

The Road to Reintegration

Goodwill Industries' Call to Action to Ensure Successful Re-Entry for Ex-Offenders

Position Statement

Goodwill Industries International, Inc.

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Abstract

As of mid year 2007, more than 2.3 million people were incarcerated in federal and state prisons, and local jails, and the U.S. Department of Justice has concluded that nearly every person incarcerated in jail, and 95 percent of state prison inmates, will someday be released. Yet ex-offenders are often released from prison without a transition plan and little more than the clothes on their back, a bus ticket home and a mandate to report to the local parole office the next business day. As the nation's largest provider of job-training services, Goodwill Industries is uniquely positioned to be a leader in the successful reintegration of ex-offenders and former prisoners into mainstream society. A number of Goodwill agencies already run a variety of programs that are designed to help ex-offenders and former prisoners find and keep jobs, and provide help for housing, substance abuse, and health and mental health issues.

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Executive Summary

By the middle of 2007, more than 2.3 million people were incarcerated in U.S. federal and state prisons, and local jails. Ironically, the so-called “Land of the Free” has the largest prison population rate in the world.

As the rate of incarceration has increased, local, state and federal budgets have increased exponentially. At a rate of \$62.05 per day, or \$22,650 per year, average state spending per adult prisoner outpaced the growth rates for state spending on health, education and natural resources. In 2005, more than \$65 billion was spent on corrections, up 619 percent compared to the \$9 billion that was spent in 1982. The cost of corrections will only continue to grow at this current pace unless key stakeholders come together to closely scrutinize our nation’s reliance on incarceration, consider alternative responses to crime and its prevention, and develop successful models for ex-offenders to integrate back into their communities.

The U.S. Department of Justice tells us that nearly every person incarcerated in jail, and 95 percent of state prison inmates, will someday be released. Of the nearly 700,000 prisoners who will be released this year, research tell us that two-thirds (67.5 percent) will return to prison within three years.

The financial impact on communities is significant when ex-offenders return to their communities, cannot find employment, violate their probation or parole, and are then returned to jail or prison. The communities from where recidivists are removed, often high-poverty areas, lose an estimated \$11.6 billion per year due to the lost potential earnings that these offenders could have earned had they successfully re-entered their communities and found legitimate employment. When we fail to help prisoners successfully transition back to their communities, we also spend an estimated \$15.8 billion each year to keep them in prison.

There are many barriers to a successful re-entry to public life, from drug dependency and low educational attainment, serious illness, debt, and limited work experience. Laws, regulations and systemic practices have also erected barriers for ex-offenders who are re-entering their communities and seeking employment.

While most returning prisoners return to the communities they left, in many cases these communities do not have the services or employment opportunities to support this population. “Most return to low-income, predominantly minority communities that have relatively few unskilled jobs... that pay very low wages and provide few benefits or chances for upward mobility. In these circumstances, many ex-offenders may simply choose to forego these employment options, in favor of illegal opportunities or more casual work.”¹

Because racial minorities are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice arena, systemic and legal barriers that keep offenders from successfully returning to their communities disproportionately affect the Black and Hispanic communities.

Helping ex-offenders to find and keep employment is clearly difficult work and should not be considered a panacea to the nation's growing corrections crisis. However, as the nation's largest provider of job-training services, Goodwill Industries is uniquely positioned to be a leader in the successful reintegration of ex-offenders and former prisoners into mainstream society. A number of Goodwill agencies already run a variety of programs that are designed to help ex-offenders and former prisoners find and keep jobs, and provide help for housing, substance abuse, and health and mental health issues.

- **Goodwill Industries believes that providing job placement and employment services to ex-offenders is a cornerstone toward building a prisoner re-entry continuum that holds offenders accountable for their actions, yet supports them when they return to their communities.** This is especially important as local, state and federal corrections administrators and policymakers have felt it necessary to take cost-cutting steps, including reducing literacy and job training programs in jails and prisons.
- **Goodwill Industries believes that access to safe and stable housing is another cornerstone in the prisoner re-entry continuum.** The experience of local Goodwill agencies that work with ex-offenders informs us that it is more effective to address ex-offenders' various needs once they have secured stable housing and found a legitimate source of income.
- **Goodwill Industries believes that until necessary steps are taken to help former prisoners attain and retain jobs, recidivism will continue to be an escalating problem that weakens families and communities, and stretches states' corrections budgets to the breaking point.** Goodwill seeks solutions that provide ex-offenders with the skills and the tools they need to find work, launch careers and rebuild their lives. By keeping ex-offenders and former prisoners from returning to a life of crime and incarceration, we can increase public safety and reduce skyrocketing corrections costs while better utilizing community resources to tackle other compelling issues.

