

**2022 KANSAS SENTENCING COMMISSION WORKSHOP
PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES**

Mark H. Bergstrom

Mark H. Bergstrom is the executive director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing. The Commission is a legislative, criminal justice agency responsible for the development and adoption of guidelines for sentencing, resentencing, parole, and recommitment, and for monitoring compliance with these and other statutory provisions. Mr. Bergstrom is also an Associate Teaching Professor of Sociology & Criminology at The Pennsylvania State University, Adjunct Professor of Law at the Duquesne University School of Law, and an Adjunct Faculty at the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law. He is the 2019 recipient of the Richard P. Kern Memorial Award, presented by the National Association of Sentencing Commissions for contributions to the development of sentencing policy and research.

Rhys Hester

Rhys Hester, JD, Ph.D., is a professor at Clemson University, where he teaches Criminal Law, Courts, and Justice Administration. His research focuses on judicial decision-making, sentencing, and risk assessment. He is the former deputy director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing and is currently working with the Commission to support its proposal for revisions to the guidelines. Dr. Hester is also a contractor for the National Institute of Justice on a project related to the review and revalidation of the PATTERN risk assessment tool. Hester previously held positions as Associate Research Professor at Penn State University and Research Fellow at the University of Minnesota Law School. His research has been published in leading journals in the field of criminology and criminal justice, including *Criminology*, *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, and *Crime and Justice: A Review of Research*.

Francis Givens

Francis Givens is originally from Mission, Kansas. Francis graduated from Shawnee Mission North High School in 2007. She then began college at Johnson County Community College and completed her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Wyoming in 2011, where she competed in track and field and cross-country. After graduation, Francis went on to graduate law school at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law in 2014. Since graduation, Francis has spent time as an Assistant District Attorney in Wyandotte County, Staff Attorney for the Kansas Sentencing Commission, and a City Prosecutor in Kansas City, Kansas. Francis is the Special Projects Manager for the Kansas Sentencing Commission.

Kira Johnson

Kira Johnson has been the SB 123 Program Director for over five years. In her position, she develops and reviews program policy, procedure, and expenditures, while working with the treatment providers and other stakeholders to ensure offenders are receiving appropriate treatment. Kira has worked as a behavioral health professional at numerous correctional facilities and in community mental health. Her professional interests include anxiety treatment, integrated behavioral health, and correctional psychology. Kira possesses two master's degrees in Clinical Psychology and is a Licensed Masters Level Psychologist in the state of Kansas. Currently, Kira is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Florida Institute of Technology.

Robert Sullivan

Robert Sullivan has served as the director of Johnson County's Department of Corrections since January 2018, overseeing adult and juvenile probation, a 69-bed juvenile detention center, juvenile intake and assessment functions, adult and juvenile electronic monitoring, and a 398-bed adult residential center. Before becoming the Department of Corrections director, Robert served as the Criminal Justice Coordinator for Johnson County, Kansas. As Criminal Justice Coordinator, Robert's primary duties were to provide internal support for the County Manager's Office on all criminal justice-related activities and serve as the staff liaison and coordinator for the Johnson County Criminal Justice Advisory Council. Before coming to Johnson County in January of 2015, Robert served ten years as the Director of Community Corrections for the Kansas Fifth Judicial District.

Spence Koehn

Spence Koehn is the Court Services Specialist for the Office of Judicial Administration. He graduated from Ottawa University in 1995. Following graduation, he began working with the 4th Judicial District Community Corrections, where he was an Intensive Supervision Officer for over five years before becoming an Intensive Supervision Officer for Johnson County Court Services in 2001. In 2003 he became a Court Services Officer in the 6th Judicial District, where he remained until 2015, when he began working in the same capacity for the 4th Judicial District until his hire by OJA in 2020. He served on the Kansas Association of Court Services (KACSO) Executive Board as Parliamentarian from 2014 to 2017, when he began serving as the Training Chairperson until March 2020.

Hon. Tyler Roush

Judge Tyler Roush is currently the Division 24 Judge of the 18th Judicial District Court. Judge Tyler Roush has been District Judge since September, 2016. He has served in Family Law since 2017. In addition to hearing his normal case load, Judge Roush helped implement a number of changes to the administration of family law cases. He coordinated training the liaisons from our local advocacy centers to operate our Protection Order Office. He also piloted rewriting the local rules and revamping the pro se forms. Judge Tyler Roush was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern University with a double major in Economics and Math Methods in Social Sciences. Afterward, he earned his Juris Doctor and Masters of Business Administration from the University of Missouri, where he earned Order of the Barrister honors from law school and Outstanding MBA Student Generalist from business school. He also received the Bar Plan Foundation scholarship, which is awarded for ethics and professionalism. After graduation, he worked briefly in St. Louis practicing civil litigation before returning home to Wichita. Prior to taking the bench, Judge Roush handled over 1,400 cases and tried over 45 jury trials in the Sedgwick County District Attorney's office. Afterward, he continued his public service by working for Sedgwick County in the County Counselor's office, where he advised the county's public safety units, including the Sheriff's office, on a variety of legal issues. He is also an Eagle Scout.

