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### Media News

### Message from the Department Head



Students at the NMSU Campus



Breland Hall, NMSU



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**College of Arts and Sciences**  
Department of Criminal Justice

Fall is in the air...the weather is just perfect! Not so hot as it had been over the summer with extreme temperatures. Fall in Las Cruces must be the nicest time of year with perfect temperatures and little or no wind. This perfect weather reminded me that I needed to write my Department Head letter for our fall newsletter. Before I get into our updates, I want to thank Marija Dimitrijevic for all her work each semester in putting this newsletter together and getting it emailed out to all our wonderful alumni. This is not a trivial task and I want to personally recognize and thank Marija. She does an excellent job with this, as well as all her duties as coordinator of our NMSU Global program. Her efforts do not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

It has been another very busy year in the Criminal Justice program. This past Tuesday we had the second annual Clothesline Project take place in Corbett Center. Ahran Cho has put in hundreds of hours to ensure the success of this project and has just done an outstanding job! We had over 1,000 individuals tour our display this year and about 120 additional t-shirts were added to the exhibit. Local and regional agencies that support victims of abuse were present to speak with visitors and offer support to those in need. I would like to also thank our undergraduate and graduate students who volunteered many hours of their time to help make this event a success. Their contributions were outstanding and made our department very proud. I would also like to thank our sponsors who made generous donations to support this event. They include NMSU-Global, the College of Arts & Sciences and the Provost's office. This has become such an important project. We anticipate that it will continue to grow each year.

As I write this newsletter, Ida D'Antonio-Hangen and several students, many from the Humans-4-Humans student group, are conducting presentations at one of the local high schools. While this opportunity serves to educate, it is also a great way to recruit the next generation of criminal justice students. Humans-4-Humans is a student organization initiated by our students to bring public awareness to the very serious problem of human trafficking. Our students are clearly passionate about criminal justice issues and helping our community with pressing issues that they face. This generation of students is very socially aware and wants to do their part to help improve our society. I know I speak for our entire faculty when I say thank you to each one of them for their tireless work.

*Continued on the next page*

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## Media News



High school students visiting  
CJ Department



Tulsa PD interviewing  
online students



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Department of Criminal Justice

## Message from the Department Head

Recently, the Dean's office provided space in the basement of Breland Hall for several Mock Crime Scenes. We envisioned using this space for our classes, but soon found out that during Aggie Welcomes and visits from school groups, it has become a very popular attraction. In fact, this weekend I will be taking a group of about 75 students through the three crime scenes we have set up. During any given semester about 300-400 students visit the Mock Crime Scene. The crime scene was the brainchild of Ida D'Antonio-Hangen, and she and her students have spent a considerable amount of time setting this up and rotating differing scenarios to keep it relevant.

As part of our latest update, we are excited to announce that the tuition for all [undergraduate](#) and [graduate courses](#) at NMSU Global will now be set at an affordable \$250 per credit hour exclusively for active law enforcement. It's a positive step towards supporting law enforcement personnel's education and career growth.

As has become my traditional request in this newsletter, we would love to hear from you. After each newsletter we send out I get four or five emails from alumni, some whom I remember as well as some who went to school here during a time that I was not around. It is great to hear from those who email about what outstanding work they are doing in the field. I enjoy getting to meet or reconnect with our graduates and hearing about what they have accomplished since graduation.

Please reach out to say hello and, as always, know that you are welcome and encouraged to visit at any time. While much at NMSU has changed, many things seem to be frozen in time. It is always nice to give tours of campus and reminisce with folks about NMSU and its history!

*[Dennis Giever](mailto:dgiever@nmsu.edu)*  
[dgiever@nmsu.edu](mailto:dgiever@nmsu.edu)

# Welcome New Faculty

## Jessica Corey

Assistant Professor



Jessica Corey, Ph.D. joined the Department of Criminal Justice at NMSU in Fall 2023.

She is originally from the Houston, Texas area where she double majored and received her undergraduate degrees in Criminology and Psychology. It was in one of her undergraduate classes where she discovered her passion for corrections, re-entry, and rehabilitation. She then pursued and obtained her master's degree in Clinical Psychology from Sam Houston State University, and shortly after graduation began working in the Texas prison system.

While she gained experience in many different types of correctional facilities as a mental health practitioner, her primary work experience was in a maximum-security prison. During her last year of employment, she worked in a management role, supervising mental health staff across four prison units.

## Jessica Corey

After 6 years of practitioner experience, she decided to pursue her doctorate degree in Criminology to better understand criminology and criminal justice from an academic standpoint. During this time, she discovered her primary research interests were corrections, mental health, and program evaluation. She earned her doctorate degree in Criminology and a certificate in Program Evaluation from The University of Texas at Dallas in May 2023.