The Need for a National Conversation

Goodwill Industries also believes the time is long overdue for a national conversation that scrutinizes and considers alternatives to the justice system's "get tough" response to crime, and policies that needlessly penalize ex-offenders and prisoners long after their sentences have been served. We recognize the need for legislative change at the state and federal levels to help address the problem of prisoner recidivism. Goodwill Industries calls upon key stakeholders including state and federal policymakers, judges, law enforcement officials, service providers (including local Goodwill agencies), educators, employers, and victims to come together to create systemic changes that hold offenders accountable, minimize the negative effects on their communities and families, and support ex-offenders and returning prisoners who want to re-enter society to make a positive contribution.

If our nation is to overcome the two-pronged challenge of rising incarceration rates coupled by high rates of recidivism, we need to build a national service continuum of programs for ex-offenders and former prisoners. We must have strong case management systems in place to “meet offenders where they are” while supporting them as they make their journeys toward making positive and legitimate contributions in their communities. While there are numerous pathways to becoming ex-offenders and former prisoners, the continuum consists of one, two or all three of the following actions:

- **Diversion** — Pre-sentencing diversion commonly occurs when the charged individual enters a plea agreement with the district attorney’s office. In exchange for entering a guilty plea, the individual is sentenced to participate in programs such as job training, substance abuse counseling, or any other activity designed to hold the offender accountable while addressing an issue that may have contributed toward his or her decision to commit the criminal offense. Upon successful completion of the programs, the charges against the individual are dropped.
- **Incarceration** — In many cases, the interests of justice and public safety demand that certain offenses result in removing offenders from their communities. Hopefully the corrections facility where the offender is incarcerated will have **general training** and **pre-release programs** available for the offender. Pre-release programs differ from general training because they occur when a prisoner approaches the release date. Pre-release programs are meant to smooth offenders’ transitions from correctional institutions to their communities by working with the offenders to develop plans — including housing, employment and participation in post-release programs — that will help them successfully re-enter their communities.
- **Post-release Programs** — Residential and community-based post-release programs represent the final phase in the national service continuum. Individuals may be referred to community-based counseling, job training and job placement programs, among other supports, that can help individuals who want to legitimately transition from incarceration to their communities.

Re-entry Challenges for Special Populations

The national discussion must take into account the effects of incarceration and recidivism on several special populations.

- The effects of a **parent’s incarceration** on children are numerous, including loss of financial support, social stigma, weakened parent-child relationships, poor school performance, increased delinquency, and placement in the child welfare system. These effects have long-term implications that can last long after ex-offenders have served their sentences.

- **Court-involved youth** face numerous barriers to re-entry. Many have physical, mental health and substance abuse problems. Many have children. Yet most have never graduated from high school, held a job or lived independently. And many are returning to communities where poverty, unemployment, homelessness, drug addiction and crime are endemic.
- Since 1985, the number of **women in prison** increased at almost double the rate of incarcerated men — 404 percent compared to 209 percent. Compared to their male counterparts, female offenders tend to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, suffer from mental health problems at higher rates, abuse drugs at higher rates, and are likely to have been sexually abused. Policies that ban people who have committed drug-related offenses from receiving public assistance or accessing public housing disproportionately affect female ex-offenders because women are incarcerated for drug-related offenses at a higher rate than men.
- Nearly all of the people who leave prison have a **physical health, mental health or substance abuse problem**. Furthermore, research finds that a significant number of returning prisoners have more than one of these health conditions — approximately four in 10 men and six in 10 women.
- Longer sentences, reduced use of parole, growing incarceration rates and a rapidly aging general population are commonly cited reasons for the **rapid growth of elderly inmates** in prisons nationwide. Many older ex-offenders may have physical and mental disabilities common to those experienced by the general aging population. When older prisoners are released from prison, especially after serving long sentences, they are likely to lack family support systems that are willing or able to help secure housing.

Opportunities Created by Federal Laws or Regulations

Re-entry programs such as those authorized under the Second Chance Act, the Federal Bonding Program, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit are useful supports for ex-offenders and returning prisoners. However, the experience of local Goodwill agencies that serve former offenders and prisoners informs us that these supports, while helpful, are not enough.

- **Second Chance Act** — In response to the nation's alarming incarceration and recidivism trends, the Second Chance Act of 2007 was signed into law on April 9, 2008. Authorizing \$330 million in funds over two years for re-entry programs, the Act represents a good first step toward addressing the national corrections crisis. Goodwill Industries was active in the efforts that led to passage of the Act, and now advocates for Congress to provide financial support for the programs and activities authorized by the new Act.
- **Federal Bonding Program** — While most employers purchase commercial Fidelity Bond insurance to protect against loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e., theft, forgery,

larceny and embezzlement), insurance companies will not usually cover “at-risk” employees because they are designated by insurance companies as being “not bondable.” As a result, at-risk job applicants are routinely denied employment. Only through their participation in the Federal Bonding Program (FBP) can they become bondable.

- **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** — The WOTC is an incentive for private sector businesses to provide on-the-job training and employment opportunities to people in nine target groups, including ex-felons who have been released for less than one year and who are known to have significant barriers to employment. In exchange for providing employment opportunities to people representing one of the target populations, employers may claim a federal tax credit.

