Message from the Director

Dear Friends,

I am proud to share with you the McSilver Institute’s 2015-16 Annual Report, which highlights some of the institute’s key initiatives and accomplishments over the past academic year—the fifth and final one in Inaugural Director Dr. Mary M. McKay’s tenure.

Drawing on the intellectual and scholarly strengths of New York University and located within the Silver School of Social Work, the McSilver Institute partners with agencies and communities impacted by poverty in New York City, across the nation and around the world to shed light on the structural forces that perpetuate poverty, develop a new science base to address poverty’s consequences, and promote evidence-informed policies and practices with lasting social impact.

A distinguishing feature of the McSilver Institute is its recognition of the interrelatedness of race and poverty, as well as its investment in engaging community stakeholders as true partners to ensure the relevance and sustainability of its efforts, and its commitment to bridging the gap between research and practice. The ethos of the McSilver Institute is one that I have held throughout my career: True success will only be achieved if we are rising together.

It is a tremendous privilege for me to have the opportunity to build on the strong foundation that Dr. McKay has laid, and which is so evident in this report. I am grateful to benefactors Constance and Martin Silver, the members of the McSilver Institute Advisory Committee, and all the partners, donors, and staff who have contributed to the institute’s success in fulfilling its vital mission. Thank you for your continued support as the McSilver Institute further extends its reach and impact.

Sincerely,

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

Research

The McSilver Institute conducts original research that furthers understanding of poverty’s root causes and establishes evidence-based interventions to address its consequences. At every stage of the process, the McSilver Institute’s studies are defined by collaboration with community stakeholders, including public policymakers and organizations providing direct services to poverty-impacted individuals and communities. Research projects range from large, multi-year initiatives funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to small, pilot studies funded directly by the institute.

In addition to continuing work on five ongoing NIH-funded studies, in Spring 2016, the McSilver Institute was awarded a five-year, $3 million grant by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to establish a global, trans-disciplinary center focused on reducing child mental health service and research gaps in Sub-Saharan Africa. To kick off the center’s important work, the McSilver Institute partnered with Columbia University’s International Center for Child Health and Asset Development (ICHAD) and the AfriChild Center at Makerere University to host the First Annual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa July 12-15 in Kampala, Uganda. The conference, presided over by the First Lady of the Republic of Uganda, brought together researchers from Sub-Saharan Africa and the U.S. with government policy makers, non-government service providers, and community members from Uganda, Ghana and Kenya, where implementation and scale-up research studies will be conducted.
About the McSilver Institute
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 through policy and practice.

The McSilver Institute recognizes the interrelatedness of race and poverty and is dedicated to dismantling structural racism and other forms of systemic oppression.

In order to ensure our work is culturally and contextually appropriate for the populations we serve, the McSilver Institute employs a collaborative model via partnerships with policymakers, service organizations, community stakeholders, and consumers. An understanding of the significant link between individuals, families, communities, and both their external environments and the systems with which they interact guides the McSilver Institute’s research efforts.

External Funding

| FUND 25 | Government grants and contracts |
| FUND 20 | Miscellaneous income |
| FUND 24 | Non-governmental agency or organizational grants and contracts |

$28,557,168
Decade outlook
Total funding committed to McSilver Institute projects 2011-2021

People

| 43 Full-time Staff Members |
| 6 Full-time Equivalent Employees Shared across Institutions |
| 9 Part-time Staff Members |
| 64 Students and Volunteers |
Policy and Research Dissemination

Through journal articles, conference presentations, reports, panel discussions, legislative briefings, and special events, the McSilver Institute translates research findings into strong policy recommendations aimed at improving the lives of poverty-impacted populations. The McSilver Institute also publishes a quarterly peer-reviewed academic journal, *Global Social Welfare: Research, Policy, and Practice*, in collaboration with Springer.

In November 2015, the McSilver Institute and the Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy (CRISP), in conjunction with the Congressional Social Work Caucus, hosted a Congressional briefing at the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, DC on Disrupting the Cradle to Prison Pipeline: Juvenile Justice, Race, and Poverty. The capacity crowd included members of Congress, legislative staff, state and local officials, and agency representatives. Panelists including Dr. Robert L. Hawkins, McSilver Associate Professor in Poverty Studies at NYU Silver School of Social Work, highlighted compelling research on the confluence of race, poverty, trauma and juvenile justice involvement, and offered strong research-informed policy prescriptions for repairing a system that disproportionately ensnares young people of color. At the end of the briefing, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney of New York remarked, “There is no panacea to erase years and years of discriminatory policies and broken promises, but that is no excuse for inaction. I am proud that leaders like you are here to highlight the challenges as well as the real prospects for change and reform.”

