

Reentry Advocate

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Greater Cleveland Integrated Reentry Project (GCIRP)

*We want to hear
from you...*

Voices from Behind Bars

Please submit your stories to:
P.O. Box 6031053
Cleveland, OH 44103

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As the rate of incarceration continues to explode, our nation, and more specifically Ohio, must consider the use of more efficient reentry programs. While Cuyahoga County makes up just 11 percent of Ohio's population, it receives more than 20 percent of all prisoners reentering society. The county has a perceived strength of embodying a strong social service network; there is an abundance of social/human services agencies that address many of the concerns and barriers faced by returning prisoners. But, with over 6,000 men and women being


released from Ohio prisons and returning to the area every year — many with an immediate and compelling need for housing, employment, and human services — more needs to be done.

The Greater Cleveland Integrated Reentry Project (GCIRP) represents a unique and innovative collaboration of local and state service providers and stakeholders working as an interdisciplinary team to assist offenders and their families in making effective transitions for themselves and their communities.

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Oct/Nov Events & Services

Housing 101

 A group of housing experts will offer advice to formerly incarcerated individuals in regards to how to overcome the barriers to locating stable housing.

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Erika L. Forde, M.P.A.

Project Coordinator, Greater Cleveland Integrated Reentry Project (GCIRP)



Forde.
(Credit: GCIRP)

Erika L. Forde is the Project Coordinator for the Center for Families and Children's collaborative Greater Cleveland Integrated Reentry Project.

In this capacity, she is responsible for overseeing project coordination and results, advocacy and community collaboration, grant-writing, and co-fundraising with the Cuyahoga County Office of Reentry.

Forde continued on pg. 3

The Fiscal Crisis in Corrections: Rethinking Policies and Practices *Part Two of a Five-Part Series*

By Christine S. Scott-Hayward, The Vera Institute

Message from The Center Director, Peggy McGarry

The story of the rise in incarceration rates in the United States and the associated increase in corrections expenditures is not new. In most states, prisons are full or overcrowded and corrections absorbs significant resources—more than \$50 billion in 2008. What is new is the states' recent focus on cutting corrections costs and improving criminal justice outcomes.

This report, from Vera's Center

on Sentencing and Corrections, examines how states are responding to the current fiscal crisis and attempting to make changes in their criminal justice systems that will not only reduce costs but also enhance public safety and reduce recidivism.

This report could not be more timely. Political leaders on both sides of the aisle are looking for cost-effective ways to increase public safety. Fortunately, for the past number of years, researchers and practitioners around the country have developed and tested new and innovative criminal justice policies

that work to reduce recidivism. And these policies are gaining support at all levels of the government — from state governments to the Department of Justice, where Attorney General Eric Holder has repeatedly supported using modern, evidence-based methods for developing policy.

As policymakers navigate their budget shortfalls this year and next, we hope this report provides them with useful evidence-based options for cutting costs and increasing public safety.

Fiscal Crisis continued on pg. 4

GCIRP from pg. 1

GCIRP partners believe that with a coordinated response, the focused efforts of business, social service, education, philanthropy, workforce, government, and other community partners have the opportunity and the capacity to achieve sustained change and improve the quality of life for individuals and families experiencing incarceration and reentry. The Center for Families and Children (CFC), a local nonprofit human service provider, will lead our community's collaborative effort.

GCIRP's partners are fully committed to this project and many have long been invested in the development and implementation

By developing these public-private partnerships, GCIRP will execute a community model that will repair and/or strengthen the bond between incarcerated parents and their children

of a comprehensive reentry strategy, which focuses multiple partners and existing resources in the high level of cooperation and

collaboration required for success. Additionally, the Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners, County Administrator Jim McCafferty, and the Department of Justice Affairs - Office of Reentry are committed to providing strong administrative, resource, and fiscal support to this project.

