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**The City of New York  
Community Board 8 Manhattan  
Social Justice Committee  
Wednesday, September 28, 2022 – 6:30PM  
*This meeting was conducted via Zoom***

**MINUTES**

**CB8 Members Present:** Erica Bersin (Public Member), Sarah Chu, Saundra I. Coleman, Wendy Machaver (Public Member), Valerie Mason, Gregory J. Morris,

**1. Public Housing to Prison Pipeline Part 1 Presentation of Research on Punishment and Inequality in the Public Housing to Prison Pipeline in NYC**

- a) Featuring co-authors
  - i) Jay Holder, National Executive Council (NEC), Columbia University
  - ii) Ivan Calaff, Center for Justice, Columbia University
  - iii) Prof. Van C. Tran, Center for Urban Research, City University of New York Graduate Center
- b) Professor Tran began with a presentation of the research study.
  - (a) [PowerPoint Presentation](#) Highlights from the Presentation Include
    - (i) A discussion of the long reach of incarceration in the U.S., its disproportionate impact on Black and Latinx communities. There are a number of “pipelines” or structural forces that create direct pathways to prison. Those have included: “school-to-prison,” “poverty-to-prison,” “cradle-to-prison,” and “community-to-prison.” This paper provides empirical support for the “public housing-to-prison” pipeline.
    - (ii) Possible mechanisms that create these structural forces include hyper surveillance and hyper policing of NYCHA developments and an increasing reliance on surveillance technology.
    - (iii) The current study included census tracts containing NYCHA developments and mapped these geographic locations with incarceration data, crime rates, and stop, question, and frisk rates.
    - (iv) Researchers found that although crime was not higher in NYCHA census tracts compared to non-NYCHA census tracts, incarceration rates were 4.6 times higher in NYCHA tracts. The study also found that 17% of the incarcerated population in NYS originated from the 372 NYCHA census tracts even though these populations only make up 6.3% of NYS’ population.

**2. Discussion**

- a) We heard from community members who lead organizations
  - i) Dr Tawanna Gilford
    - (1) Dr. Gilford is the sister of a NYCHA resident who was wrongfully convicted. She shared how from the age of 12 to adulthood, police harassment and surveillance has been subject to a “grooming process” through a series of wrongful arrests that have been dismissed. Dr. Gilford founded the [Stop False Police Reporting Project](#) in response to this experience because of how difficult it was to put their lives back together after two decades of terror.
      - (a) Contact Dr. Gilford by e-mail at [Dr.Gilford2012@gmail.com](mailto:Dr.Gilford2012@gmail.com)
  - ii) Dr. Jessie Fields
    - (1) Dr. Fields CICA is a leader at the Committee for Independent Community Action (CICA), which works with NYCHA communities to work with residents to advance their ability to determine the

future of their homes and supports afterschool programs in underserved communities and NYCHA residences.

(a) Contact Dr. Fields by e-mail at [jessiefields1616@gmail.com](mailto:jessiefields1616@gmail.com)

iii) Jay Holder

(1) Jay Holder described the work of the National Executive Council (NEC) at Columbia University which is comprised of a research team and a policy team led by formerly incarcerated lawyers. The work of the NEC is grounded in supporting communities and integrating the lived experiences of impacted communities to direct its work.

iv) Ivan Calaff

(1) Ivan Calaff shared how the narratives of dangerousness about NYCHA housing gets translated into messages that the people who live there are dangerous. These communities want what we all want for our communities but lack the public investment. Mr. Calaff also shared how we need to not only change the narratives, but also change the narrators. The people who have lived experience should be telling their stories and their stories are often distorted when told by people outside those communities who have other agendas.

b) The discussion raised the following issues

- i) While crime is not higher in NYCHA census tracts compared to non-NYCHA census tracts, surveillance and incarceration is higher. Dr. Fields asks how public policy can decrease surveillance and bring more education, social services, and opportunities to the community. A second solution is including the residents in public housing to develop solutions to these issues.
- ii) There was a discussion about the NYCHA Public Housing Preservation Trust referenced in the paper. Although public materials have described it as representing the position of the residents, in practice it does not represent the sentiments of the residents.
- iii) The need for community investment and how NYCHA communities have been depleted of public support and the increasing privatization of community resources.
- iv) People who were incarcerated cannot return home to their families if they live in NYCHA, compounding the collateral consequences of their system involvement. People often end up on the street as a result.
- v) When a person is arrested and gives a NYCHA address as their residence, the NYPD system triggers an alert to NYCHA. Even if the arrest was not on NYCHA property, was unwarranted, charges were dismissed, a person is acquitted, or the arrested person falsely gives a NYCHA address, this exposure triggers scrutiny of the residents at that address by NYCHA.
- vi) There was a discussion about the role that stop, question, and frisk (SQF) impacted the study results. A point was raised that while SQF may not exist as a physical interaction between community members and police, it has moved to the digital realm.
- vii) Gisele Hearn from NYC District 9 Councilmember Kristin Richardson Jordan's office spoke about the Councilmembers commitment to improving affordable housing and police accountability.

Part 2 will focus on policy work and will be held on **October 24**. The National Executive Council policy team will lead a conversation at this meeting Members of the public can share their ideas for policy solutions to [info@cb8m.com](mailto:info@cb8m.com) with the subject line "CB8 Social Justice"

**3. Old Business – None**

**4. New Business - None**

**This meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm**

*Saundrea I. Coleman and Sarah Chu, Co-Chairs*