History and Mission

The NYU McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research is committed to creating new knowledge about the root causes of poverty, developing evidence-based interventions to address its consequences, and translating research findings into action through policy and best practices.

Established in 2007, the McSilver Institute is the brainchild of Dr. Constance McCatherin Silver, a New York University alumnus who was determined to establish a top-notch research institute to not only contribute to the intellectual discourse, but to also find solutions that would disrupt generational poverty in communities most affected by inequality and injustice.

NYU McSilver recognizes the interrelatedness of race and poverty and is dedicated to dismantling structural racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We collaborate with community stakeholders, policymakers, and service organizations to ensure our work is culturally and contextually appropriate.

Our research highlights the considerable links between individuals, families, communities, their external environments, and the systems with which they interact.
Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to share with you the McSilver Institute’s 2016-2017 Annual Report. It has been a very exciting year for McSilver—we are continuing to expand our thought leadership, strategic partnerships, and our impact in underserved communities city- and state-wide. Now, more than ever, we remain steadfast in our goal to put our research into practice as a catalyst for creating new knowledge, shaping public policy, and improving systems to truly serve the individuals and communities most affected by poverty. At the McSilver Institute, generating solutions for eradicating poverty is both critical to our mission and a moral imperative.

I am truly honored to be working in partnership with a talented team of researchers, practitioners, and scholars who are deeply passionate about making lasting social change. We are working to redefine the narrative for those who face the extreme challenges of living in poverty. We embrace the idea that meaningful research cannot happen in isolation—our work is infused with the input and direct guidance of underserved and under-resourced communities that are confronted by structural racism and oppression and lack access to meaningful economic opportunities.

We remain grateful for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Lindsey, PhD, MSW, MPH
Executive Director and Professor of Poverty Studies

From left: Dr. Lisa Coleman, NYU’s Chief Diversity Officer, welcoming Dr. Christina M. Greer, McSilver Fellow in Residence; a class of NYU McSilver MSW interns; Executive Director Dr. Michael A. Lindsey welcoming the audience at Trump Nation: The State of (In)equality One Year Later.
The Year in Review

Through **600 events and trainings** we reached **1,146 organizations** representing an **audience of 25,000**. This training and technical assistance was provided to **77%** of all New York State mental health clinics and **70%** of all New York State behavioral health organizations.

In 2017, **80+** publications and presentations addressing the root causes and consequences of poverty were authored by McSilver Institute researchers and staff.

The McSilver Institute was selected by NYU President Andrew Hamilton to lead the **Strategies to Reduce Inequality (SRI) Initiative**, a university-wide interdisciplinary effort to address the issue of inequality. The initiative tasked faculty across schools and disciplines to boldly explore ways to identify meaningful, sustainable solutions for addressing persistent inequality and creating new knowledge that will impact policies, systems, and communities. SRI is also charged with identifying coursework that will empower students with a deep understanding of inequality and how to promote principles of equity and inclusion.
Evidence-Informed Research Projects

The McSilver Institute undertakes innovative research that deepens the understanding of the root causes of poverty and develops evidence-based interventions to address its consequences. Research projects range from large, multi-year initiatives funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), to public-private partnerships, to small pilot studies directly funded by McSilver. The hallmark of our work is defined by a strong collaboration with community stakeholders, including policymakers and service providers.

Our research portfolio includes support from the Robin Hood Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation for the Safe Mothers, Safe Children (SMSC) project to highlight the strong association between the trauma of poverty and child maltreatment. SMSC is a parenting intervention that engages mothers diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and involved in the child welfare system to strengthen parenting skills and reduce the risk of repeat child abuse and neglect. The SMSC team has enrolled 50 mothers in the study, with nearly half starting treatment. Additionally, the team has conducted 33 trauma-informed trainings for agency staff in partnership with four community-based agencies providing preventive child welfare services in NYC.

Currently in the third of a four-year NIMH-funded research study, the Family Groups for Urban Youth project is testing the scalability of innovative family-centered approaches designed to strengthen the parenting skills of poverty-impacted caregivers, to effectively work with children ages 7 to 11 dealing with behavioral difficulties. Over the past year, the research team has been hard at work implementing and testing a multi-family group intervention in collaboration with 21 agencies and 62 clinics in multiple cities throughout New York State. Furthermore, 27 clinics have been trained in the 4Rs and 2Ss intervention, and 11 clinics have already begun running groups with caregivers to reduce child disruptive behavior.

