Community Collaborative Board
The McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research at New York University Silver School of Social Work is committed to creating new knowledge about the root causes of poverty, developing evidence-based interventions to address its consequences, and rapidly translating research findings into action.

Community-Based Participatory Research and an awareness of the interrelatedness of race and poverty are cornerstones of the institute’s work. The Community Collaborative Board (CCB) is an ongoing partnership between researchers and community members from neighborhoods impacted by poverty that participates in and shares power over the implementation of the McSilver Institute’s research projects concerned with evidence-based prevention and intervention services. The CCB ensures the programs are culturally and contextually relevant for the communities they serve.

The CCB was originally established in the Bronx in 1999 to participate in the design, delivery, and evaluation of the National Institutes of Health-funded Collaborative HIV and Adolescent Mental Health (CHAMP) study. The board has subsequently overseen more than a dozen multi-year research projects in low resource neighborhoods across New York City. It has been based at various research institutions and housed at NYU’s McSilver Institute since 2011.

The McSilver Institute CCB Member

“With our CHAMPIONS programs to prevent youth from engaging in risk behaviors, the purpose was to have adults from the community learn the programs and then pass on the knowledge to youth in their own families, organizations and churches. We provided the training and resources but the community members took it from there. They enrolled hundreds of kids in the study, who reported increased knowledge about risk behaviors and decreased intention to engage in them. Best of all, these community educators continued to reach neighborhood kids long after the study ended.”

—Angela Paulino, MSW
McSilver Institute Research Scientist and CCB Member

“The CCB’s major research projects are funded by:

National Institutes of Health
New York City Department of Education
Academic Institutions
Philanthropic Foundations

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Federally-funded research programs overseen by the CCB have resulted in evidence-based, peer-delivered and sustainable interventions addressing challenges such as:

- HIV/AIDS
- Mental Health & Behavior Disorders
- Substance Use
- Educational Achievement & Positive Youth Development
- Domestic & Community Violence

“Domestically & Community Violence”

“I have been on the CCB from the beginning with CHAMP, which was aimed at keeping South Bronx school kids like my son from getting HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. We started with a curriculum that was used in Chicago but we put every experience we had inside that manual so it fit our community. That’s what made it so successful. I have been on the board 16 years now and it has been an experience of a lifetime. I have learned a lot, boy, and I gave my talents to my kid, who is now in college and on the CCB himself.”

—Ervin Torres
McSilver Institute CCB Member

“I was first on the CCB when I was 21 years old. The first time I was on the CCB I was a teenager. I knew about the CCB when I was 16. I entered the CCB in 1999 and I’ve been on the board ever since. I have been on the CCB for 16 years, and I would say that it has been the experience of a lifetime. I have learned a lot, boy, and I gave my talents to my kid, who is now in college and on the CCB himself.”

—Ana Miranda
McSilver Institute CCB Member

“A large body of evidence indicates programs that address the particular stressors of community faces and that reflect the core values a community holds are more likely to achieve their long-term objectives. The CCB ensures the cultural appropriateness and sustainability of the McSilver Institute’s initiatives in poverty impacted communities, and has been critical to our success in developing evidence-based interventions that work.”

—Mary McKeman McKay, PhD
Dean, Brown School of Social Work, Washington University McSilver Institute Inaugural Director

“Our goal is not to go into a community and tell them what to do, it is to learn from the community, see what the needs are and work from there. That’s what made it so successful. I have been on the board 16 years now and it has been an experience of a lifetime. I have learned a lot, boy, and I gave my talents to my kid, who is now in college and on the CCB himself.”

—Ervin Torres
McSilver Institute CCB Member

“Oftentimes as researchers we can get lost in the literature, focusing on what is in the knowledge base and what the data says. But when you’re with the board it reminds you who we are impacting. It helps to get that perspective and acknowledge that each community has its own voice. It makes the interventions more real, more viable, more sustainable and more impactful.”

—Latoya Small, PhD
UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work Assistant Professor McSilver Institute Faculty Fellow and CCB Member

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McSilver Institute Research Scientist and CCB Member

“When we did recruiting for the HOPE Family Program, to study HIV prevention among youth in family shelters, a lot of parents in the shelter were like ‘we’ve been through so many programs that come tell us something and then leave. But not you guys, you are from here, you look like us.’ That’s very important. We’re people from the community, we stay and we follow up.”

—Kerby Jean
McSilver Institute CCB Assistant Secretary
Today, the 25 CCB members include parents, school personnel, healthcare providers, and social workers, as well as university researchers. The CCB aims to nurture and empower families and communities, and its core mission is to come together to develop and implement culturally relevant intervention programs for communities. Board members are also active in disseminating knowledge gained through these efforts to community members and policymakers.

Community Collaborative Board Members
Anita Rivera, Chairperson
Janet Watson, Vice Chair
Nomie Byndon, Secretary
Kerby Jean, Assistant Secretary
Angel Algarin
Michelle Barrientos
Indamora Castro
Andrew F. Cleek
Daniel Ferris
Chandelle Fowler
Sashana Fuller
Briana Gonçalves
Ammu D. Kowolik
Mary Legagneur
Micaela Mercado
Ana Miranda
Aida Ortiz
Hadiza L. Osuji
Gary Parker
Nancy Parker
Angela Paulino
Rhina Paulino
Sabine Phineus
Gabriel N. Rivera
Jamie Rivera
Latoya Small
Ervin Torres
Ervin G. Torres

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