



Belk Center
for Community College
Leadership and Research



2020 Postsecondary Career and Technical Education Research Fellow

Sponsored by the ECMC Foundation

Misti R. Jeffers

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, UT Knoxville

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Bio. Misti Jeffers is completing her Ph.D. in Social Policy at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. Her research agenda is grounded in social justice as she explores equitable access to opportunity, social mobility, and the educational and career pathways of historically underrepresented students. Misti takes special interest in creating institutional-level change as a means to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of poverty, particularly in rural Appalachia. Most recently, Misti has been a Graduate Research Assistant at the Institute on Assets and Social Policy and previously worked in program evaluation and in direct care at a trauma-based youth behavioral health facility. She earned an M.A. in Child Study and Human Development from Tufts University, an M.A. in Social Policy from Brandeis University, and a B.S. in Psychology and Human Services from East Tennessee State University, where she was a McNair Scholar. Misti has presented at numerous national conferences on career pathways research methodology, Appalachian identity, and equity in juvenile justice reform initiatives.

Project. Misti’s mixed methods, multi-phase study uses statewide longitudinal data to categorize the shape and determinants of educational and vocational behavior and outcomes of Tennesseans participating in CTE programs. This project aims to address gaps in understanding the underlying mechanisms determining pathways to sustainable careers while emphasizing the multiple dimensions of equity in economic mobility strategies. Findings will contribute to policy and program implications for student affairs administrators, guidance counselors, and mentors across institutional contexts.



Research Sponsor: Dorian L. McCoy, PhD
Associate Professor
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

The Program

Fellows will be part of a community that participates in two national research training institutes, research methods webinars, works with CTE research mentors, and conducts postsecondary CTE research.

“We have designed this CTE Fellows program to provide scholars with the unique opportunity to be part of a community and a formal curriculum to develop their research skills while working toward improving the field of CTE.”

— James Bartlett II, Ph.D.

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