations of the five dockets with the MHDD Judges and Court Administration. Meghan facilitated a variety of projects expanding education and policy measures throughout the court, including a collaborative effort among Cuyahoga County Executive's Office, the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board, and the Court of Common Pleas in the reduction of mentally ill within jails through the national Stepping Up Initiative. Her previous positions with the Court have included MHDD Probation Officer and Pre-Sentence Investigator.

She also served with City Year/AmeriCorps National Service. Meghan obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at Bowling Green State University and is a proud graduate of Magnificat High School. Meghan is currently enrolled in the National Center for State Court's Certified Court Manager Program through the Supreme Court of Ohio. Meghan serves as a committee member on various committees and advisory boards, including the Supreme Court of Ohio's Specialized Docket Commission. Meghan conducts trainings and presentations at local, state and national conferences.

Supervising Gun-Involved Youth

Jonathon Kulick, PhD

*Deputy Director for Research and Programs
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Sandy Mullins, JD

*Senior Research Scholar
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Meghan Patton

*Specialty Courts Administrator
Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court*





Supervising Gun-Involved Youth and Young Adults

InterCourt Conference
Columbus, Ohio
March 14, 2025

Jonathan Kulick, NYU Marron Institute
Sandy Mullins, NYU Marron Institute
Meghan Patton, Cuyahoga Co. (OH) Court of Common Pleas

Background

- Many states have strict sentencing for nonviolent firearms offenses
- Most first-time nonviolent gun offenders are young adults
 - Research shows that many carry guns for self-protection, not with intent to commit crimes
 - Early intervention can deflect first-time offenders from gun crimes and from gun victimization
 - Opportunity for clearing record of felony conviction
- Growing interest in specialized supervision for youthful, nonviolent gun offenders



Specialized Supervision

- **Multiple intervention points in justice-system process**

- Pretrial diversion
- Post-plea diversion
- Probation
- Parole

- **Multiple lead/supervising organizations**

- Prosecutor's office
- Court
- Community-supervision agency



Two Focus Programs

Monroe County, New York

- Grant-funded
- 18–29, arrested for CPW 2nd
- Led by probation department, cases on interim probation out of Gun Court
- Connect with employment, education, and case-management in the community
- SCF sanctions and rewards

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

- Violence Intervention Program
- Adult: 18–26, arrested for felony gun possession
- Juvenile:
- Led by court, supervision by probation department
- Connect with trauma-recovery resources, services, and supports in the community
- SCF sanctions and rewards



Cuyahoga—History

- In 2018, the Court piloted the Violence Intervention Program (VIP) to target defendants charged with certain gun-related felonies.
- Support included: the Court's Adult Probation Department, local prosecutor and public-defender offices, volunteer peer mentors, and the county's job-placement agency.
- Participants were young adults from high-poverty Cleveland neighborhoods known for gun-related homicides affecting males 18–26.
- The program started by serving 15 participants.



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Cuyahoga—Eligibility

- **Charges**
 - Carrying concealed weapons
 - Having weapons under disability
 - Using weapons while intoxicated
 - Improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle
- **Conditions**
 - Nonviolent charge, gun not been used to facilitate another offense
 - No significant prior history of violence or domestic violence
 - No gang affiliation or association
 - Priority given to those with moderate to high ORAS risk score/high need
 - Unemployment/underemployment, educational needs, and/or trauma needs are preferred
 - Diversionary and non-diversionary tracks available



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Cuyahoga—Referral and Transfer

- **Prosecutor Screening**

- Criminal and juvenile history
- NIBIN (federal ballistics) review
- Gang activity/association screening via Prosecutor's Crime Strategies Unit in conjunction with the Cleveland Police Gang Unit

- **Court Screening**

- ORAS interview
- Needs survey
- Motivation scale
- Trauma (ACES) screening performed by MetroHealth LISW



Monroe—History

- Started in 2016 as pilot program in NYS Gun Involved Violence Elimination strategy
- Targeting the highest-crime communities in Rochester
- SCF supervision for some people placed on interim probation
- 2019 evaluation by Rochester Institute of Technology recommended expansion

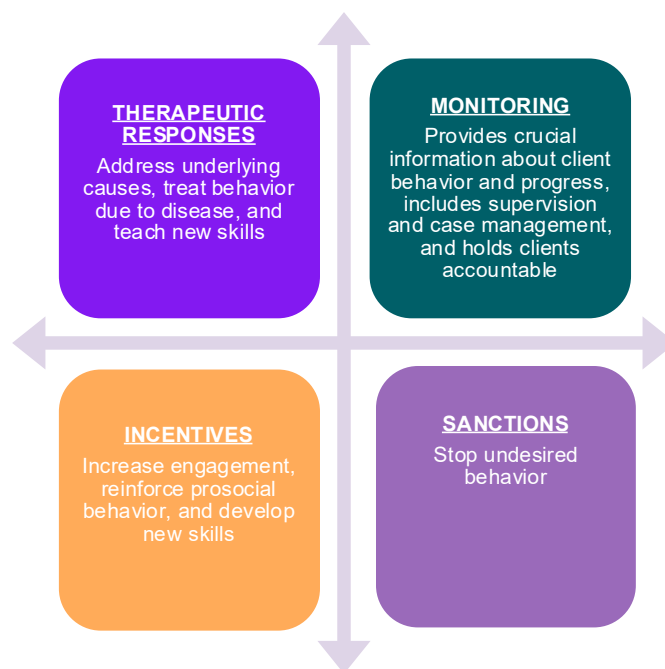


Monroe—Eligibility

- **Charge:** Criminal Possession of Weapon 2nd
- **Conditions**
 - 18–29
 - City of Rochester resident or offense committed in City of Rochester
 - Documented or suspected gang involvement
 - Prior noncompliance with community supervision, either in Criminal or Family Court
 - Appears unlikely to succeed under traditional probation-supervision model
 - History of violence excluding crimes with elements that include discharging a firearm or other weapon
 - History of high or greatest risk per NYS COMPAS risk assessment



Cuyahoga — Program Design



Cuyahoga—Team

Dedicated staff:

- VIP judge
- Specialty Courts administrator/coordinator
- Public defender
- Prosecutor
- Probation officer
- MetroHealth Trauma Recovery Center
- Cleveland Peacemakers Alliance
- Employment & education agencies: Ohio Means Jobs, Passages, and Reach Success

The team meets prior to meetings with participants. Afterwards, each participant meets privately in the court room, around a table with the team.



