

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
2013 Criminal Justice Advisory Board Conference
“One System, Many Pieces”
October 28-30, 2013
Days Inn, Penn State

Session Descriptions

Pull of Gravity: Every year in the United States, 700,000 people are released from prison or jail. Within three years, 67 percent will re-offend. Pull of Gravity is a film that tells the stories of three men, each attempting to make his way along the challenging continuum of reentry. Filmmaker and co-director El Sawyer brings both a keen ear and eye to this story, having traveled this path himself. He realized that the journey is misunderstood, even by those whose hearts and minds lean sympathetically. With colleague and co-director Jon Kaufman, Sawyer turned to the art of storytelling, captured on film, to debunk perceptions and replace ignorance with fact. Together Sawyer and Kaufman have created an intimate portrait of three lives, offering compelling insights that can help shape responses from family members, parole officers, law enforcement officials, and the social networks upon which reentry is dependent; when viewed by ex offenders, the film can offer hope tempered by a dose of unvarnished experience. Over the last few years, reentry has become a hot topic of discussion within the criminal justice sector; incarceration and recidivism are costly, burdening government and agency budgets that have been increasingly scrutinized during a period of extended economic retrenchment. Equally significant is the lost human potential, and the collateral impact on families and communities. Pull of Gravity is a film sponsored by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, which worked with the filmmakers previously on a video-based violence-intervention program for youth. Based on the success of that effort, the U.S. Attorney's Office embraced the concept for this documentary, and put its full support behind what is expected to unfold as a multi-faceted project that exposes the juggernaut of reentry.

Re-entry Coalition – How to Start One: In this session, representatives from re-entry management organizations in three counties - Lancaster, Northampton, and Philadelphia - talk about the ways that they have organized their re-entry efforts to meet the unique needs of their local areas. Partners, implementation, and service delivery systems vary in each of the area but all of the groups are dedicated to lowering recidivism, reducing prison populations, and improving the lives of returning citizens while at the same time keeping their communities safe. The presenters will pay special attention to the best practice ideas that they have developed in the course of starting their project.

Working Together – Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Department of Corrections, and Community Re-entry Services: In this workshop, we will explore the DOC and PBPP's recent joint efforts to improve reentry for offenders through Reentry Service Centers and Transitional Housing Units. We will look at the workshops and services being provided, as well as connections to the community being used to enhance re-entry efforts.

Justice Bridge Housing – One Public Housing Authority's Experience: Obtaining stable, affordable housing quickly after release from jail is extremely important to the probability of successful reentry, and it is extremely difficult and expensive! The Union County Housing Authority was appointed to the Union County CJAB for the purpose of helping justice-involved individuals develop and implement a housing re-entry plan. Using PCCD funds, the Housing Authority developed a rental assistance program and used its expertise to house selected individuals in stable, affordable housing within two weeks of applying for the re-entry program. This Justice Bridge Housing Program has been so successful that the federal Bureau of Justice

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Assistance has recently awarded a grant to the Housing Authority to study similar housing re-entry programs, refine its Justice Bridge Housing Program, and develop a toolkit designed to replicate the program and equip public housing authorities across the country to partner with criminal justice agencies.

The Union County Justice Bridge Housing Program:

The first session (1:45-2:45) will generally describe the Union County program and our experience to date. The first session will set up the second, if one plans to attend the second session, it is important to also attend the first.

Justice Bridge Housing Workshop:

The second session (2:50-3:55) will be in charrette format and builds upon the first session. We hope to get into more practical detail by considering Justice Bridge Housing from multiple perspectives including yours!

STAR Program – Federal Re-entry Court: Philadelphia’s Supervision to Aid Reentry (S.T.A.R.) Program, also known as Federal Reentry Court, is a 52-week program that aims at reducing parole revocation by providing an innovative combination of intensive supervision and comprehensive support to individuals coming out of Federal Prison. Approximately 40 participants, divided into two courts, attend bimonthly sessions before Magistrate Judge Timothy R. Rice and District Judge L. Felipe Restrepo. Prior to each court session, a team of representatives from the Federal Judiciary, Federal Public Defenders Office, U.S. Probation, and U.S. Attorney’s Office meet to discuss each participant’s progress. Since its inception in 2007, the program has served 186 participants, yielding 120 graduates and myriad successes. This presentation will highlight Reentry Court, providing an overview of the history, general structure and function of the program, as well as strategies for a successful reentry process. Presenters will discuss how strong partnerships and holistic approaches to Reentry have the potential to change lives and reduce parole revocation, thereby creating safer communities.

State/County Re-entry Program: The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole’s Reentry Programs are specialized programs that help reduce recidivism and improve public safety through a team of Probation and Parole professionals, providing intensive supervision and oversight to program participants. Research reveals that no other intervention brings bear such an intensive response with such dramatic results as do drug courts and reentry programs. The Reentry Programs are based on the principles developed by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals in collaboration with the U. S. Department of Justice. Board Reentry Program sessions may differ from county to county depending on the resources and needs of the particular county. The Reentry Program is a mandatory program for designated parolees who have a history of drug/alcohol abuse or addiction. The program lasts approximately 12-18 months. After completion of the program, the offender will continue standard supervision with a general unit parole agent. Generally, one program session per month is conducted at the county courthouse with the following team members: PBPP Board Member, Common Pleas Judge, Parole Manager/Project Manager, Parole Supervisor, Parole Agents, county drug and alcohol counseling case managers and any other community agencies deemed appropriate. This presentation will highlight the Programs from the retired PBPP Board Member, Common Pleas Judge and PBPP Bureau Director of Offender Re-entry Coordinators perspective.