Dr. Corey is beyond excited to now be working at NMSU! She deeply cares about her students and looks forward to mentoring them throughout their educational careers. She also looks forward to continuing to learn from and collaborate with the amazing, supportive faculty.

# Welcome New Faculty

## Mari-Esther Edwards Assistant Professor



## Mari-Esther Edwards

*“I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better.” - Maya Angelou*

*“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.” -Malcolm X*

My last day with the New Mexico Corrections Department was July 28, 2023. I moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico on August 1, 2023, to prepare for my first semester at NMSU. I am enjoying the local cuisine and partaking in Caliches as a special treat. I find Las Cruces relaxing where I can focus on teaching and conducting research in various aspects of community supervision.

The two quotes (to the lower left of the page) explain my educational and criminal justice practitioner journey. Working in any kind of criminal justice career, where public service is the main goal, one needs to be flexible and adapt to the needs of the audience. To complete this, you must continue to learn through various educational settings, with mentors, and through self-retrospection. Continued education and self-accountability are key when your decisions can alter an individual's and family's future.

This semester I am honored to teach CJUS 333: Juvenile Corrections and CJUS 434: Probation, Parole and Community Supervision. There are a couple exciting things we accomplished in the first half of the semester: a tour at the John Paul Taylor Center and Guest Speakers educating us about their experiences in the field. On September 13, 2023, we visited the John Paul Taylor Center, a long-term juvenile facility that can house up to 48 committed youth. The Youth Care Specialist team presented an overview of the facility and the programming offered to the youth in their care. After the presentation, we were able to tour the various buildings in the center which included a workshop, greenhouse, classrooms, gym and dormitories. The tour's highlight was when the NMSU students and juveniles conversed with each other about their experiences and futures.

On September 27, 2023, the NMCD Probation and Parole Division Director Lupe Sanchez and Deputy Director Andrea Sandoval supplied an overview of their department, shared their experiences of working in the field as well as in administration and answered various questions posed by the students. Director Sanchez and Deputy Director Sandoval started their careers in the criminal justice system as Probation Officers (one with extensive experience with juveniles and the other with adult court programs).

Am grateful for the practitioner experience I have had by working with the New Mexico Corrections Department, Georgia Department of Community Supervision, and the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice as this helps me bridge the two worlds of academia and practitioner together. I am excited to start my new career as an Assistant Professor with the Criminal Justice Department.

# The “I Am Empowerment Event”



Professor Ida D'Antonio with students at the “I am Empowerment Event”

The idea for the “I Am” Empowerment Event came to life during a board meeting with members of the [Sexual Assault Youth Support Network \(SAYSN\)](#). The founder of SAYSN is Abrianna Morales, and [Professor Ida D'Antonio](#) is on the board of this organization. SAYSN is a community of survivors, supporters, and advocates who are dedicated to building a world without sexual violence where justice is restorative and healing is possible. Ms. Morales is a sexual assault survivor, and she wants to make a difference. Here is her story:

“I was 15 when I was sexually assaulted. It was someone I knew. It was someone I trusted. It was someone who convinced me that it was my fault. And after I came forward, I felt remarkably alone. What I wanted, more than anything, was someone to talk to. Someone who understood what it was like to be 15. Someone who knew how scary it was to speak out. Someone like me. It was hard to find that someone. I didn't even know where to look. All I knew was that they were out there and may have been looking for me, too. Finding that someone wasn't a matter of if, only how. Thus, Sexual Assault Youth Support Network (SAYSN) was born.”

# The “I Am Empowerment Event”



NMSU Students at the event

Before [SAYSN](#) was an organization, it was a project. In August 2017, they hosted the first-ever “I AM” series event, where they photographed survivors and supporters holding signs that showed that victimization doesn’t define them and that support is out there. The “I Am” series not only gives survivors the chance to feel supported, but it also allows them to feel empowered and connected to one another through participating.

While discussing the “I AM” series at the board meeting, Professor Ida D’Antonio mentioned to Ms. Morales that victims of human trafficking need this kind of support system as well. Victims need to know that they are not to blame for their victimization. They were either forced, tricked, or coerced into their human trafficking situation. The message that the [Humans 4 Humans student group](#) wanted to portray was that victims need to feel empowered. The skits that were performed on stage not only showed the different types of human trafficking but also had some common myths that people have towards victims. Those myths were dismantled with facts and statistics of this horrific crime.