Legal and Regulatory Barriers

- **Barriers to Employment** — Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act protects individuals from the denial of employment by certain employers because of arrests that do not lead to conviction unless there is a “business justification,” or because of a criminal conviction unless there is a “business necessity.” However, states, rather than the federal government, set most policies and legal standards governing the employment of individuals with criminal records.
- **Barriers to Education** — People who are incarcerated in a state or federal penal institution are not eligible to receive federal Pell Grants. In addition, people who are convicted of possessing or selling drugs while in school and receiving federal student aid are ineligible for any grants, loans or work assistance programs. In August 2008, this law was changed to allow these students to restore their eligibility if they pass two random drug tests.
- **Barriers to Public Housing** — While public housing could be a useful resource in providing housing to ex-offenders, local Public Housing Authorities often use the existence of a criminal background to automatically disqualify applicants. The law also grants the authority to public housing agencies to deny admission to public housing if it determines that an applicant or any member of the applicant’s household has ever “engaged in any drug-related or violent criminal activity or other criminal activity which would adversely affect the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.”
- **Adoption and Safe Families Act** — Under this law, states are required to file a petition to terminate parental rights for any child, regardless of age, that has been in foster care for 15 out of the most recent 22 months. In the meantime, states are also required to identify, recruit, process and approve a qualified adoptive family on behalf of these children. While the law simply aims to protect the rights of children by limiting long-term foster care placements, one of the collateral consequences is that the families of offenders are at serious risk of being permanently dissolved.

- **Loss of Voting Rights** — Prohibiting ex-offenders from voting has not been proven to deter people from committing crime. Instead, it disproportionately disenfranchises racial minorities and the high-poverty communities in which they live by ensuring that their important issues remain low priorities among legislators who need not concern themselves about the issues of non-voters.
- **Military Eligibility** — Ex-offenders, particularly those who complete their sentences at a relatively young age, may look to the military for stability and as a resource that would teach them discipline while offering valuable hands-on training and educational benefits once they complete their service. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding an individual's conviction, if the military believes a person has committed a serious felony or a number of other serious offenses, the person is not eligible to serve in the military.

Recommendations

Systemic and Local Level

- **A National Service Continuum for Ex-Offenders and Returning Prisoners**
 - Improve the connection between corrections and social services agencies.
 - Encourage workforce agencies to implement strategies that take the needs of ex-offenders into account.
 - Work with local stakeholders to build a social service network to connect ex-offenders to pre- and post-release supportive services such as treatment, counseling, housing assistance, education (including GED and ESL), and job training and placement.
 - Ensure that there are resources in the community for people who have committed crimes against people.
- **Employers**
 - Encourage employers, including Goodwill agencies, to offer appropriate employment opportunities that could be filled by ex-offenders.
 - Provide technical assistance to these employers to ensure that they understand their liability and appropriately place ex-offenders.
 - Unless it is relevant to the available position, discourage employers, including municipal and state governments, from asking for arrest and conviction information on employment applications.

- **Housing**

- Urge local housing authorities to implement procedures that allow case-by-case decisions about whether to deny access to public housing for people who have been convicted or who are related to people who have been convicted of drug-related crimes.
- Work with drug offenders to ensure that they successfully complete drug rehabilitation programs, and work with public housing authorities to ensure that their completion and subsequent public housing eligibility are quickly recognized.

- **Education**

- Improve access to education by encouraging community colleges to offer classes during non-traditional hours, and/or distance-learning opportunities.
- Encourage universities to restore scholarships that were revoked due to a criminal conviction.

- **Corrections**

- Reduce barriers to prisoner-family contact.

- **Military Service**

- Educate ex-offenders about military restrictions while encouraging those who may qualify to serve to work with recruiters.

State Level

- **Prisoner Re-entry Preparation**

- Require prisons to provide assistance and adequate planning time to inmates who will soon be released.
- Require prisons and jails to provide access to GED and ESL programs, substance abuse treatment, counseling, vocational rehabilitation and job training.
- Prohibit jails and prisons from releasing inmates without identification, such as driver's licenses, government ID cards and social security cards.

- **Job Training**

- Allow participation in job training to count toward work requirements if mandated by parole.

- **Employment and Career Opportunities**

- Create incentives for employers who hire ex-offenders.
- Target professional prohibitions to prevent ex-offender access to circumstances related to their crimes.

- **Minimize Financial Disincentives for Finding Legitimate Employment**
 - Pass through all child support payments to families.
 - Set realistic support and restitution orders.
 - Automatically suspend child support obligation or set orders at zero during incarceration.
 - Provide information to parents and families during the prison intake process.

- **Expungement**
 - Implement a process that allows people to correct inaccuracies in their criminal background records.
 - Allow non-violent ex-offenders to petition the state to expunge or seal their criminal records after a reasonable amount of time without a conviction.

- **Sentencing**
 - Increase alternatives to incarceration, such as diversion.
 - Reconsider state mandatory minimums and adultification laws. Give judges the flexibility and tools they need to identify offenders who would respond to sentences that hold them accountable for their crimes while minimizing the negative affects associated with their incarceration.

