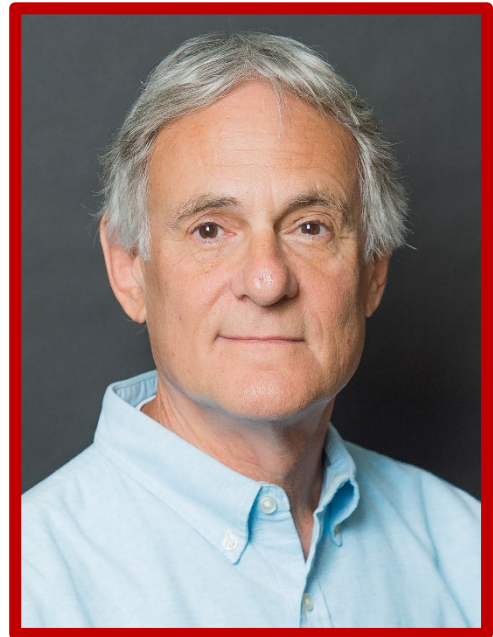


## **DIVISION OF EXPERIMENTAL CRIMINOLOGY**

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Dr. Steve Belenko is the 2017 recipient of the **Jerry Lee Lifetime Achievement Award**, which recognizes lifetime achievement in the field of experimental criminology.

Early on in my career, I realized that the criminal justice system is where so many of society's problems come together (social, health and political problems), I decided to devote my career to studying them and ultimately to changing the criminal justice system for the better. I've focused on juvenile and adult justice agencies to understand the causes and correlates of substance abuse and related health behaviors among offenders, and conduct research to improve the development and implementation of evidence-based substance-abuse and other health-related services. I am very gratified to receive the 2017 Jerry Lee Lifetime Achievement Award which recognizes a researcher whose career has advanced evidence-based policy in the field of criminology.



In addition, my work has examined the prevention and treatment of HIV and other STDs among adult and juvenile offenders, as well as treatment-focused interventions to reduce recidivism. Having worked in the non-profit and city government world early in my career, I especially enjoy collaborating with practitioners in prisons and jails, probation agencies, and court systems in experimental research to develop theory-informed interventions that improve diversion and other prevention and treatment services for offenders. A common thread running through my work is a devotion to educating practitioners and policy makers about the value of research and data to improve services that improve public safety and public health. Practitioners are on the front lines and improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations makes a difference in the populations they serve.

Over my career, I have undertaken eight randomized controlled field experiments to investigate varying types of treatment within the criminal justice system. My research has evaluated both organizational level and individual-level interventions testing the efficacy of:

1. Adding peer recovery support specialists to a drug court team. (still in the field)
2. An organization-level implementation of interventions targeting substance abuse services for delinquent youth under community supervision. (still in the field)
3. A local change team with external coach on improvements in the delivery of HIV services to prison and jail inmates.



4. A computerized substance abuse treatment intervention for prison inmates, compared with standard treatment.
5. A brief substance use prevention intervention for truant youth brought into the juvenile justice system.
6. A brief substance use prevention intervention for recently arrested delinquent youth placed under community supervision.
7. The Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (DTAP) program in Brooklyn NY
8. A supported work program for individuals with substance abuse problems being released from prison.

Through these rigorously designed experimental studies, I have shed additional light on what works related to treatment options for both substance abuse and HIV/STD prevention. My work has also spurred the implementation of systems that improve the services offered by agents of the criminal justice system long after my research studies have concluded. Experimental research is crucial for building scientific knowledge but is even more impactful when it leads to sustainable changes in policy and practice.

Criminal justice is an interdisciplinary discipline and I actively work to integrate expertise from and collaborate with colleagues from other disciplines. I am trained as a mathematician and experimental psychologist and did my dissertation on animal models of alcoholism. My first job at the Vera Institute of Justice, where I started working on criminal justice programs. Research positions at the mayor's office in New York City, Columbia University, and the University of Pennsylvania followed before I joined Temple's faculty in 2006. My 11 years at Temple have gone by very quickly and I look forward to continuing to develop and implement experimental research to improve the evidence base, and reduce the negative impacts of substance abuse and other health problems among offenders.