Shelly Williams

Shelly Williams started her career in January 1993 in Great Bend, Kansas, with Central Kansas Community Corrections as an Adult Intensive Supervision Officer. She moved to Manhattan, Kansas, in April 1994 and started working for Riley County Community Corrections, first serving as an Adult then Juvenile Intensive Supervision Officer was promoted to the Juvenile Services Supervisor, and has been the Director of the agency since 2008. Shelly Williams has worked for Riley County Community Corrections for 28 years. Ironically, the Kansas Sentencing Guidelines reintroduced and passed as Senate Bill 423, became law in 1993, Shelly's first year in the field of Corrections. Shelly remembers attending the first-ever Sentencing Guidelines training presented by Deputy Secretary of Corrections Betsy Gillespie. Shelly has held leadership roles within her professional association, the Kansas Community Corrections Association, and serves on the KDOC Community Corrections Advisory Committee for Adult Services. She was recommended by the Secretary of Corrections to serve on the Kansas Criminal Justice Reform Commission and ultimately appointed by the Governor. Other Reform Commission committees served on include:

- Served on the Dual Supervision Sub-Committee,
- Served on the Research-Based Incentives Sub-Committee,
- Served on the Race in the Criminal Justice Sub-Committee, and
- Served as the chairperson of the Standardized Terms & Conditions of Supervision Subcommittee

Christy Molzen

Christy Molzen has been a staff attorney for the Kansas Judicial Council for over 20 years. She worked with the Council's Advisory Committee on Sex Offenses and Registration during their two-year review of the criminal code's sex offense structure and related registration requirements. Earlier in her career, Christy clerked for Kansas Supreme Court Justice Marla Luckert and Court of Appeals Judge Jerry Elliott.

Hon. Benjamin Sexton

Judge Sexton was appointed by Governor Bill Graves and has served as a district judge since 2001 in the 8th Judicial District. In 2021 he became Chief Judge of the 8th Judicial District. Judge Sexton attended Kansas State University and received his B.S. in 1983. In 1986, Judge received a J.D. at Washburn University and then practiced law until 2001.

Hon. Dennis “Boog” Highberger

Dennis “Boog” Highberger is a 1992 graduate of the University of Kansas School Law. He served as Special Counsel to the Secretary of Health and Environment for many years, and his areas of practice during that time included the regulation of long-term care homes, food service, and child care, and many other areas of health law, environmental law, and administrative law. His areas of private practice have included wills, estates, contracts, family law, federal communications law, and general civil practice. Boog served on the Lawrence City Commission from 2003 to 2009 and was Mayor in 2005/2006. He has been an active member of the Lawrence community, and currently serves on the Douglas County Food Policy Council, the City of Lawrence’s Public Incentives Review Committee (PIRC) and Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB), and the boards of directors of Independence, Inc., the Community Mercantile Education Foundation (CMEF), and the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association (ELNA). He has served as a representative in the Kansas legislature since 2015. In 2019, he was appointed to serve as a member of the Kansas Sentencing Commmission.

Jennifer Kisela

Jennifer Kisela is a Deputy Program Director at the Council of State Governments Justice Center, providing technical assistance to states that are using the justice reinvestment initiative. In her role, she provides content expertise in the areas of evidence-based practices in community supervision, quality assurance, correctional programming, and parole board decision-making. Prior to joining the CSG Justice Center, she worked for 15 years in community corrections with her most recent position as the Research and Continuous Quality Improvement Administrator at Oriana House in Ohio where she implemented and oversaw the training and coaching of staff on the use of effective interventions. In addition, Jennifer has provided training and coaching services as an independent contractor to community corrections agencies throughout the U.S. Jennifer holds a BA in Justice Studies from Kent State University and an MS in Criminal Justice from the University of Cincinnati.

Tanner Garrett

Tanner Garrett has a master’s degree in Information Systems Management and has worked for Domo, Inc., for 4.5 years. He works with organizations large and small to solve their most complex problems with custom software built on Domo as the data and governance foundation.

Jermaine Wilson

Jermaine Wilson is a servant leader who has dedicated his life to serving God and helping others. He currently serves as the Regional Director of Prison Fellowship and Mayor Pro-Tem of Leavenworth, KS. His desire to serve others comes from his troubled childhood and humble beginnings. Seven years of Jermaine’s life, he spent incarcerated. During his time in prison, he gave his life to the Lord, and that’s when his whole life turned around. He no longer saw himself as a failure and a mistake. He saw himself as a Man of God with a purpose. Once released from prison, Jermaine started serving his community and created a Non-Profit Organization called Unity in the Community, to help establish trust between Citizens and Law Enforcement. His criminal record was expunged in 2015. Jermaine Wilson was elected to serve as Leavenworth City Commissioner in 2017 and became the Mayor of Leavenworth, KS, in 2019. Jermaine is an Ordained Minister, Husband, and father of five children. He also serves on the Kansas Sentencing Committee. “With God all things are possible.”