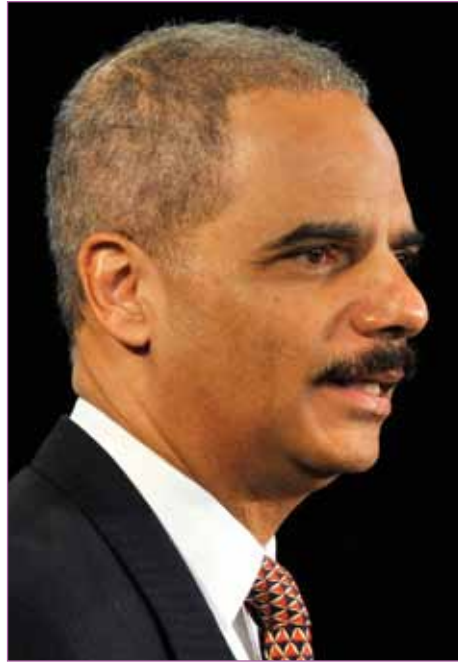
The development of reentry planning has progressed in Cuyahoga County since 2002 and has included extensive local analysis by the Urban Institute, as well as leadership by local government, community-based organizations, including the Cleveland Chapter of United Way.

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Attorney General Eric Holder's Speech at the 2009 American Bar Association Convention

Part Two of a Six-Part Series

Getting smart on crime requires talking openly about which policies have worked and which have not. And we have to do so without worrying about being labeled as too soft or too hard on crime. Getting smart on crime means moving beyond useless labels and catchphrases, and instead relying on science and data to shape policy. And getting smart on crime means thinking about crime in context – not just reacting to the criminal act, but developing the government's ability to enhance public safety



before the crime is committed and after the former offender is returned to society.

It is imperative that we get smart on crime now, for much has changed since some of our basic, governing assumptions about criminal law enforcement were developed. In the middle decades of the Twentieth Century, our nation experienced an historic increase in crime and illegal drug use. In the 1960s and 70s, the overall crime rate increased more than five-fold.

Holder continued on pg. 4

Forde from pg. 1

Forde's duties also include reporting to the funders, and the implementation of a marketing campaign.

As an undergraduate psychology student, Forde developed her passion for reentry after serving as an intern with The Vera Institute of Justice in New York City in the summer of 2000. As a research analyst intern she studied the effectiveness of Alternatives to Incarceration programs throughout the five-boroughs of New York. Upon her graduation from The Pennsylvania State University in 2001, Forde served as a Trial Preparation Assistant at the New York County District Attorney's Office — and

although she thoroughly enjoyed the time and experience obtained, the drive to affect her community continued to push her towards a career in reentry. In 2005, Erika relocated to Cleveland from New York and in 2006, while working as a full-time paralegal she began graduate work in the Masters of Public Administration program at the Maxine G. Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University. In her two years at CSU she had the opportunity to network and further learn about the reentry community in Cleveland – with those encounters helping her to put together a presentation at the 2008 Conference of Minority Public

Administrators held in Bermuda. It was that presentation that she used as the basis for the thesis she authored - a policy analysis entitled Incarceration, Reentry and Reintegration – The Continuous Revolving Door.

Forde currently resides in Lakewood, and enjoys spending spare time with family and friends, while also finding time to explore the historical and cultural neighborhoods in the Greater Cleveland area. She is a member of a number of organizations, including the National Association of Professional Women and Pi Alpha Alpha (National Honor Society for Public Administration & Affairs).

Events from pg. 1

The session will be held on Friday, October 2nd, from 9 am to 12:30 pm at Stella Maris, 1302 Washington Ave., Cleveland. For more information, call 216-432-0616.

Award Ceremony



ACT-UP REENTRY and Hope 4 U Life Skills are joining together to celebrate Community Server's 1st Annual Recognition & Awards Ceremony on Saturday, October, 3rd from 7-10 pm at 2014 W. 53rd St. (off Lorain Ave.). Honorees are Cleveland Councilmen Kevin Conwell, Jay Westbrook, and Matt Zone. Entertainment by jazz vocalist Reggie Kelly. Donation: \$15 at the door. For more information call 216-316-4207.