In keeping with the McSilver Institute’s commitment to infusing every aspect of its operations with anti-oppressive practice, over the past year, CTAC held a series of webinars for mental health providers addressing race and trauma in the context of psychotherapy. Topics included race-based traumatic stress, ways of working with participants who have experienced racism, and implications for the assessment of trauma beyond the DSM-5; the role of race and racial identity in the therapeutic relationship and best practices for clinicians working with persons of color; and common instances of racial microaggressions and strategies clinicians can use to challenge racial stereotypes to work effectively with participants of color. More than 400 professionals from licensed mental health clinics across the state participated in the webinar series, and hundreds more viewed the archived videos on the CTAC website.

Evidence-Informed Training and Technical Assistance

The McSilver Institute improves the lives of those impacted by poverty by creating the tools, training and infrastructure needed by front line workers (e.g. clinicians, teachers, case managers) so they can deploy effective research-derived interventions. The institute’s 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 State-funded technical assistance centers to help develop the public safety net serving those made vulnerable by poverty. These include the Community Technical Assistance Center (CTAC), funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Managed Care Technical Assistance Center (MCTAC), funded by OMH and the state’s Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

A complete list of publications and presentations released over the past academic year is included at the end of this booklet.
Program Evaluation, Performance Monitoring, and Outcome Assessment

The McSilver Institute leverages its expertise in research and analysis to conduct program evaluations for community-based organizations that provide support and care to children and families confronting poverty. This work involves integrating validated survey tools with existing or new evaluation processes; analyzing quantitative and qualitative data; conducting focus groups and interviews with program participants and staff; and helping agencies build internal capacity for data collection and analysis.

In December 2015, the McSilver Institute, in partnership with the non-profit RAND Corporation, was selected by the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City to provide implementation assistance and scientific evaluation for the city’s Connections to Care (C2C) initiative, which aims to meet the unmet mental health needs of low-income communities by integrating evidence-based mental health services into established community-based organizations (CBOs). As part of the de Blasio administration’s ThriveNYC Mental Health Roadmap, C2C is a $30 million federal Social Innovation Fund public-private partnership being implemented by the Mayor’s Fund in collaboration with the City’s Center for Economic Opportunity and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Over the course of the five year contract, the RAND/McSilver Institute partnership will provide technical assistance to participating CBOs to help them deliver the evidence-based interventions, and evaluate the initiative’s implementation, impact on those who receive services, and cost.

Education

Integration with NYU’s Silver School of Social Work allows the McSilver Institute to contribute to high quality, science-informed, and poverty and social justice focused social work education. The McSilver Institute is dedicated to readying the next generation of social workers and public health professionals. To that end, the Institute has a rigorous and enriching pre- and post-doctoral fellowship program, and provides over 30 students per semester with meaningful internship opportunities. Likewise, McSilver Institute staff and faculty continue to create and teach compelling, new courses at NYU’s Washington Square campus and around the globe.

In fall 2015, NYU Silver School of Social Work launched its first-ever graduate-level, full-semester study abroad program in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The program, which the McSilver Institute helped design and implement, fuses education, research, and practice, and enables students to dive completely into another country’s language, culture, and community. The 13 second-year MSW students enrolled in the initial cohort took the same required courses offered at NYU’s Washington Square campus and did field placements with the McSilver Institute’s community-based partners, ranging from one of Buenos Aires’ oldest and largest public hospitals to a program that uses art as a therapeutic tool for children in poverty-impacted communities, to a feminist grassroots organization supporting women and children living in Villa Paris. With its tradition of strong social movements, an embrace of social services and mental health care, and a rich cultural heritage, Argentina provides a unique context for training social-justice focused social workers with a global perspective.
In mid-June 2016, leaders of the McSilver Institute’s AOSC presented a workshop entitled “Addressing White Supremacist Patriarchal Group Practices” at the 38th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Social Work with Groups. Social workers, students and professionals participated in the workshop, which dealt with white supremacist practices in groups including but not limited to clinical, family, and work groups. During the workshop, the AOSC aimed to create an environment that allowed for the processing of complex feelings, and the creation of practical mechanisms that counter white supremacist patriarchal practices within groups.