- **Transportation**
 - Repeal laws — such as banning driver’s licenses — that limit ex-offenders’ access to job opportunities.

- **Voting Rights**
 - Restore voting rights to ex-offenders and former prisoners.

Federal Level

- Appropriate the full authorization level for the Second Chance Act.
- Create incentives for One-Stop operators to make pre-release contact with prisoners.
- Work Incentives — Expand financial incentives for ex-offenders to accept low-wage jobs.
- Employers — Improve and publicize the federal bonding and tax credit programs to assist employers who hire individuals with criminal records.
- Education — Restore Pell grants to some prisoners. Support alternative education programs that serve ex-offenders. Provide incentives to community colleges and universities to accommodate ex-offenders who want to improve their education.
- Family Strengthening — Protect children, yet be judicious when implementing policies, such as terminating parental rights, that prevent families from reunifying.

Recommendations for Goodwill Agencies and Other Social Service Providers

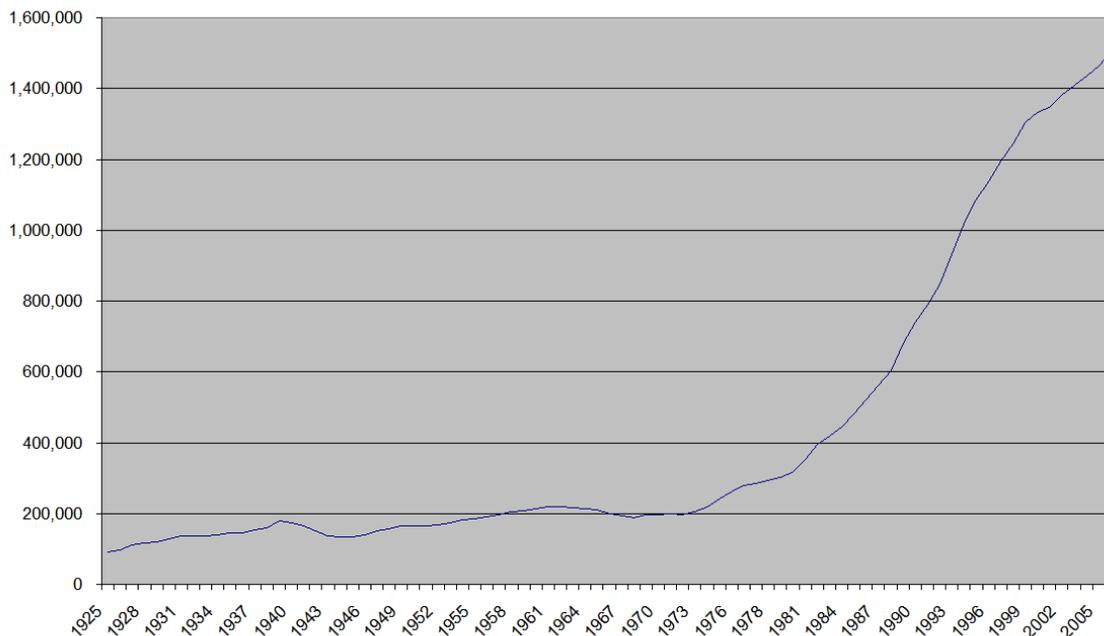
- Learn about serving ex-offenders.
- Offer ESL and GED programs.
- Offer soft-skills training that helps families reconnect.
- Provide support that helps re-entering parents to care for their children after they are released.
- Reach out to the administrators of jails and prison in your territories to offer supports for prisoners that will prepare them for their release.
- Educate other service providers about serving ex-offenders and former prisoners.
- Build and strengthen relationships with stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Learn about and get involved in existing local, state, and federal efforts to promote systemic and legislative change.
- Suggest including legislative proposals on state and regional associations' legislative agendas to address barriers faced by ex-offenders and former prisoners.

The Problem of Ex-Offenders Re-Entering Society

In the 1970s, American corrections and sentencing policy shifted from a treatment-oriented model to a deterrent model that relied on fixed sentences meant to intimidate people from committing crime in the first place while incapacitating people who commit crimes. Since 1972, the number of people incarcerated in federal and state prisons has steadily increased by an alarming 666 percent — from 196,092 in 1972² to 1,595,034 in 2007.³ In addition to the nearly 1.6 million people who are incarcerated in prisons, another 766,010 people are currently incarcerated in local jails.⁴ The result? As of mid year 2007, more than 2.3 million people are currently incarcerated in federal and state prisons, and local jails.⁵

Ironically, the United States, the so-called “Land of the Free,” has the largest prison population rate in the world (738 per 100,000 in 2005), followed by Russia (611 per 100,000). With approximately 2.3 million people incarcerated in the nation’s jails and prisons, the United States incarcerates more people than any other country in the world, soundly beating second-ranked China, which has more than 1.5 million of its people serving sentences.⁶

**Number of Sentenced Prisoners
Under Federal and State Correctional Jurisdiction (1925-2006)**



Source: <http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/pdf/t6282006.pdf>.

