

Betsy E. Craft
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Current Positions

- 2024- **Arapahoe County Public Health**
Planning Partnerships and Community Health Promotion | Community Engagement Specialist
- 2023- **University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus**
Dr. Katherine Lemasters | Division of General Internal Medicine | Department of Medicine | School of Medicine | School of Public Health | Community Engagement Consultant | Assistant Professor

Education

Colorado State University, Global Campus, 2023
Business Management and Organizational Leadership

Pikes Peak Community College, 2017
General Studies & Business

Areas of Interest and Expertise

Community-led & participatory research • Health equity • Drug user health & overdose prevention • Non-punitive drug policy • Mass incarceration • Jail-based peer-led care • Qualitative & arts-based research • Liberatory harm reduction • Community organizing • Coalition-building • Peer support • Systems change • Lived & living expertise leadership • Peer-led street outreach implementation • Harm reduction and relationship-driven engagement models

Grants and Contracts

- 2024 Craft Consulting LLC: Contract with Arapahoe County Public Health to elevate the voices of participants who use drugs and build capacity for the ACPH Syringe Access Program. \$10,000
Role: Contractor
- 2024 Craft Consulting LLC: General Internal Medicine Small Grant at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus to qualitatively explore mental health and substance use needs for those in jail and on probation in the Denver metro area. \$22,500.
Role: Community Engagement Consultant
- 2024 Craft Consulting LLC: Community Engagement and Health Equity Pilot Grant at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus to build a Community Advisory Board around mental health and substance use needs for those in jail and on probation in the Denver metro. \$8,000.
Role: Co-PI

- 2024 Craft Consulting LLC: Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE). Organized Community Advisory Board of lived and living expertise leaders for statewide public awareness campaign for fentanyl education mandated by HB22-1326. \$4,000,000.
Role: Consultant
- 2023 Craft Consulting LLC: The state of Colorado and Behavioral Health Administration study to assess health and criminal legal impacts of making fentanyl possession a felony. \$550,000.
Role: Consultant

Professional Experience

Community Engagement Specialist 8/2024-current
Planning Partnerships and Community Health Promotion, Arapahoe County Public Health

- Leads system-level community engagement and overdose prevention strategies for Arapahoe County’s syringe access programming, including building PALI, a participant-led advisory group of people who use drugs, launching eastfaxHR peer-led outreach, supporting FTIR drug checking infrastructure, and contributing to an overdose fatality review pilot.
- Developed community feedback loops and partnerships that strengthened Harm Reduction best practices, expanded participant leadership, and contributed to an eightfold increase in participation at the East Colfax fixed site.

Community Engagement Consultant 4/2024-current
General Internal Medicine Small Grant at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

- Conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews and thematic analysis examining mental health and substance use needs among individuals in jail and on probation in the Denver metro area.
- Co-designed research questions and recruitment strategies and supported ethical, community-engaged interpretation and dissemination of findings across academic, clinical, and community settings.

Health Equity Pilot Grant at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Co-PI

- Co-led a Community Advisory Board–guided photovoice study focused on mental health and substance use needs among individuals with lived experience of incarceration and probation, including participatory study design, data collection, qualitative analysis, and dissemination.

Community Engagement Consultant 4/2023-5/2024
Health Impacts of Criminal Penalties for Fentanyl Possession in Colorado

- Supported community-engaged research analyzing how felony criminalization of fentanyl possession may impact overdose risk, treatment access, and health outcomes for people who use drugs in Colorado.

Peer Navigator 2/2022-9/2023
Office of the Municipal Public Defender, City of Denver

- Delivered comprehensive overdose safety and individualized reentry planning for public defender clients in the courtroom and in the jails through peer support, an evidence-based, non-clinical model of care.

Peer Support Specialist 11/2020-2/2022
Colorado Village Collaborative

- Founded a peer-led neighborhood cleanup program that strengthened participant leadership, built trust with neighbors, and improved community relations.
- Delivered peer support in safe outdoor spaces and tiny home villages through resource navigation, trauma-informed crisis support, and connection to behavioral health care and permanent housing.

