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January 2018 Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow: Yunsoo Park, Ph.D.

2017-2018 Federal Executive Branch Policy Fellow

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My second year of the SRCD Executive Branch Policy Fellowship at the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has involved applying the training and skills I acquired during my first year to approach a greater range of responsibilities with increased independence. I carry out various activities to facilitate the implementation of research and evaluation focusing on topics pertaining to crime and victimization, primarily intimate partner violence and elder abuse. A major responsibility throughout my second year has involved leading the Federal Interagency Workgroup on Teen Dating Violence. Through this work, I engage with federal partners and expert researchers and practitioners to communicate and exchange exciting and cutting-edge information about research, evaluation, and program activities in the field.

I serve as a primary NIJ contact for a large-scale, national evaluation focused on linking systems of care for youth victims. This project requires the successful integration of priorities and strategies across different states. As such, I have learned how dynamic partnerships are formed and maintained, as well as the crucial

pieces that go into effectively launching and evaluating a project of considerable diversity and magnitude. In this role, I advise and consult with partner organizations on evaluation approaches and methods. I also represent NIJ during key collaborative meetings, such as all-sites and steering committee meetings.

Throughout my second year, I have continued to strengthen and build on the effective communication of scientific research to a wide range of audiences. For example, I recently completed a research brief on the protective effects of social support against elder abuse based on an NIJ-funded longitudinal study; this brief is intended to provide direct access to findings to enhance practice and clarify policy choices. In addition, I am in the final stages of publishing a book chapter focusing on outcomes related to teen dating violence, and also continue to write website summaries based on final reports of NIJ-funded projects focusing on dating violence.

Through my various responsibilities, I have been able to collaborate and interact actively with scientists and practitioners. For example, I help to organize various research meetings for ongoing projects focused on aspects of program implementation and evaluation (e.g., measurement of outcome variables). I also recently chaired a panel at the American Society of Criminology Conference, which gave me the opportunity to work with expert researchers in the field.

I continue to be extremely grateful to NIJ and SRCD for the invaluable opportunities and support of my continued professional growth, and am incredibly excited for the next steps to come.