



## ***Come hear from a panel of experts on addressing the issue of bail reform.***

**Policy Forum: *Bail Reform* | Friday, May 17 | 10AM-12PM | Barrows Auditorium**

### **Keynote Speaker**



**Heather Rice-Minus**, serves as vice president of government affairs at Prison Fellowship where she directs lobbying, research, and coalition building on pivotal criminal justice issues at the federal level. She has contributed to stories in outlets including Christianity Today, the Marshall Project, CBN News, and World Magazine. She is the co-author of Prison Fellowship's Bible study curriculum, "Outrageous Justice." A valued shaper of the criminal justice reform debate because of her wide-ranging policy expertise, Rice-Minus is also personally vested in justice reform as someone who has both been a victim of crime and walked alongside a family member during his incarceration. Heather is a graduate of George Mason University School of Law and is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

### **Panel Moderator**



**Jerry Blassingame** is founder and CEO of Soteria Community Development Corporation in Greenville, SC. He mentors and trains previously incarcerated individuals as they re-enter communities, acting as a catalyst for mutual understanding, respect and cooperation. As a survivor of the criminal legal system himself, Jerry served 3 ½ years of a 20-year sentence and successfully navigated the reentry process himself since his release in 1999. He provides tools to enable access and opportunities for individuals and their families who have been impacted by the legal system.

### **Panel**



**Heather Garretson** Heather leads the ACLU of Michigan's Smart Justice Campaign, which is committed to cutting incarceration in half and to ending racial discrimination in the criminal justice system. In her nationwide talks and various writings, Heather examines Christian grace, the criminal justice system, and how the two can work together to create justice for our communities. Heather is a State Bar of Michigan Fellow, a member of the Christian Community Development Association's Mass Incarceration Task Force, on the Board of Directors for Calvin Seminary, is a Board member of Western Michigan Christian School, and a member at Bethany Christian Reformed Church in Muskegon, Michigan.



**Shelton McElroy** is the Deputy Director of Operations of The Bail Project. Prior to joining TBP, Shelton worked with Parent Advocacy and Participatory Defense in Louisville, KY, assisting parents in the reunification process with their children and using organizing tools to fight the criminal justice system. As a formerly incarcerated individual who was a ward of the state in foster care for over 15 years, Shelton works daily to dismantle dehumanizing systems of oppression. A 2016 [Just Leadership USA](#) fellow and a 2018 BMe Genius award recipient, Shelton holds Masters in Mental Health Counseling and studies Documentary Studies at Duke University. In addition, Shelton hosts scholarship workshops for underserved individuals and has raised over \$100k for emerging scholars.



**Terry Schuster** is an associate manager at The Pew Charitable Trusts. He oversees a broad portfolio of policy work and research related to pretrial justice and incarceration in local jails. Terry is an attorney and national expert on evidence-based pretrial, sentencing, and community supervision practices, and has provided technical assistance on criminal justice reform campaigns in Utah, Alaska, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Michigan.



**Miera Walker, MSW** is a social justice advocate and a prison abolitionist whose passion is addressing the intersectionality of race, class, gender and reentry for incarcerated men and women. Miera is the Criminal Justice Manager, Policy and Advocacy Division with Forward Justice. In 2016, Miera's personal journey with the justice system was featured in Christianity Today. Most notable about Miera is her love and commitment to serving those who are marginalized and often overlooked. Her goal is to dismantle the shame and stigma by reframing the narrative.