Licensing and Compliance Administrator 11/2019-11/2020
Green Dragon Corporate Office

- Managed state and local licensing renewals and compliance tracking for 21 regulated cannabis licenses across retail, cultivation, and infused product operations. Coordinated alarm, fire, business, and sales tax permits across multiple jurisdictions in Colorado.

Executive Assistant

7/2016–9/2018

MegaStar Financial Corporate Office, Denver, CO

- Provided high-level executive support to the MegaStar CEO and C-Suite team, including calendar management, meeting coordination, digital marketing, confidential information, and international travel.
- Coordinated logistics across three branches while ensuring executive priorities and deadlines were met.

Institutional and Professional Activities and Service

eastfaxHR / Arapahoe County Public Health, 8:32 Zine Project, Project Lead

June 2025–current

- Developed 8:32, a Harm Reduction zine created by-for-with community in partnership with Heather Edney, using a liberatory design model to educate Colorado drug user rights, resources, drug user-led movements.

American Society of Addiction Medicine Panel of People with Lived and Living Experience

Dec 2025-current

- Serves on the national ASAM panel for the update of our National Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder.

Denver Health, You Decide Denver, Budget Delegate

Oct 2025-current

- Serves on the leadership team of a \$100k participatory budgeting initiative developing an RFP to reduce substance use-related harms and overdose through non-clinical leadership in Denver.

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Overdose Prevention Media Campaign,

Advisory Chair

May 2024-May 2025

- Served as Advisory Chair for a state-level lived and living expertise panel responsible for developing overdose prevention media campaign messaging mandated by HB22-1326; led participant recruitment, conducted semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and supported qualitative analysis and dissemination.

Denver Opioid Abatement Council, Community Advisor

June 2023-present

- Mayorally appointed to two consecutive terms to serve as community advisor on the DOAC, as a person who uses drugs and independent expert, to mitigate the harms of the opioid crisis in Denver.
- Initiated advocacy that led to an ordinance change establishing compensation for lived and living expertise community advisors and expanding equitable representation among voting members and advisors.
- Co-led a series of focus groups with unhoused people who use drugs to inform DOAC strategic plan.

Colorado Opioid Abatement Council, Infrastructure Share Grant, Community Reviewer

Feb-April 2023

- Served as a volunteer community reviewer to ensure lived and living expertise directly informed opioid settlement funding allocation decisions.

Elevated Denver, First Collaboratory Design Team

March 2024-Nov 2024

- Served on core design team for an innovative model for tackling homelessness that puts power in the hands of those with lived and living expertise to design highly responsive, sustainable solutions.

Colorado Peer Policy Action Network, Founder and Leader

2023-present

- Leads a statewide, peer-led coalition to standardize forensic peer support in Colorado jails through peer-informed policy initiatives and advanced training curricula.
- Secured a research partnership with CU Anschutz, co-led a formal analysis of county jail policies related to medication for opioid use disorder, harm reduction, and peer support across all 46 Colorado county jails.

- Colorado Drug Policy Coalition, Policy Director** Feb 2023-present
- Statewide coalition formed in response to Colorado’s 2023 Overdose Prevention Center (OPC) bill, advancing data-driven harm reduction and drug policy reform.
 - Led organizing for Denver’s pop-up OPC for OPC National Solidarity Week in 2024, with support from local and national Harm Reduction leaders, including an FTIR drug checking expert, incorporated in 2025.
- Housing Navigation Action Planning Coalition, Founder** March 2023-Oct 2024
- Founded and led a Denver metro coalition focused on strengthening coordinated support among housing navigators and housing providers.
- Colorado Behavioral Health Administration, Peer Support Steering Committee** June 2023-June 2024
- Appointed by BHA (SB22-181) to serve on committee and develop peer support workforce standards.
- Right Response Colorado, Policy Advocate** Oct 2023- current
- Statewide coalition operating at the intersection of unmet health needs and the criminal legal system, advocating for evidence-based health solutions in place of punishment or incarceration.
- University of Colorado Anschutz WORTH Program, Community Advisory Board** Jan 2022-Oct 2023
- Provided community-informed guidance on a program designed to connect individuals transitioning from incarceration to trauma-informed medical care, peer support, and health navigation services.
- City of Denver Peer Workforce Advisory Group** June 2022-June 2023
- Guided a participatory research about the role integrity for a Peer Navigator vs Outreach Case Coordinator.
- Naloxone Champions, University of Colorado, Denver** March 2021-Aug 2021
- Shared a nonfatal overdose story through a digital storytelling project focused on stigma reduction, and served as a Community Advisor supporting community-based workshops and a community forum.
- Harm Reduction Action Center, Volunteer** Jan 2016-Present
- Served as a volunteer for Colorado’s longest standing and most prominent syringe access program.

