



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 12, 2024

CONTACT

Justin Terrell, MNJRC Executive Director: justin@mnjrc.org; 612-361-7925

Minnesota Justice Research Center to Bring Together Local and National Experts to Discuss “Pivoting from Problem to Possibility”

Dr. Shawn Ginwright will headline MNJRC’s Re-Imagining Justice Conference on November 19 in Minneapolis; Closing Plenary explores what might be possible in the upcoming legislative session

MINNEAPOLIS—The Minnesota Justice Research Center (MNJRC) today announced the final program schedule for their 2024 Re-Imagining Justice Conference. This year’s theme, “Pivoting from Problem to Possibility”, sets up an exciting program with keynotes, plenaries, and a dozen breakout sessions that explore issues on the leading edge of the criminal legal system. The conference, which brings together local and national experts, will tackle issues ranging from changing police culture and limiting traffic stops, new approaches to youth auto theft, to city-county-community partnerships to build appropriate public safety responses, and building safety and equality for girls in the juvenile justice system..

The Re-Imagining Justice Conference takes place on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, from 9 am - 5:30 pm, with registration opening at 8 am. It is taking place in person at the UMN McNamara Alumni Center in Minneapolis.

“At this year’s Re-Imagining Justice Conference, people from all different backgrounds will share their experiences, hopes, and dreams while exploring some of the most pressing issues and innovations in our criminal legal system,” said **Justin Terrell, Executive Director of the Minnesota Justice Research Center**. “Together, we’ll pivot from problem to possibility as we seek to reimagine criminal justice in our nation and pivot to a system that truly represents everyone who is affected by it.”

The conference opens with a keynote address by Dr. Shawn Ginwright, whose groundbreaking concept of “healing-centered engagement” has revolutionized the field. Dr. Ginwright has written numerous highly acclaimed books, including most recently *"The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves,"* which inspired this year’s conference theme. His talk will be followed by a fireside chat with Dr. Yohuru Williams, the Distinguished University Chair and Professor of History and Founding Director of the Racial Justice Initiative at the University of St. Thomas.

Following the opening program, attendees will go into breakout sessions. Breakout sessions include subjects such as how to combat the youth auto theft crisis to discussions about creating a more positive policing culture. The conference will end with the closing plenary, Making Meaning of November 5th, with a discussion of what policy may be advanced in the upcoming 2025 Minnesota Legislative Session. Program highlights include:

1. Early Intervention & Partnership: The Hennepin County's Attorney's New Approach to Youth Auto Theft

Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty, Josh Peterson

This session will explore Hennepin County’s innovative approach to addressing youth auto theft through early intervention and community support. This initiative connects at-risk youth with resources outside the legal system, showing promising results in preventing crime and fostering community safety.

2. It’s Time to End Slavery in Minnesota

Aaron Rosenthal, Peter Mayer, Chauntyll Allen, Aaron Ernst, Max Graves

In 2024 in Minnesota, prison labor is legal slavery. This session explores the intersection of labor protections, workforce issues, and criminal justice reform. Presenters will address prison conditions, the intersection between labor and criminal justice, and opportunities for transformative change in our state, including the end of slavery.

3. Changing the Culture of Policing

Moderated by Sharon Sayles Belton with Assistance Chief of Police (Golden Valley) Alice White, St Paul Police Commander Amanda Heu, and MPD Sergeant Christopher Gaiters

This session delves into emerging accountability standards and harm reduction models, while examining the slow yet essential progress towards transparency. Presenters will discuss challenges in recruitment and the role of diversity, equity, and inclusion in reshaping law enforcement culture for a safer, more just future.

4. Closing Plenary: Making Meaning of November 5th: Legislative Session Landscape

Moderated by Mark Osler with Fatima Moore, Chas Anderson, and Larry Jacobs

“The Minnesota Justice Research Center invites Minnesotans from all walks of life to attend the Re-Imagining Justice Conference and join these important conversations to create a more just future for our state,” **said Terrell**.

Members of the public can learn more about the event’s programming and register [here](#).

About the Minnesota Justice Research Center

The Minnesota Justice Research Center (MNJRC) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to driving meaningful change to Minnesota’s criminal legal system through rigorous and community-centered research, education, and policy development. The MNJRC works with people with a wide range of knowledge and experience in the criminal legal system, including scholars, practitioners, students, survivors, and those who have served time in prison. For more information, go to www.mnjrc.org.

About the Keynote Speaker

Dr. Shawn Ginwright is the Jerome T. Murphy Professor of Practice at Harvard Graduate School of Education. His groundbreaking work on trauma, healing, and the empowerment of African American youth has earned him a reputation as an innovator, provocateur, and thought leader in the field of education. Learn more about Dr. Ginwright at shawnginwright.com.

###

Note to reporters and editors: The Re-Imagining Justice Conference is open to reporters to attend. Please contact Cara Letofsky at cara@mnjrc.org for more details.