Most people who are incarcerated in the United States are serving sentences for crimes that are not among the offenses used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program to calculate violent crime rates.⁷ Only 3.3 percent of federal inmates,⁸ 52.1 percent of state prison inmates,⁹ and 21.6 percent of

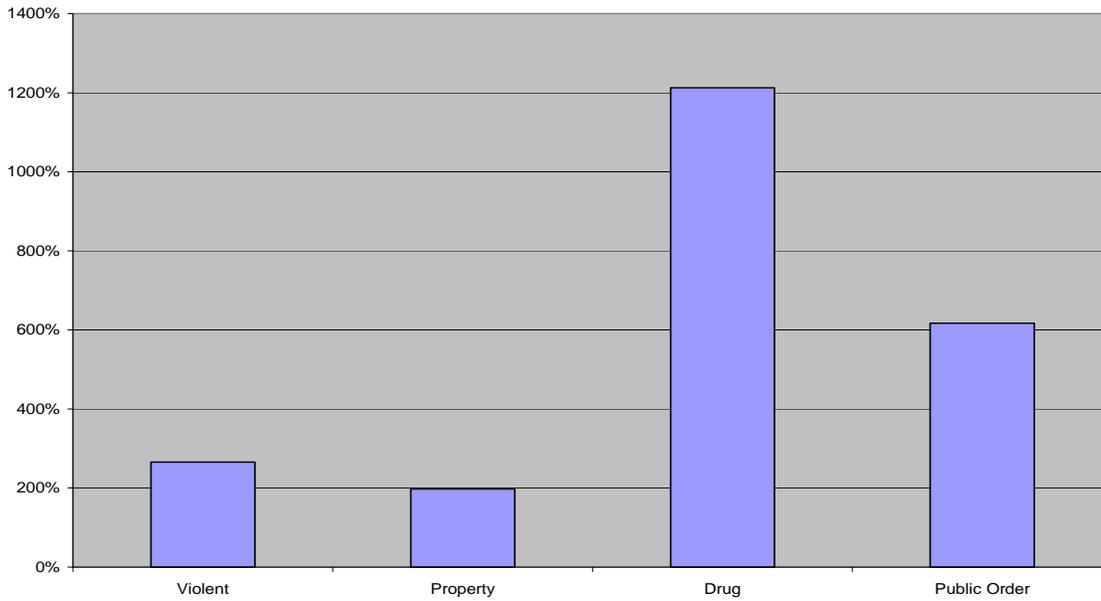
convicted jail inmates¹⁰ are serving sentences for violent crimes. Data available from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) indicates that the violent crime rate has consistently declined since 1994,¹¹ and in 2005, was at the lowest level ever recorded.¹² The picture is much different from behind bars. In 1980, 173,300 people were incarcerated in state prisons for violent crimes. In 2004, that number had increased by 266 percent to 633,700 people.

BJS data show that other crime, such as property crime, is at levels well below the peaks seen years before.¹³ The property crime rate, 154 per 1,000 households in 2005, is at its lowest level since 1974, when the property crime rate was 551.5 per 1,000 households.¹⁴ This represents a 72 percent decrease. Yet incarceration for property crime has steadily increased since 1993. Again, the reality as seen in state correctional facilities is much different. The number of people who were incarcerated in 1980 compared to 2004 — 19,000 compared to 265,600 — represents a 197 percent increase.

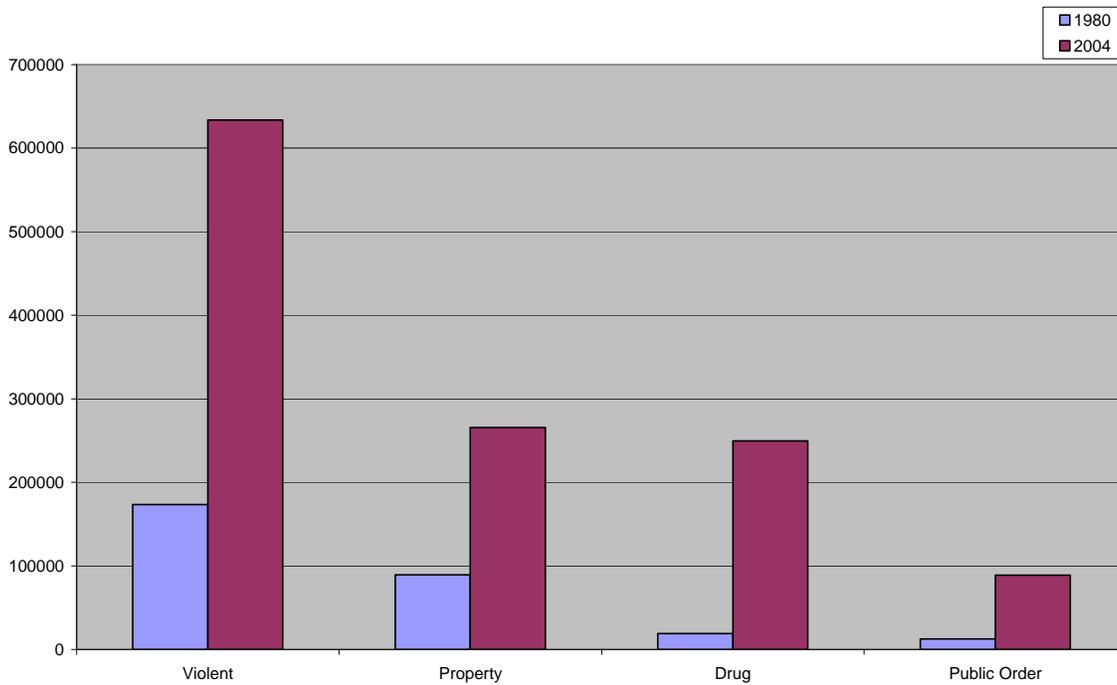
Without doubt, the data about drugs is the most shocking. The number of adults arrested for drug offenses increased by an astonishing 425 percent between 1970 and 2006, from 322,300 in 1970 to 1.69 million in 2006.¹⁵ Arrests steadily climbed until 1987, when the crack cocaine epidemic caused arrests to dramatically spike in 1988 and 1989, followed by an equally dramatic three-year decline. Since 1993, adult drug-related arrests have steadily increased and are at their highest level since 1970.