Research Publications

1. Otañez, M., **Craft, B.**, Burges, N., Talley, V., Guerrero, A. (2025). Humanizing Drug Overdoses in Colorado: A Liberatory Harm Reduction Comic Made with Sex Workers and People Who Use Drugs. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 138 (549): 351–360. <https://doi.org/10.5406/15351882.138.549.07>
2. LeMasters, K., Nall, S., Jurecka, C., **Craft, B.**, Christine, P., Binswanger, I., Barocas, J. “You can’t incarcerate yourself out of the drug problem in America:” A qualitative examination of Colorado’s 2022 Fentanyl criminalization law. *Health Justice* 13, 26 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-025-00334-8>
3. LeMasters, K., Nall, S., Jurecka, C., **Craft, B.**, Christine, P., Goodman, R., Henderson, J., Haywood-James, R., Williams, A., Wittner, G., Barocas, J. Criminal legal penalties, substance use, and overdose: a concept mapping study examining Colorado’s criminal legal penalties. *BMC Global Public Health* 3, 1 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s44263-024-00117-7>.
4. Paquette, C., Ehle, K., Roach, M., Danna, T., LeMasters, K., **Craft, B.**, Brinkley-Rubinstein, L. How competing needs after incarceration lead to adverse health outcomes among people who use criminalized drugs. *BMC Glob. Public Health* 3, 36 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s44263-025-00152-y>
5. Nall, S.K., Jurecka, C., Ammons, A., Rodriguez, A., **Craft, B.**, Waleed, C., Dias, D., Henderson, J., Boyer, J., Yamkovoy, K., Swathi, P., Patil, P., Behne, F., LeMasters, K., Brinkley-Rubinstein, L., Barocas, B.

Forthcoming Publications

1. Christine, P., Pytell, J., Gabrielson, A., Munoz-Jones, S., **Craft, B.**, Rotello, H., Binswanger, I., LeMasters, K. Do state mandates translate to jail policies? A landscape review of Colorado jail policies for medication for opioid use disorder. Under Review.

Selected Conference Oral Presentations (* Presenting Author)