With the support of the Ample Table for Everyone Foundation, McSilver’s research has expanded to include raising awareness of the unique effects of food insecurity on pregnant women and in utero development. Family and Food Matters to Pregnant Women promotes overall access to and intake of nutritious foods for pregnant women in WIC Centers and a maternity shelter. In partnership with the Westside Campaign Against Hunger, the Family and Food Matters team recruited 70 pregnant women and enrolled 29 families in the family program that focuses on strengthening family relationships, family nutrition, eating on a budget, and stress reduction skills.

The Family and Food Matters program shines a light on the nexus between nutrition, food security, and mental health.
Departments & Programs

The **Clinical Education and Innovation Department (CEID)** focuses on developing and disseminating cutting edge programming, trainings, and tools to support the rapid translation from research to practice for practitioners and organizations working in under-resourced communities. CEID offers webinars and podcasts for professionals who influence healthcare systems to think critically about social factors and their impact on individuals’ health and well-being.

In 2017, CEID launched “Zero Degrees of Separation: The Role of Social Determinants Series,” an online program consisting of 21 offerings on topics such as the impact of racism and poverty on mental health, gender inequality, mass incarceration, housing and food insecurity. The program reached more than 3,900 healthcare professionals.

The **Community Collaborative Board (CCB)** is an innovative partnership of parents and residents, university researchers, educators, and youth from across New York City that informs the implementation of McSilver’s research projects and programs. As the catalyst for our Step-Up program, the CCB ensures the cultural appropriateness and sustainability of the institute’s initiatives in poverty-impacted communities.

Funded by the Robin Hood Foundation and the New York City Department of Education, **Step-Up** is a mental wellness and positive youth development program operating within five New York City public schools in East Harlem, the South Bronx, and East New York. The program provides supportive services for teens experiencing challenges living within low-resourced communities to promote academic achievement and a positive transition to adulthood. Step-Up aims to address ecological stressors that disproportionately affect Black and Latino youth and their families who are impacted by poverty and violence.

**Right:** Step-Up students participating in the annual **Photovoice** program, a creative photography workshop created in partnership with the Josephine Herrick Project.

**Below:** some of the creative output.
Training and Technical Assistance

At NYU McSilver, we pride ourselves in not being a traditional research institute, rather we fully embrace the concept that research through a trauma-informed lens deepens our understanding of the root causes and consequences of poverty.

The McSilver Institute improves the lives of those impacted by poverty by creating the tools, training, and infrastructure needed by service providers (e.g. clinicians, teachers, case managers) so they can deploy effective interventions. This collaborative approach brings together researchers, educators, policymakers, practitioners, and consumers to identify pathways for adapting evidence-based practices to address the needs of diverse, under-resourced, and highly-stressed agencies and community-based service providers. The McSilver Institute is the lead organization directing several New York City- and New York State-funded technical assistance centers to help develop the public safety net serving those impacted by poverty. These centers include:

The **Community Technical Assistance Center of New York (CTAC)**, funded by the New York State Office for Mental Health (OMH), advances the effective and efficient provision of treatment to children and families who rely on public-sector services to meet their mental health needs. In 2017, CTAC offered over 50 webinars and events to behavioral health organizations throughout New York State reaching nearly 9,000 behavioral health professionals. And, of the **498** mental health clinics throughout New York State, CTAC has served over **77%** of these organizations.

The **Managed Care Technical Assistance Center (MCTAC)**, funded by New York State’s Office of Mental Health and Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, assists all substance use and mental health providers throughout New York State to transition to Medicaid managed care. MCTAC offers free tools and trainings to help providers strengthen their organizations and improve service delivery and outcomes for their clients.

In 2017, MCTAC offered **112** webinars and events for nearly **10,000** behavioral health professionals throughout New York State. MCTAC has proudly served **70%** of the state’s **812** unique agencies.
The NYC Early Childhood Mental Health Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC), funded by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene through ThriveNYC, seeks to expand the availability and accessibility of high-quality, specialized mental health services and support for children from birth to age five and their families. TTAC offered 176 hours of training to 679 participants affiliated with New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)-Funded Early Childhood Therapeutic Centers (ECTCs), including early care and education program staff.

The ttacny.org site (above) went live in 2017. Through this portal, TTAC participants were able to access 176 hours of specialized training and other resources targeted at mental health professionals working with children and families. = 8 hours

Connections to Care (C2C), funded by ThriveNYC through the RAND Corporation, is an innovative strategy that integrates mental health support into the work of community-based organizations (CBOs) to improve mental health and other outcomes of low-income and at-risk New Yorkers. McSilver staff have provided comprehensive technical assistance to 15 CBOs and their mental health partners (MHP) as part of the C2C pilot initiative, in addition to leading a three-part series on supervision for 68 CBOs and MHP participants to further enhance the implementation of C2C.
Addressing Suicide Among Latina and Black Male Youth: What the Community Needs to Know

On International Suicide Prevention Awareness Day, the McSilver Institute partnered with Comunilife, Inc. to organize a community forum on suicide among Latina and Black male youth. A coalition of elected officials and over 35 community-based organizations served as co-sponsors. The evening convened more than 250 community residents and stakeholders to discuss why Latina and Black male youth are disproportionately affected by depression and suicide, and how families can receive help.