Evidence-Informed Service Delivery

The McSilver Institute harnesses its research findings and community collaborative approach to develop and implement services grounded in evidence-based practices and stakeholder investment. Step-Up, our positive youth development and mental health support program funded by the Robin Hood Foundation and the New York City Department of Education, exemplifies this approach. Step-Up was developed in collaboration with African-American and Latino teenagers experiencing significant academic, social, and emotional issues for teens in similar circumstances. It is implemented across ecological contexts—school, community, and family—and is embedded within seven low-resourced New York City high schools. Among its many positive outcomes, the program has a high school graduation rate of greater than 90%, more than 80% of whom go on to college.

As students advance in Step-Up, they are required to develop a group project. These tend to be small-scale volunteer activities at school or in the community. In spring 2016, the second-year Step-Up students at Performing Arts and Technology High School (PATHS) in Central Brooklyn decided to do something more ambitious. They organized a student basketball tournament and after-party, with all proceeds from ticket and refreshment sales benefiting Little Flower Children and Families Services, a highly regarded, Brooklyn-based non-profit that places children in crisis in safe and supportive foster homes. The well attended event, which was open to PATHS students only, netted almost $400 for the organization, which several Step-Up students personally presented to the agency.

Anti-Oppressive Steering Committee

The McSilver Institute is defined by its commitment to anti-oppressive research and practice. Since 2013, McSilver Institute staff have annually participated in a two-day anti-racism training facilitated by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond or Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training. The McSilver Institute also offers scholarships to its student interns to attend Undoing Racism® trainings and has invited facilitators from the People’s Institute to provide onsite trainings specifically for interns.

In early 2014, the institute established an ongoing Anti-Oppressive Steering Committee (AOSC) to ensure anti-oppressive practices, policies and procedures are incorporated in every aspect of the McSilver Institute’s operations, both internal and external. The AOSC, which has members from every corner of the institute, meets biweekly and plays an integral role in the institute’s governance.

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In January 2016, the McSilver Institute CCB met with Bronx Borough President and past McSilver Award winner Ruben Diaz, Jr., to discuss their collaborative research projects to address the needs of youth and families in the Bronx. Much of the conversation focused on a pilot study the CCB completed in the Highbridge section of the Bronx called Mobilizing the Adult Protective Shield (MAPS). The intervention aims to reduce kids’ engagement in risky behaviors by helping them and their caregivers see the resources as well as challenges in their neighborhood, and by teaching their caregivers how to engage in community organizing and government advocacy to improve community conditions that put their kids at risk. Borough President Diaz, who is revitalizing the Bronx for all its residents, provided useful guidance and encouragement to pursue a larger study building on the pilot’s success.

Community Collaborative Board
An ongoing partnership between community members from urban neighborhoods and researchers, the McSilver Institute’s Community Collaborative Board (CCB) guides the design, development and implementation of research projects concerned with prevention and intervention services for youth and their families. The board, which meets twice monthly, ensures the cultural appropriateness and sustainability of the institute’s initiatives in poverty-impacted communities and is active in disseminating knowledge gained through these efforts to parents, adolescents, and other community members.

McSilver Institute Values Statement

WE ARE INCLUSIVE
We honor, appreciate, and encourage diversity, inclusion, and a culture of respect and open communication.

We are committed to a workplace culture where diversity is celebrated and a flexible, comfortable, and safe environment is provided for people of all backgrounds and histories.

WE ARE COLLABORATIVE
We are fueled through collaborative decision-making processes.

We value input both internal and external in all that we do and believe that all voices must be heard.

WE ARE INVESTED IN INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY POVERTY
We are dedicated to working with and empowering communities and organizations that are directly affected by or are working to address the root causes and consequences of poverty in a form that is respectful, consensual, and bi-directional.

WE ARE TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION
We are motivated by a commitment to social justice and equality and therefore continuously strive towards implementation of evidence-informed systems, practices, and policies that acknowledge all and oppress no one.

WE ARE RISING TOGETHER
We strive towards a world where the basic human needs of all people are met and communities are able to participate in the decision-making processes that affect them.

We pledge to dismantle structural oppression in all of its manifestations, including but not limited to racism, classism, sexism, ageism, ableism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and religious intolerance.
Publications


Technology use and technological self-efficacy among undergraduate nursing faculty. *Nursing Education Perspectives*.


**Presentations**