At the end of the event, we had an opportunity for students to come up and fill out an “I AM” posters. There were two individuals who disclosed for the first time that they had been victims of sexual assault and that they needed to hear this “Empowerment” message. They needed to hear that they were not to blame for what happened to them. The messages people wrote on the posters were inspiring. Example such as “I AM your voice!”



I Am Empowered Messages

My passion is not only to educate others in human trafficking but to stand with and empower victims! – Ida D’Antonio

# Successful CJ Student Story



Deborah Silva

Deborah Silva graduated with a bachelor's (2015) and a master's in criminal justice (2017) from NMSU. This is her story:

Shortly after graduating, I began my federal law enforcement career with the US Border Patrol. BP was a great starter agency for me, but I knew I wanted more for my career. I wanted to investigate and further predicate cases for prosecutions. Additionally, I wanted to work on a variety of cases, instead of solely immigration-related offenses, which led me to apply for Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

I have been with HSI for about a year and a half now, and it was the best decision for my career. I can see myself retiring with this agency. Everyday is different and I love the challenge and freedom of working different types of cases.

While being employed with HSI as a criminal investigator, I have also earned the new title of MOM four months ago! Balancing mom life and work life came easy fortunately and a lot of that is thanks to my husband, but also, the agency is very family friendly.

HSI is actively recruiting females to become criminal investigators. For any female out there that has any hesitations about having a career in law enforcement because you want a family life also, use me as an example. You CAN have both and it is possible. It's a rewarding career, check out HSI. The personal views expressed in this article do not necessarily represent the programs and policies of ICE, DHS, or the government.

## Departmental Star – Dr. Hyunin Baek



Dr. Baek, Dr. Giever, Dr. Bejarano, Diane Giever

I am truly honored to have been selected as a Departmental Star at NMSU's College of Arts and Sciences. This recognition means a lot to me, and I want to express my deepest gratitude to the department and all those involved. I'm grateful for the opportunities and support I've received throughout my academic journey, which have allowed me to shine in this role. I look forward to continuing to contribute to our department's success and the pursuit of knowledge. Thank you for this incredible honor. – [Dr. Hyunin Baek](#)



## The Aggie Next Step College Experience campus visits in the CJ Mock Crime Scenes in Breland Hall

The Criminal Justice Department participated in the Aggie Next Step College Experience campus visits for middle and high school students on Oct. 4 and Oct. 11-12, 2023.

The Aggie Next Step College Experience provides education about college and career opportunities, showcases NMSU's colleges and departments, and introduces youth to NMSU. Students participated in a full day of activities and presentations at the NMSU Las Cruces, examining a mock crime scene session with Professor Ida D'Antonio.

The dean's office provided space in the basement of Breland Hall for several Mock Crime Scenes. We envisioned using this space for our classes but soon found out that during Aggie Welcomes and visits from school groups, it has become a very popular attraction. During any given semester about 300-400 students visit the Mock Crime Scene.



Students visiting the mock crime scene in the basement of Breland Hall

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## Tulsa Police Department has partnered with NMSU Criminal Justice Department

TPD Contact information:

Officer J. David Medrano | Police Recruiter

6066 E. 66th St. N.  
Tulsa, OK 74117

[JesusMedrano@cityoftulsa.org](mailto:JesusMedrano@cityoftulsa.org)

[Tulsa PD Website](#)

Tulsa Police Department has partnered with the Department of Criminal Justice at NMSU to provide students with a unique opportunity to receive hands-on training experience at their academy in Tulsa, OK while earning a degree and getting paid. Tulsa PD visits the CJ Department each semester.

### [Apply - Tulsa Police Academy Partnership](#)

- Like an internship: Criminal Justice majors can attend the academy while getting paid
- Six months of instruction, five months of field training, including ride-along
- In the first six months of training, you can earn \$55,000 annually, then up to \$70,000
- After completing all prior degree requirements and being accepted into the Tulsa Police Academy (passing a background check, physical fitness standards, etc.), you'll have the opportunity to finish your final NMSU 15 credit hours at the academy.
- Students finish the academy and graduate with a degree
- Advancement opportunities
- Great stepping block and resume addition



Tulsa PD at the NMSU Campus

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# Metaversity and Criminal Justice Department