The discussion was moderated by Debralee Santos, the Editor-in-Chief of Manhattan Times and The Bronx Free Press. Panelists included: Dr. Rosa M. Gil, Founder, President and CEO of Comunilife, Inc.; Dr. Michael A. Lindsey, Executive Director of NYU McSilver; NYS Assemblymember Carmen De La Rosa; and Reverend Dr. Michael A. Walrond, Jr., Senior Pastor of First Corinthian Baptist Church.

University-Wide Interdisciplinary Research

Strategies to Reduce Inequality (SRI) is a new university-wide initiative, launched in 2017 and led by the McSilver Institute to address inequality through collaborative and community-focused research, specialized course offerings, symposia, and strategic partnerships to identify new knowledge that will impact policy and systems while promoting equitable solutions. SRI brings together 58 NYU faculty members from 12 of the university’s schools and 18 centers to work collaboratively in order to explore research methods, deepen the understanding of inequality, and promote equity and inclusion—all with the intention of creating new knowledge to positively impact policies, systems, and communities.
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Speaker Series and Community Forums

Through a strategic partnership with New America–NYC the McSilver Institute launched the SRI Speaker Series highlighting a variety of issues at the heart of some of the most critical struggles of vulnerable communities.

THE COLOR OF MONEY: BLACK BANKS AND THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP

As the racial wealth gap persists in building wealth for those who already have it and sowing debt among those who don’t, leaders in the fight for economic justice joined in conversation to discuss how to pioneer strategies that reform how the government works and whom it serves. Panelists discussed fees and fines levied by municipal governments and the criminal justice system, residential segregation, and the rise of predatory payday lenders.

Author Mehrsa Baradaran was joined by Blondel Pinnock, Senior Vice President and Chief Lending Officer, Carver Federal Savings Bank; Anne Stuhldreher, Director of Financial Justice for the City and County of San Francisco; New York State Assemblymember Clyde Vanel; and McSilver Institute Executive Director Dr. Michael A. Lindsey, with opening remarks by NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer.

TRUMP NATION: THE STATE OF (IN)EQUALITY ONE YEAR LATER

Social justice advocates convened for a discussion on the prospects of solving inequality under the Trump Administration. Panelists reflected on the deepening state of social and economic inequality and the new political culture defining the first year of the incoming presidential administration.

Panelists discussed education, immigration, criminal justice, and women’s rights before answering audience questions about political realities and opportunities. The conversation offered strategies for mobilizing communities and protecting the interests of all Americans, especially marginalized and poverty-impacted communities.

From left: Karine Jean-Pierre, National Spokesperson, MoveOn.org; Christine C. Quinn, Former NYC Council Speaker and President and CEO, Women In Need (WIN); Salamishah Tillet, Co-founder and President, A Long Walk Home, Associate Professor of English and Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania; and Elana Broitman, Director, New America–NYC.
SYMPOSIUM ON RACE AND POVERTY: KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

The national symposium was the first of its kind at the McSilver Institute and included discussions and presentations about the interrelatedness of race and poverty, with an emphasis on the disparities that adversely affect children, families, and communities of color impacted by economic inequality. This symposium served as a springboard for the McSilver Institute and its partners to develop action-oriented goals that directly touch the lives of those most deeply affected by social injustice.

Speakers and presenters included: Deputy Surgeon General RADM Sylvia Trent-Adams, PhD, RN, FAAN; Cheryl Anne Boyce, PhD, Chief of Research and Implementation Science, Center for Translation Research and Implementation Science at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, NIH; Garth Graham, MD, MPH, President, Aetna Foundation; Lisa Gennetian, PhD, Research Scientist, NYU Steinhardt; Anne Williams-Isom, CEO, Harlem Children’s Zone; and Tavis Smiley, broadcaster, author, and advocate.

VIOLENCE AS A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE: FACEBOOK LIVE EVENT WITH DEEPAK CHOPRA AND LIFE CAMP

In recognition of International Day of Peace, Dr. Michael A. Lindsey joined Dr. Deepak Chopra, New York City Councilmember Robert Cornegy, Jr., LIFE Camp Founder and CEO Erica Ford, and other community leaders to address the issue of community violence as a public health crisis. This conversation, broadcast live on Facebook, sought to expand the discourse on preventing and disrupting violence, both locally and globally.
THE FIFTH ANNUAL McSILVER AWARDS

In 2017, the McSilver Institute celebrated an important milestone, the fifth anniversary of the McSilver Awards. Over the past five years, the McSilver Awards have honored some of New York City’s and this country’s most prolific leaders who have made significant contributions to better understanding the root causes of poverty and addressing its consequences.