Cuyahoga—Safety Planning

- “Gun violence often happens within informal social networks tied together by the places people live, the schools they attend, and their places of worship.” (Everytown for Gun Safety)
- VIP recognizes that participants carry guns to protect themselves from perceived and real threats to their safety. Safety planning validates and addresses these fears.
- Safety planning prompts participants to protect themselves through changes in behavior, internal dialogue, and environment and by seeking help rather than relying on a gun.

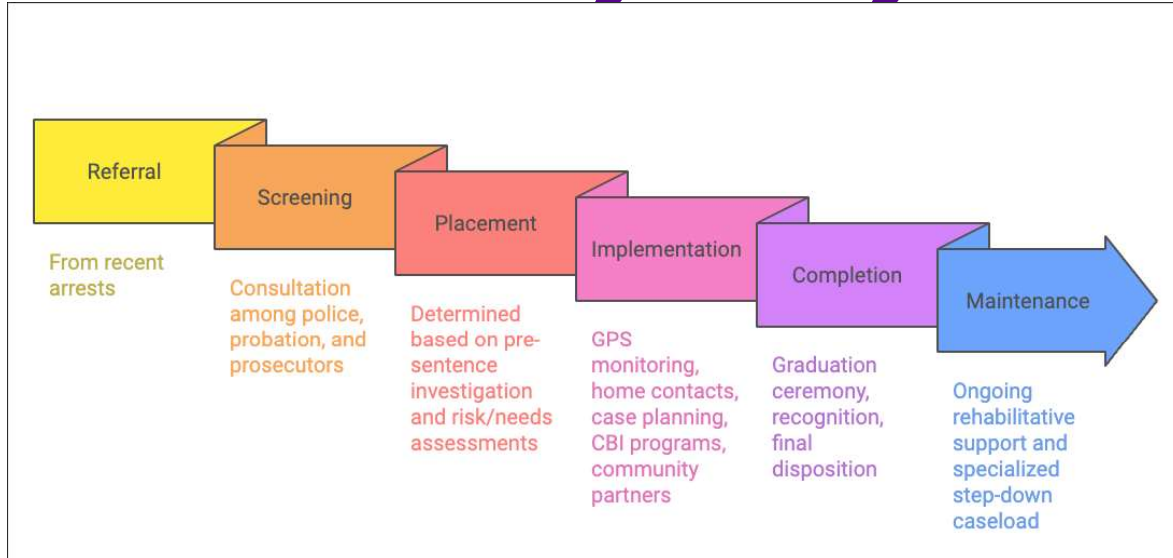


VIP Safety Plan

Step 1: What behaviors can I change to reduce the need for a weapon and to feel safe:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
Step 2: Internal coping strategies – Things I can do to take my mind off my problems without contacting another person (relaxation technique, physical activity):
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
Step 3: People and social settings that help me to feel safe:
1. Name: _____ Phone: _____
2. Name: _____ Phone: _____
3. Place: _____ 4. Place: _____
Step 4: People whom I can ask for help:
1. Name: _____ Phone: _____
2. Name: _____ Phone: _____
3. Name: _____ Phone: _____
Step 5: Professionals or agencies I can contact when I feel stressed or need help:
1. Peer Supporter: Myron Phillips Phone: (440) 319-9574
Cleveland Peacemaker Alliance Main Number (216) 243-7092
2. Trauma Counselor: Yvette Nosal Phone: (216) 396-2069
3. Probation Officer: Jessica Alvarado
Office Phone (216) 348-4863 or Google Voice (call or text): (513) 494-4113
4. Suicide Prevention Lifeline Phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or 988
5. Others: _____
Step 6: Making the environment safe:
1. _____
2. _____

The one thing that is most important to me and worth living for is: _____

Monroe—Program Design



Monroe—Stakeholders

- Community Partnerships
 - Street Outreach—City of Rochester Office of Neighborhood Safety, SNUG
 - Employment—Pathstone Inc., Rochester Works!
 - Education—Urban League, Pathstone Inc.
 - Case Management—Health Homes, Pathstone Inc.
- Program Team
 - Judge
 - Probation supervisor, senior probation officer, and probation officers
 - Supervising public defender
 - Supervising ADA
 - Police command-staff-level designee
 - Crime analyst

Discussion

Program Data

Cuyahoga County

70 participants during grant period

- 33 active
- 25 graduated
- 8 unsuccessful terminations
- 2 neutral terminations
- 2 active capias (warrants)

Monroe County

343 active cases in 2024

- Total 65 successful completions
- Total 22 unsuccessful completions
- In 2024, 10 gun arrests
 - 1.6% of total in county
 - c/w 4.2% in 2021

Activity

- Would a specialized supervision program make sense in *your* jurisdiction?
 - Need
 - Capability
 - Resources
- Develop a client-safety plan that makes use of resources in *your* jurisdiction.



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Questions?

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