





IN SEARCH OF BETTER OUTCOMES

BY ALAN J. BORSUK

The lasting wounds and scars aren't always visible. Often they don't prompt big concern. Or they are dismissed as part of the job, the price one pays. But the wounds and scars are important—and there are ways to reduce them, sometimes even remove them.

The path toward better outcomes for all who are part of the world of law enforcement has been a long-time concern of Marquette Law School. A leading example: For more than 15 years, the Restorative Justice Initiative, led by Janine Geske, a former justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court and a now-retired distinguished professor of law, has been an important part of the Law School's life. Through efforts in communities and at correctional facilities and through annual conferences, the Restorative Justice Initiative has tried to provide repair where individuals and groups have experienced harm.

Two recent conferences at Marquette Law School provided insight and candor in addressing the scars and wounds on all sides of the law enforcement world. The following pages give some snapshots of each of the conferences, whose full proceedings are available online.

The annual Restorative Justice Initiative conference, on November 9, 2018, was titled "The Power of Restorative Justice in Healing Trauma in Our Community." Beginning here on page 28, an edited and excerpted transcript of one of its panel discussions—this one involving four people in law enforcement—focuses on how police officers and others are affected by what they face in the line of duty.

The Law School's Lubar Center for Public Policy Research and Civic Education hosted another conference on October 4, 2018: "Racial Inequality, Poverty, and the Criminal Justice System." This conference spotlighted the difficulties faced by people who leave incarceration and reenter the general community. A report on the conference, including some broader context, is offered, beginning on page 34.

A common theme to the two events: There are ways to do better, when it comes both to individuals and to our communities.