Prison Reform Panel



The Cleveland Public Library will host a panel discussion, "Let's Talk Prison Reform,"

on Saturday, November 7th, from 3-4 pm, in the Louis Stokes Auditorium of its Main Branch at E. 6th & Superior Avenue. Dan Moulthrop, the host of WCPN's "Ideastream" will moderate the panel, which will include Alan Elsner, the author of "Gates of Injustice" a 2004 book which focuses a spotlight on America's prison systems; Frank Shewalter, the warden of the Northeast Pre-Release Center, a women's prison located in Cleveland,; and Mansfield Frazier, the author of "From Behind the Wall" and the editor of the Reentry Advocate Newsletter. Free.

Holder from pg. 3

Violent crime nearly quadrupled. The murder rate doubled. And illegal drug use surged.

Many lawmakers in the 1980s responded by declaring, in rhetoric and through legislation, that we needed to get "tough on crime."

States passed truth-in-sentencing and three-strikes-and-you're-out laws. Some state parole boards became more cautious, while other states eliminated discretionary parole altogether. And the federal government adopted severe mandatory minimum sentencing laws, eliminated parole, and developed the federal sentencing guidelines.

That's not all. The federal government and the states spent billions of dollars for new prison construction to house the rapidly increasing number of persons convicted or sentenced under these policies. The results were dramatic. The number of inmates in American prisons increased seven-fold from 1970 to the present. Today, one out of every 100 adults in America is incarcerated – the highest incarceration rate in the world.

Holder continued on pg. 6

Fiscal Crisis from pg. 2

Introduction

As their 2009 legislative sessions ended, many states were still working to balance their budgets. Deficits that affected a handful of states in FY2008 had become widespread:

Forty-three states were facing an aggregate budget gap in FY2009 of more than \$100 billion, undermining funding for essential services such as education, health care, and corrections. More shortfalls were projected for FY2010, and at least

31 states had forecast budget gaps for FY2011.

The Challenges

1) These gaps would be even greater without the availability of federal stimulus funds.

Second only to Medicaid, corrections has become the fastest growing general fund expenditure in the country.

2) Two million three hundred thousand people in the U.S. are now in prison or jail—more than

one in 100 adults.

3) On any given day 7.3 million adults are under federal, state, or local correctional control (including those on probation, parole, and other forms of supervision)—one in 31 adults.

4) In FY2008, the most recent year data are available, states spent an estimated \$47 billion of general funds on corrections, an increase of 303 percent since 1988.

Fiscal crisis continued on pg. 5

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GCIRP from pg. 2

The proposed integrated reentry model that has emerged consist of pre-release planning, structured reentry, and long-term reintegrative monitoring and services. The target population will be men and women 18 years of age and older who are planning to reside in Cuyahoga County directly from prison or through community control facilities. Individuals with behavioral health needs and concerns identified at program intake will receive case management services through CFC, while individuals with no identifiable behavioral health concerns will receive case management services through our collaborative partner, Cleveland Community Reentry (CRE).

GCIRP's assistance to inmates returning to the community include: transportation; clothing, food, and amenities; financial resources; personal identity documentation; housing; employment, education and training; health care and

supportive services. By developing these public-private partnerships, GCIRP will: 1) execute a community model over the next three years that will provide comprehensive support services for more than 440 returning individuals (and 800 families), especially children, in Cuyahoga County; 2) repair and/or strengthen the bond between incarcerated parents and their children; 3) raise awareness of the challenges of Reentry and engage the community in support; and 4) advocate for broader system change that will create a stronger framework for supporting individuals returning to the County to reduce recidivism, crime, and cost to the community.