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The Foundation of Evidence-Based Corrections Practice – Actuarial Risk and Needs

Assessment: While the total number of offenders in state prisons has dropped slightly in the last few years, the same is not true for either offenders under community supervision, most notably probation, or those held in jails. Thus, local decision makers and justice practitioners are faced with safely managing increasing numbers of offenders, while resources at all levels are shrinking. Every day, front-line staff, managers and elected officials must make numerous decisions at the macro and micro-levels regarding what services are provided, to whom, for how long etc. Administering actuarial risk and need tools to offender populations, understanding what the results mean, and how the results might best be used to determine who is prioritized for services, supports and interventions and what specific services are required, is fundamental to operating a justice system which aims to hold offenders accountable and prevent future victimization. This workshop will explore what these assessments are, why they matter and how the results should influence resource allocation and other decisions in local government.

Best Practices – Women In Transition (WIT): This presentation will provide an overview of transitional services provided to women both inside Lackawanna County Prison and within the local community. It will highlight lessons learned, findings, obstacles and challenges identified throughout the first year of programming.

Best Practices – McKean County Community Service & 3G Program: Community service has been imposed as part of criminal sentences for decades in McKean County. In 2011 the McKean County Community Service and Good Growing Gardens (3G) Program was initiated to enhance the utilization of community service as a criminal sanction, rehabilitative tool and alternative to incarceration. To date thousands of hours of community service have been ordered and completed. The program has assisted hundreds of defendants with the development of good work skills and habits. McKean County’s jail population has been substantially reduced – all at reduced costs to McKean County! This presentation will focus on the development and implementation of the program, its successes and failures and reviews current program data and statistics.

Evidenced Based Practices – A Holistic Approach: Presented by Mark Carey, this session will cover the essentials and benefits of Evidenced Based Practices (EBP). Mr. Carey will discuss the importance of risk assessments, those most commonly utilized, as well as the top criminogenic needs, and how courts utilize this information. He will identify which programs work, why, and what other counties/states are implementing. Participants will learn a step-by-step guide to move forward with EBP’s in their county. Finally, Mr. Carey will impart the importance of the justice system and the CJAB working together to achieve risk reduction.

Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategies (JJSES): Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Justice System is designed to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system to achieve its balanced and restorative justice mission by employing evidence-based practices, with fidelity at every stage of the juvenile justice process; collecting and analyzing the data necessary to measure the results of these efforts; and, with this knowledge, striving to continuously improve the quality of our decisions, services and programs.

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Effective Addictions Treatment in the Criminal Justice Population: This session will examine the relationship between substance abuse and criminality, with an emphasis on defining elements of effective treatment and how criminal justice professionals can best leverage treatment mandates to reduce the risk of recidivism.

Building Capacity and Creating Culture through Focused Leadership: Sylvia Hepler is a career development specialist who provides coaching, live workshops, group facilitation and retreats for organizations that wish to build capacity for success. During this segment, Ms. Hepler will work with audience members using case studies and exercises to identify strategies for CJAB capacity building. Information will include how to develop a high-functioning CJAB culture, improve communications, enhance engagement and leverage member strengths and skills to optimize CJAB success.

Effectiveness, Data Collection and Enhancements in Intermediate Punishment (IP) Programs: This session will discuss Pennsylvania's County Intermediate Punishment and Restrictive Intermediate Punishment (RIP), initial findings from the RIP research, program and future implementation of IP funding.

Enhancing Criminal Justice Response to Victims of Crime: This session will explore various victim service initiatives of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Office of Victim Services, designed to improve the response to victims as they proceed through the criminal justice process. Information about Pennsylvania's efforts to address human trafficking will also be provided.

Law Enforcement/Technology Updates: This session will cover updates from our partners at the Pennsylvania State Police, Pennsylvania Justice Network (JNET), Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, and the Local Technology Workgroup. Topics will include; Adam Walsh updates, Forensic Blood Analysis, Facial Recognition, and other technologies.

Reducing Justice Involvement for People with Mental Illness: The Pennsylvania Mental Health and Justice Center of Excellence (CoE) is a collaborative effort of Drexel University and the University of Pittsburgh funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse services. The Center works to reduce justice involvement of people with severe mental illness and often co-occurring substance use disorders by serving as a resource for technical assistance and training to the Commonwealth and counties to improve their continuum of criminal justice/behavioral health services. The Center uses the Sequential Intercept Model (Munetz & Griffin, 2006) to provide a conceptual framework for communities to organize targeted strategies for diversion, re-entry, linkages to community services, and alternatives to incarceration. The presenters will discuss the development of the CoE in the context of research about the relation of mental illness and offending and will describe how the CoE fits into the strategic plan of PCCD and OMHSAS in Pennsylvania. Finally, the presenters will describe current projects of the CoE, what has been learned from counties across the Commonwealth and where the CoE is headed in the future.

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Multi-disciplinary Investigative Teams/Child Advocacy Centers: This session will discuss the purpose and function of Multi-Disciplinary Investigative Teams (MDIT) and Child Advocacy Centers (CAC), how to get your programs started, and updates on current efforts underway in Pennsylvania Legislation.

County CJAB Digital Dashboard & Offender Identification Dashboard: The CJAB Dashboard released in May 2013 will be presented highlighting the information available related to county activity in Law Enforcement, Courts, Sentencing, County Jail, Probation and Parole, Victims, as well as additional initiatives currently in progress.

Establishing and Maintaining a Collections Court: Representatives from four counties will discuss the innovative new cost collection specialty courts known as "Cost Containment Court." This session will include an introduction and description of the court program, including how the court is structured, how it operates and what data is available to show success in collection activity. Finally, special "how-to" information will be included to assist attendees in setting up a similar program in their own counties.