The arrest data for drug offenses pales in comparison to the increase in incarceration for drug offenses. In 1980, 19,000 people were serving sentences in state correctional facilities for drug offenses. In 2004, that number had grown to 249,400 people — a 1,213 percent increase.¹⁶ Furthermore, BJS reports estimate that 16 percent of jail inmates,¹⁷ 19 percent of state prison inmates and 16 percent of federal prison inmates admit that they committed their crimes in order to get money to buy drugs.¹⁸

**Proportionate Growth in Incarceration by Crime Category
(1980-2004)**



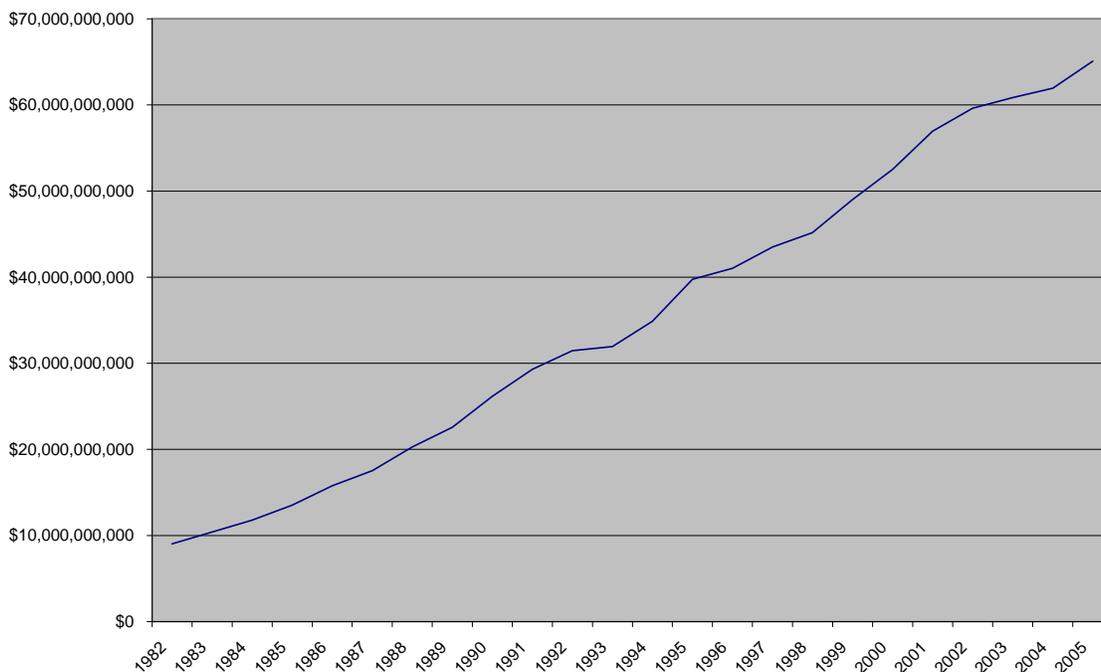
**State Incarceration by Crime Category
(1980-2004)**



As the rate of incarceration has increased, local, state and federal budgets have had to keep pace. Of the nearly \$57 billion spent nationally on corrections in 2001,¹⁹ state spending on adult prisons alone totaled \$29.2 billion.²⁰ At

a rate of \$62.05 per day, or \$22,650 per year, average state spending on adult prisons outpaced the growth rates for state spending on health, education and natural resources.²¹ In 2005, more than \$65 billion was spent on corrections, up 619 percent compared to the \$9 billion that was spent in 1982.²² The cost of corrections will only continue to grow at this current pace unless all key stakeholders come together to closely scrutinize our nation's reliance on incarceration and consider alternative responses to crime and its prevention.