## NMSU immersive teaching technologies attract Meta's attention

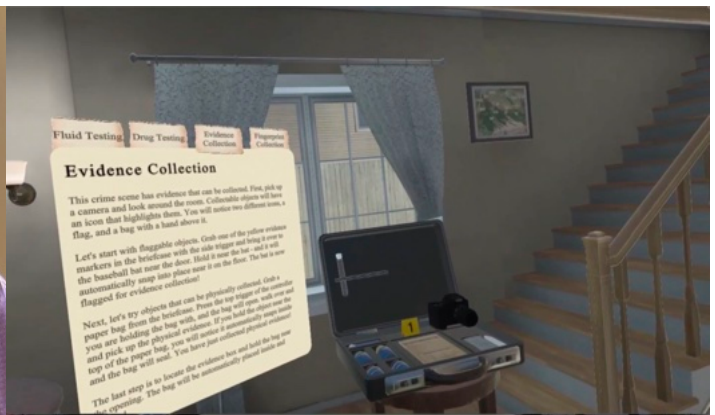
[Meta](#) is partnering with 15 universities, including [New Mexico State University](#), on immersive learning initiatives, including virtual reality (VR).

One program that has embraced VR-supplemented learning is the [NMSU Criminal Justice Program](#), where students are using VR to investigate virtual crime scenes in CJUS 424 Forensic Law.

To watch a VR interview with D'Antonio-Hangen and Andrew Sedillo of NMSU Global Campus, visit [Youtube](#)

### [News Article](#)

Professor Ida D'Antonio - Hangen recorded with Meta and Vacationland, showcasing her virtual reality story. She shared her experience using VR in CJUS 424 Forensic Law and how the learning experiences of NMSU Department of Criminal Justice students were enhanced as a result of integrating VR.



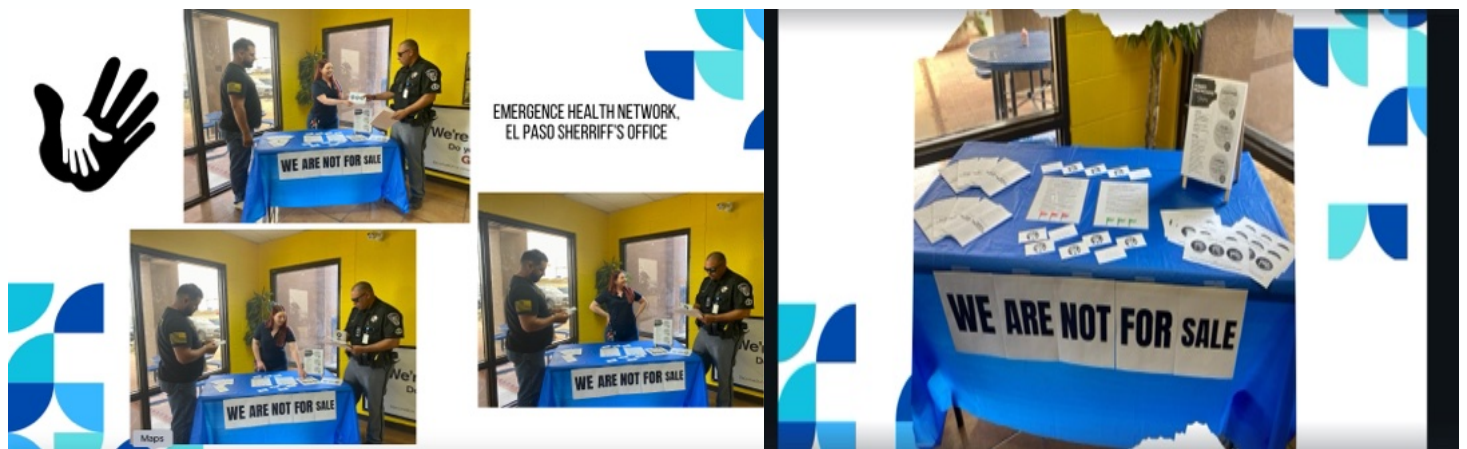
Andrew Sedillo, Ida D'Antonio, Robbie Grant



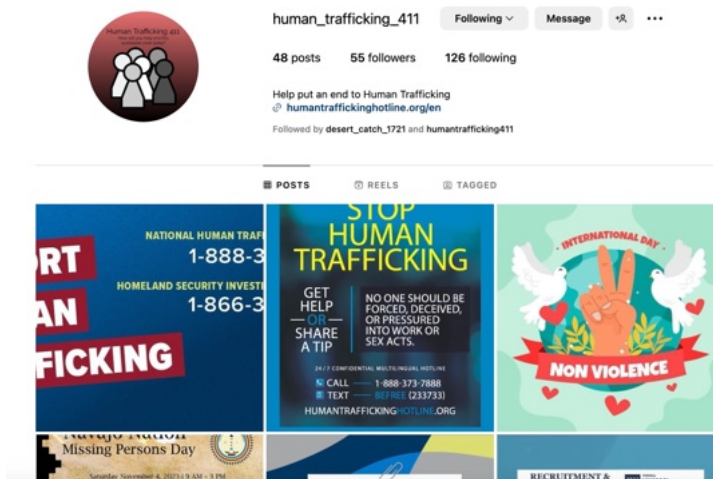
## Students Experiential Learning Projects in online classes

Cheyenne Marie Murphy created outstanding awareness materials for the human trafficking course. Cheyenne presented these materials at the halfway house where she works, and also shared and educated about human trafficking with several outside entities, including the El Paso Sheriff's office, case managers, TDCJ program facilitators, and security personnel.

