EWU’s Music Department and Department of Sociology and Justice Studies with cohosts, Dr. Sheila Woodward and Dr. Kerryn Bell, present

Dr. Mary Cohen and Mr. Kenneth Bailey

Crossroads: Choral Singing and Songwriting inside and outside Prison

May 12, noon – 12:50 p.m.

Webinar Link: https://ewu.zoom.us/j/95530120146

Hear stories and original songs from the founder of the Oakdale Prison Community Choir and a formerly incarcerated member of the choir. They explore how choral singing in prisons creates spaces for personal and social growth and social awareness of the need to transform the punitive approach to the criminal legal system.

Mary Cohen

Mary L. Cohen is an Associate Professor of Music Education at the University of Iowa. She researches music making and well-being, songwriting, and collaborative communities. In 2009, she founded the Oakdale Prison Community Choir (http://oakdalechoir.lib.uiowa.edu/) and she began a Songwriting Workshop at Oakdale Prison in 2010. Participants have written over 150 songs, and the Oakdale Choir has performed over 75 of these songs, many available with the Creative Commons License.

Kenneth Bailey

Kenneth W Bailey Jr is a formerly incarcerated individual (2007-2014, discharged February 2019). He was an original member of the Oakdale Community Choir (2009-2012). While a member he collaborated with Dr. Mary Cohen and other members on various original songs. *May the Stars Remember Your Name* being the most notable as its journey led into the hands of YoYo Ma. He also enrolled in the Grinnell College Liberal Arts in Prison Program while incarcerated. Presently he is enjoying his life as a returned citizen.