Direct Expenditures on Corrections (1982-2005)



Being asked to do more and during fiscally tight years, local, state and federal corrections administrators and policymakers have felt it necessary to take cost-cutting steps, including reducing literacy and job training programs in jails and prisons. In the meantime, the U.S. Department of Justice has concluded that nearly every person incarcerated in jail, and 95 percent of state prison inmates, will someday be released.²³ In 2005 alone, state and federal authorities released 698,459 prisoners, nearly 45 percent of the total 2005 state and federal corrections population.²⁴

Over time, inmate access to programs — such as education, job training and counseling — has decreased. Often, ex-offenders are released from prison without a transition plan and little more than the clothes on their back, a bus ticket home and a mandate to report to the local parole office the next business day. Society expects ex-offenders to have learned from their prison experiences, even though they've been disconnected, sometimes hundreds of miles, from their families and communities. It's not enough for most. Research shows that most individuals who

have been released from prison will return to prison within three years of their release — 67.5 percent will be rearrested; 46.9 percent will be reconvicted of a new crime; and 26.4 percent will be returned to prison for a technical violation.²⁵

The financial impact on communities is significant when ex-offenders return to their communities, cannot find employment, violate their probation or parole, and are then returned to jail or prison. Nationwide, the communities from where recidivists are removed, often high-poverty areas, lose an estimated \$11.6 billion per year due to the lost potential earnings that these offenders could have earned had they successfully re-entered their communities and found legitimate employment. When we fail to help prisoners to successfully transition back to their communities, we also spend an estimated \$15.8 billion each year to keep them in prison. These already striking figures do not consider the lost earnings or costs associated with those who are released from or returned to local jails. In addition, these figures do not reflect the costs associated with individuals who have been found guilty, yet not initially sentenced to a serve time in a correctional facility.

Educational Attainment for Prison Population ²⁶		Median personal income ²⁷	Estimated number of offenders released ²⁸	Estimated number who will return to prison (67.5 percent)	Estimated lost earnings for those returned to prison ²⁹	Estimated annual cost for to incarcerating recidivists (\$22,650)
Some High School	39.7%	\$20,321	277,288	187,170	\$3,803,472,436	\$6,280,578,251
High School Diploma or GED	49.0%	\$26,505	342,245	231,015	\$6,123,060,904	\$7,751,847,212
Some Postsecondary Education	11.4%	\$31,054	79,624	53,746	\$1,669,041,328	\$1,803,490,984
Total	100.1³⁰		698,459	471,460	\$11,595,574,669	\$15,835,916,446

The costs associated with an individual's incarceration are multi-generational. The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that parents in U.S. prisons had close to 1.5 million minor children in 1999, representing 2.1 percent of the nation's 72 million minor children.³¹ Costing the federal government an average of \$15,914 each, some of these children will be placed in the foster care system.³² Worse, these children are six to 10 times more likely than the average young person to end up in prison.³³

Racial disparities permeate nearly every aspect of the criminal justice system. Racial minorities, particularly Black and Hispanic males, are disproportionately represented in prisons and jails. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Black males represent 6.5 percent while Hispanic males represent 7.8 percent of the total United States population,³⁴ yet they respectively represent 35.4 percent and 17.9 percent of the 2.3 million people in custody.³⁵ In 2007, the custody incarceration rate for black males was 4,618 per 100,000; Hispanic men were incarcerated at a rate of 1,747 per 100,000; and White men were incarcerated at a rate of 773 per 100,000.³⁶

Because racial minorities are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice arena, systemic and legal barriers that keep offenders from successfully returning to their communities disproportionately affect the Black and Hispanic communities. Such barriers include those to employment, housing, health care, public supports and benefits, and political participation. The effect can be seen in the recidivism rates. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, African Americans and Hispanics are rearrested, reconvicted and returned to prison at higher rates than White people.³⁷

Public Attitudes

Despite findings that crime has steadily declined since the mid-1990s, public opinion polls show that the vast majority of the American public believes that crime is a serious problem and getting worse. For example, a Gallup poll conducted in October 2007 found that 71 percent of Americans believe that crime in the United States was worse than it had been a year before.³⁸ In addition, a total of 57 percent of those polled responded that crime was very serious or extremely serious. Interestingly, only 51 percent of those polled responded that they believed that local crime was getting worse, with a total of 15 percent indicating that crime in their area was a serious or very serious issue.