1. LeMasters, K., ***Craft, B.**, Macht, A., Clifton, M., Cullins, Z. “They shouldn't have to go through that:” Improving mental health and substance use needs during jail incarceration and while on probation in CO. Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice and Health, Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA. March 2026.
2. * **Craft, B.** Turnbull, G., Eisenman, B., Mendoza, D. “A Roadmap for Standardizing Forensic Peer Support in Colorado Jails” Rethinking Addiction Conference, Loveland, CO, 28 October 2025.
3. * **Craft, B.** & Turnbull, G. “A Roadmap for Standardizing Forensic Peer Support in Colorado Jails” Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference, Loveland, CO, 27 October 2025.
4. Rolley, T., * **Craft, B.**, Murray, S., Shah, R., Regier, E., Walley, A., Weisenthal, K. Harm Reduction is Healthcare: Decreasing Risk and Stigma with People Who Use Drugs.” American Society of Addiction Medicine) Annual Conference: Innovations in Addiction Medicine and Science Workshop, 25 April 2025.
5. Christine, P., Pytell, J., Gabrielson, A., Muñoz-Jones, S., * **Craft, B.**, Rotello, H., Binswanger, I., LeMasters, K. “Do Jail Mandates Translate to Jail Policies? A Landscape Review of Colorado Jail Policies for Medication for Opioid Use Disorder.” Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice and Health, Annual Conference, Austin, TX. March 2025.
6. LeMasters, K., Nall, S., Jurecka, C., * **Craft, B.**, Christine, P., Binswanger, I. “You Can’t Incarcerate Yourself Out of the Drug Problem in America.” The Burden of Additional Criminalization of Fentanyl. Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice and Health, Annual Conference, Austin, TX. March 2025.
7. * **Craft, B.**, Otañez, M. “Arts-Based Anthropology and Liberatory Harm Reduction: Perspectives from a University Researcher-Community Member Graphic Novel Collaboration,” 85th Annual Conference of the Society for Applied Anthropology: Revitalizing Applied Anthropology, Portland, Oregon, 25 March 2025
8. Otañez, M., * **Craft, B.**, Talley, V., Burgess, N. “Social Justice Graphic Novel Making for Beginners,” 85th Annual Conference of the Society for Applied Anthropology: Revitalizing Applied Anthropology, Portland, Oregon, 25-29 March 2025 (workshop).
9. * **Craft, B.**, Esquibel, J., Jones, D., Drtina, B., Hume, KC., Walts, D. “The Power of Peer Support: A Collaborative Approach to Transforming Jail-Based Systems of Care Panel.” Rethinking Addiction Conference, Loveland, CO, October 2025.
10. * **Craft, B.** Esquibel, J., Blum, J. “Advancing Peer Support in Colorado County Jails” County Sheriffs of Colorado Fall Conference, Broomfield, CO, 20 August 2024.
11. Lemasters, K., * **Craft B.**, Jurecka C., Nall S., Haygood-James, R., Henderson J. “The Effects of Criminal Legal Penalties on Substance Use and Overdose: A Concept Mapping Study,” Conference for Interdisciplinary Drug and Alcohol Research “Across the Divide,” University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, CO, 17 and 18 May 2024.
12. Hagerman, S., Conzelman, C., * **Craft, B.**, Otañez M., “Qualitative Research and Creative Community Engagement,” Conference for Interdisciplinary Drug and Alcohol Research “Across the Divide,” University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, 17 and 18 May 2024 (workshop).
13. Nall, S., Barocas, B., Jurecka, C., * **Craft, B.**, Dias, D., Doll, N., Goodman, G., Hale, L., Henderson, J., James, R., Robertson, J., Speer, T., Williams, A., Wittner, G. LeMasters, K. The Effects of Criminal Legal

Penalties on Substance Use & Overdose: A Concept Mapping Study. Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice and Health, Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ. April 2024.

14. * **Craft, B.**, Hagerman, S., Otanez, M. "Collective Knowledge in Nontraditional Spaces: Education, Research and Outreach Strategies for REFORMers." Drug Policy Alliance Conference. October 2023.
15. * **Craft, B.**, Matatall, E. "Strengthening the Peer Support Workforce at the City and County of Denver: An Assessment and Action Planning Project." Public Health in the Rockies Conference, Sept 2023.
16. Nall, S., Jurecka, C. Ammons, Rodriguez, A., **Craft, B.**, Waleed, C., Dias, D., Henderson, J., Boyer, J., Yamkovoy, K., Swathi, P., Patil, P., Behne, M., LeMasters, K., Brinkley-Rubinstein, L., Barocas, J. "Identifying Structural Risk Factors of Overdose Following Incarceration: A Concept Mapping Study." College on Problems of Drug Dependence, Annual Conference, Denver, CO, June 2023.
17. Marty, O., * **Craft, B.**, Guerrero, A. "Visualizing Harm Reduction, Stigma Reduction and Overdose Prevention: A Video Storytelling Workshop," 13th National Harm Reduction Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 13-16 October 2022.