What makes GCIRP different than other reentry programs? There are a number of significant and impactful factors that this project will address for the individuals returning to Cuyahoga County. Experience (confirmed by Urban Institute Justice Policy Center

studies and others) has shown that certain approaches are effective in providing Reentry services and reducing recidivism, including: 1) pre/post-release support; 2) intensive case management for all individuals experiencing the trauma of incarceration (i.e. significant others, children, extended family members, and close friends); 3) an extensive wrap-around service provider network for all clients; 4) focus on the children of those persons formerly incarcerated – preventative strategies to diminish the cycle of incarceration; and 5) longevity – GCIRP is currently funded for three years by The Cleveland Foundation, United Way of Greater Cleveland - Community Vision Council, Cuyahoga County Department of Justice Affairs - Office of Reentry, and The George Gund Foundation.

All questions or concerns regarding GCIRP should be directed to Erika Forde, Project Coordinator, at eforde@c4fc.org or 216-325-9400.

Fiscal Crisis from pg. 4

They spent an additional \$4 billion in special funds and bonds and \$900 million in federal funds, bringing total corrections expenditures to nearly \$52 billion. With one in every 15 state general fund dollars now spent on corrections, officials have little choice but to look there for savings. In doing so, however,

they must be careful to find cuts that will not compromise public safety.

This report, based on a survey of enacted FY2010 state budgets and other recent sentencing and corrections legislation, found that at least 22 states have reversed the trend of recent decades and cut funding for corrections.

5) Lastly, the report examines the form of these cuts: reductions in operational costs, strategies for reducing recidivism, and reforms in release policies. It also highlights a number of innovations that states are pursuing for long-term cost reductions.

Next Month: The Effect of the Fiscal Crisis on Corrections

Holder from pg. 4

By 2007, the nation's violent crime rate had dropped by almost 40 percent from its peak in 1991. Few would dispute that the imprisonment of offenders has been at least partially responsible for this dramatic drop in crime rates.

But just as everyone should agree that incarceration is – and will continue to be – part of the answer, everyone should also agree that it is not the whole answer. And so, we at the Department of Justice will continue to put the people who threaten

our communities where they belong – behind bars. But we will also recognize that imprisonment alone is not a complete strategy for enforcing our nation's criminal laws, and we will act on that fact.

Next Month: Part III

The Citizen Circles Concept



Citizen participation and guidance is essential for correctional practices inside and outside institutions. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has embraced the needs related to offenders returning home

from correctional settings and as such one strategy is the implementation of Citizen Circles. The focus is on eight dynamic domain areas: employment, education, associates/social interactions, family/marital, substance abuse and community functioning, personal/emotional orientation and attitude.

They create partnerships that promote positive interaction and accountability for offenders upon release. Circle members address risks that contribute to criminal activity by taking ownership of the solution. It is an opportunity for citizens to communicate expectations for successful reentry and help offenders recognize the harm their behavior has caused others. Offenders are able to make amends and demonstrate their value and potential to the community.

Citizen Circles Locations

(Call for meeting dates and times)

The Euclid Avenue Citizen Circle Congregational Church

Kathleen Farkas
9606 Euclid Ave.
3rd Monday of every month at 7:00 pm
216.787.4900

East Cleveland

Andrea Graham
1850 Belmore Ave.
3rd Monday of every month at
5:00 pm
216.214.4254

Zion Chapel

Rev. Dennis Jonel
4234 Lee Rd.
3rd Monday of every month at
6:00 pm
216.752.2743

CEOGC

Medical Arts Building

Lewis West
2475 E. 22nd St.
(Lower level)
2nd Monday and Friday of
every month at 11:30 am
216.357.2621

Mt. Pleasant Murtis Taylor Center

Diane Coats
13411 Kinsman Ave.
1st Tuesday of every month at
6:00 pm
216.751.1085

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Reentry Advocate



COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS:

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To receive a copy of
Going Home to Stay

call First Call for Help
at 216.436.2000 or
go online and download
a copy at www.211cleveland.org/pdfs/communityreentry.pdf

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The editors are always interested in additional success stories.
Please send us an email at MansfieldF@gmail.com