Our fifth anniversary celebration of the McSilver Awards recognized five extraordinary leaders for their achievements in transforming systems to dismantle structural poverty, racism, and oppression. The event was held at the NYU Law School and also marked the first McSilver Awards under the leadership of Dr. Michael A. Lindsey.

During the program, Dr. Lindsey presented awards to: David C. Banks, President and CEO of the Eagle Academy Foundation; NYC City Councilmember Corey Johnson; Dr. Jelani Cobb, Professor, Columbia University School of Journalism; Ana Oliveira, President and CEO of the New York Women’s Foundation; and Gary Parker, Director of the Clark-Fox Policy Institute and Associate Dean of External Affairs, Brown School of Social Work at Washington University–St. Louis.

PAST McSILVER AWARD HONOREES

2013
Karen Brooks Hopkins, Heather McGhee, Dr. Thelma Dye, Lorie Slutsky, Dr. Rosa Gil, Dennis M. Walcott

2014
Dr. Pedro A. Noguera, Rose Pierre-Louis, Hon. Ruben Diaz Jr., Jonathan P. Edwards, Andrea Elliott

2015
Carolina Cordero Dyer, Tracie M. Gardner, Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, Margarette Purvis, Carlton Whitmore

2016
Dr. David Gómez, Phillip A. Saperia, Linda Sarsour, Rev. Al Sharpton, Sheena Wright, Dr. Mary M. McKay
Funding

EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

Fiscal Year 2016–2017

- **FEDERAL/GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND CONTRACTS** $6,157,965
- **MISCELLANEOUS INCOME** $964,151
- **FOUNDATIONS AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS** $960,000

EXTERNAL FUNDING OVER TIME

2017 $8,082,116
2016
2015
2014
2013
2012 $978,500

$30 Million Has been awarded in grants and other external funding sources since the establishment of the McSilver Institute.

Partners & Supporters

**BENEFACTORS**
Constance and Martin Silver

**FOUNDATIONS**
Robin Hood Foundation
Annie E. Casey Foundation
The New York Women’s Foundation
The Ample Table for Everyone Foundation

**GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**
National Institutes of Health
National Institute of Mental Health
New York City Department of Education
New York State Department of Health
NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene
New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services
New York State Office of Mental Health

**NON-PROFITS, ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AND CORPORATIONS**
Beacon Health Options
Ghetto Film School (GFS)
The Clark-Fox Policy Institute at the Brown School of Social Work
Government Affairs and Community Engagement at NYU
New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
New York Center for Child Development
Institute for Community Living
RAND Corporation
People
From September 2016 to December 2017

52 Staff
74 Interns

Current Staff
Michael A. Lindsey   Priya Gopalan   Tyrone Parchment
Mary Acri           Christina Greer   Rosemonde Pierre-Louis
Diana Arias         Emily Hamovitch   Aya Port
Meaghan Baier       Fatima Johnson   Patricia Quintero
Lindsay Bornheimer  Jayson Jones     Kassia Ringell
Geraldine “Jerry” Burton  Yvette Kelly   Anita Rivera-Rodriguez
Geetanjali Chugh    Ammu Kowolik    James Rodriguez
Andrew Cleek        Anne Kuppingher  Anthony Salerno
Catherine Cota      Andy Kwan       Illaha Sattar-Alam
Caitlin Cronin      Kate Lambert    Frederica Stines
Brad Crooks         Karolina Łukasiewicz
Kara Dean-Assael    Miles Martin    Sasha Stok
Zoila Del-Villar    Morgan McGuire   Ervin Torres
Lydia Franco        Maria Mini       Boris Vilgorin
Ashley Fuss         Aida Ortiz       H. Chris Villatoro
Briana Gonçalves    Hadiza Osuji    Janet Watson

Policy and Research Dissemination
Through journal articles, conference presentations, reports, panel discussions, legislative briefings, and special events, the McSilver Institute translates research findings into policy recommendations aimed at improving the lives of people living in distressed communities. A complete list of publications and presentations released over the past year follows.
Publications


2017 Annual Report


Presentations


Lukasiewicz, K. (2017). Social policies for refugees; Beyond borders: Turning commitment into action in a global world. Presentation at the Women Graduates-USA 10th Annual General Meeting, Milwaukee, WI.


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