Selected Conference Posters (* Presenting Author)

1. * **Craft, B.**, Macht, A., Clifton, M., LeMasters, K. "They shouldn't have to go through that." Improving mental health and substance use needs during jail incarceration and while on probation in Colorado. Drug Policy Alliance, Reform Conference, November 2025. Detroit, MI.
2. * **Craft, B.**, Christine, P., Dillon, J. "Civil Disobedience to Advance Public Health: Colorado's Pop-Up Overdose Prevention Center for Solidarity Week" poster. Drug Policy Alliance, Reform Conference, November 2025. Detroit, MI.
3. Nall, S., Jurecka, C., **Craft, B.**, Christine, P., Barocas, J., LeMasters, K. "You Can't Incarcerate Yourself Out of the Drug Problem in America": The Burden of Additional Criminalization of Fentanyl. College on Problems of Drug Dependence, Annual Conference, June 2024. Montreal, Canada.

Public Speaking (* Presenting Author)

1. * **Craft, B.** & LeMasters, K. Do Jail Mandates Translate to Jail Policies? A Landscape Review of Colorado Jail Policies for Medication for Opioid Use Disorder. Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention: Assisting Jails Meeting. December 2025, Virtual.
2. * **Craft, B.** Community Advisory Group Brief. Denver Opioid Abatement Council. August 2025, Virtual.
3. Bailer, D., * **Craft, B.**, Kral, A., Marcus, P., MickenBurg, D. "Clearing the Path for Overdose Prevention Centers in the United States." Drug Policy Alliance. December 2024, Virtual Webinar.
4. * **Craft, B.**, Rodriguez, R. Haywod-James R. "Advancing Peer Support in Colorado County Jails." Fentanyl Stakeholder Session. September 2024, Virtual.
5. * **Craft, B.** "Advancing the Peer Support Workforce in Carceral Facilities." Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention: Assisting Jails Meeting. July 2024, Virtual.

Invited Lectures and Panels (* Presenting Author)

1. * **Craft, B.** Markis, C, Doneski, K. Addictions Counseling; Graduate School of Mindfulness Based Transpersonal Counseling program, Dr. Jetaun Bailey. 21 February 2026. Virtual.
2. * **Craft, B.** & Lemasters, K. Best Practices for Engaging People Who Use Drugs as Research Partners and Participants. Health Systems Node Monthly Seminar. 5 February 2026. Virtual.

3. * **Craft, B.** What is our role? Incarceration and Reflections on Well-Being course. Health Humanities and Ethics Graduate Certificate Program. Instructor: Dr. Kate Lemasters. December 2025.
4. Medrano, L., Jorgensen, M., Fernandez, T., Garcia, R., Spencer, K., * **Craft, B.** “Nothing About Us Without Us” Lived & Living Experience Voice Leading the Charge” Keynote Panel. Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference, Loveland, CO, 27 October 2025.
5. Christine, P., * **Craft, B.**, LeMasters, K. Examining the Health Impacts of Colorado’s 2022 Fentanyl Criminalization Law (HB 22-1326). Right Response Colorado. October 2025. Virtual.
6. * **Craft, B.** Community-Based Participatory Research with People Who Use Drugs. Fieldwork Methods Class. Cultural Anthropology Graduate Program. Instructor: Dr. Marty Otanez. 27 February 2025.

Research Exhibitions & Creative Dissemination

1. Otañez, M., * **Craft, B.**, and Baranauskas, S., “Zine-making: Art as a Form of Resistance and Healing” (workshop) ACT [Active Collective Trauma] Summit 2025: Art as Healing, Aurora, Colorado, 18 September 2025.
2. * **Craft, B.**, Macht, A., Walker, T., Moffett, T., McConnellogue, M., Wise, J. Incarceration, Mental Health, and Substance Use: A Photovoice Project. High Walls Exhibit at the Redline Contemporary Art Center. 17, August 2025.
3. Lemasters, K.,* **Craft, B.**, Jurecka, C., Nall, S. Barocas, J. Felonizing Fentanyl Study Community Forum. 5280 Recovery High School. 9 November 2023.