[Check out Cheyenne's work](#)



Jennifer Sherman created the Instagram page "[Human Trafficking 411.](#)" With the Instagram page, Jennifer not only aims to raise awareness but also strives to empower survivors of human trafficking, providing them with hope and opportunities for a brighter future. We encourage everyone to follow the page and join in the mission to combat human trafficking.



## Students Experiential Learning Projects in online classes

Alexis Renteria organized an online fundraiser for NightLight Collection Jewelry. Alexis's efforts aren't just about raising funds; they're about raising awareness about the prevalent issue of human trafficking. Her commitment to shedding light on this pressing issue is truly commendable.

By aligning with NightLight Collection Jewelry, Alexis is helping to empower those who have been impacted by human trafficking, giving them hope and opportunities for a brighter future.



Tatianna Jiron presented a crucial talk on human trafficking at Valencia High School. It is inspiring to see our students using education to raise awareness about such pressing global issues.



## Project Clothesline October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 2<sup>nd</sup> year

The Department of Criminal Justice proudly hosted the second annual [Clothesline Project](#), bringing together NMSU and Las Cruces communities to raise awareness of the extent of the violence and abuse problem in our community and to provide support, encouragement, and resources for NMSU students. The Clothesline Project is an internationally recognized interactive exhibit, which displays t-shirts with graphic messages and illustrations to increase awareness of violence and abuse.

In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, three criminal justice student organizations (i.e., Graduate Student Organization, Alpha Phi Sigma, [Humans 4 Humans](#)) and [Dr. Ahram Cho](#) collaborated with the Office of Health Promotion to invite students to decorate t-shirts to "Break the Silence" about the devastating effect of violence and abuse, the strength and resiliency of survivors, and the impact it has on individuals and communities. The powerful exhibit was held on October 17th at Corbett Center Aggie Lounge, attracted one thousand people on campus, and displayed 250 t-shirts decorated by NMSU students, faculty, and staff.

One of the highlights of this year's exhibition was the community fair in which 18 local organizations and a larger NMSU community joined to provide solidarity against violence for our students. Participated organizations include the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General, Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New Mexico State Police Department, Las Cruces Police Department, NMSU Police Department, La Casa, La Pinon, Office of Institutional Equity, Aggie Health and Wellness, Chicano Programs, Black Programs, Criminal Justice Honor Society, Active Minds, Students for Reproductive Rights, Peer Mental Health Advocates. Each and every organization offered valuable educational resources and created a sense of unity and support for our students.

The event's success was made possible by the collaborative efforts of the students and faculty in the department, the cohost, and numerous volunteers. This year's exhibition reached a broad and appreciative audience with the generous support of sponsors, including NMSU Global, Provost Office, College of Arts and Sciences, Housing and Residential Life, Facilities and Services, and Student Involvement & Leadership Programs.

Invited by the Third Judicial District Attorney, the Clothesline Project will be displayed at the Dona Ana County Government Center in April 2024 for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

# Project Clothesline 2023





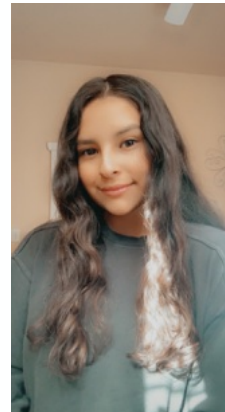
# Criminal Justice Department



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[Andreia Scarborough](#)  
(Administrative  
Assistant)



[Alexis Renteria](#) (student  
work/administrative  
assistant)

Thank you Andreia and Alexis for taking care of student and faculty needs. Your personal touches and caring for each individual student is absolutely noticed.  
Thank you both!

Please touch back to us and let us learn about your career and what you have done since you graduated.

Please send a short note or email briefly describing your careers. We might include these in future Newsletters or on our website. It would be nice for our alumni to hear from others and what they have been doing since they left NMSU.

Please check our [alumni success webpage](#)  
[Newsletters page](#)  
Connect with Us on [LinkedIn](#)

Please visit the [CJ Giving Page](#) to see how you can contribute to the future success of Criminal Justice Students.