The same Gallup poll found that a clear majority of Americans disagree with our current “get tough” approach to crime. Of those polled, 65 percent agreed that “more effort should go toward attacking the social and economic problems that lead to crime through better education and job training.” A limited focus group study conducted in March 2002 had similar findings in addition to several other significant nuances. First, the focus groups suggested that many Americans believe that “released prisoners face enormous obstacles, especially in finding meaningful work,” and that prisoners are more likely to recidivate if they leave prison with limited marketable skills and other employment barriers.³⁹ While the scope of the focus-group study was very limited, it also revealed a belief that “it is the community and ‘innocent people’ who are likely to pay the price if a former prisoner is not successful in turning his or her life around.” Furthermore, nearly all respondents in the focus groups felt that “helping former prisoners find meaningful work was the most crucial and urgent step” and a more effective way to help returning prisoners and protect communities from crime. “Many respondents appeared to think that not having such programs is just a recipe for more crime.”⁴⁰ Lastly, the focus group study suggests that the general public does not fully comprehend the extent of the barriers that ex-offenders face when they re-enter society. For example, many of the people participating in the focus groups did not realize that many prisoners cannot vote, and very few saw any point to this kind of limitation.⁴¹

Barriers to Successful Re-entry

One of the realities of the ex-prisoner population is that released prisoners do not simply scatter evenly across the country. Instead, they tend to be grouped in large concentrations in just a few locations. While most returning prisoners return to the communities they left, in many cases these communities do not have the services or employment opportunities to support this population. For instance, a 2004 report from the Urban Institute finds that only “one quarter of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the neighborhood in which they resided at the time of their post release interview was a good place to find a job.”⁴² Furthermore, an earlier Urban Institute report finds that only “24 percent of the organizations that provide a range of services to former prisoners are in the six neighborhoods that are home to the highest concentrations of returning prisoners.”⁴³

There are many barriers to a successful re-entry to public life, from drug dependency and illiteracy to serious illness and debt. Laws, regulations and systemic practices have also erected barriers for ex-offenders who are re-entering their communities and seeking employment. Harry Holzer, a Georgetown University professor and Senior Fellow at the Urban Institute, cites reasons such as limited education and cognitive skills, and limited work experience as causes for ex-offender employment rates and earnings that “are low by almost any standard.”⁴⁴ “Furthermore, most return to low-income, predominantly minority communities that have relatively few unskilled jobs... that pay very low wages and provide few benefits or chances for upward mobility... In these circumstances, many ex-offenders may simply choose to forego these employment options, in favor of illegal opportunities or more casual work.”⁴⁵

Many employers are wary of hiring people with criminal records due to concerns about lack of skills and limited work history, increased liability or theft. In addition, most states have laws that prohibit many people with criminal records from working in certain professions. Examples include jobs requiring contact with children, certain health services occupations and employment with firms providing security services.⁴⁶ While the Federal Bonding Program is available to reduce risks for employers who hire ex-offenders, focus groups of employers in Boston revealed that some employers feel that bonding cannot insulate them from the damage to reputation and client relationships that an incident involving an ex-offender employee could cause.⁴⁷ This limited research reinforces experiences reported by some local Goodwill agencies that provide employment services and job placement to ex-offenders. These local Goodwill agencies have suggested that promoting the Federal Bonding Program can cause a potential employer to feel that, bonding or no bonding, hiring an ex-offender exposes their business to additional risk. While most employers view the Federal Bonding Program favorably, the focus groups revealed that employers may give higher value to other strategies such as completion of transitional employment programs,⁴⁸ industry-specific job-skills training,⁴⁹ general work readiness training provided prior to employment,⁵⁰ and using intermediary agencies to help with job screening and retention support services.⁵¹

While many experts and researchers believe that there is a correlation between employed ex-offenders and reduced recidivism, a background paper done by MDRC notes that “there have been a few studies of [re-entry

models that provide coordinated pre- and post-release] to date, including two that used random assignment; the results were only somewhat positive.” Yet the MDRD paper notes that the research does not support the notion that “nothing works.”

Helping ex-offenders to find and keep employment is clearly difficult work and should not be considered a panacea to the nation’s growing corrections crisis. Goodwill Industries International believes that providing job placement and employment services to ex-offenders is a cornerstone toward building a prisoner re-entry continuum that holds offenders accountable for their actions, yet supports them when they return to their communities. Goodwill Industries International believes that access to safe and stable housing is another cornerstone in the prisoner re-entry continuum. The experience of local Goodwill agencies that work with ex-offenders informs us that it is more effective to address ex-offenders’ various needs once they have secured stable housing and found a legitimate source of income.

Goodwill’s Role in Helping Ex-Offenders to Successfully Return to Society

Founded in 1902 by Rev. Edgar J. Helms, Goodwill Industries has operated under the philosophy of “a hand up, not a hand out.” Goodwill collects used household items and clothing and sells them in retail stores, channeling 85 percent of revenues back into job training programs and employment supports. The primary mission of Goodwill Industries is still to assist people in the attainment of the skills they need to become successful members of the workforce. More than eight out of 10 people who come to Goodwill for help are low-income or welfare-dependent, including those with a criminal record. People who come to Goodwill for help often face a variety of barriers (including criminal records) that stand in the way of finding a job and advancing their careers.

As the nation’s largest provider of job-training services, Goodwill Industries is uniquely positioned to be a leader in the successful reintegration of ex-offenders and former prisoners into mainstream society. A number of Goodwill agencies already run a variety of programs that are designed to help ex-offenders and former prisoners find and keep jobs, and provide help for housing, substance abuse, and health and mental health issues. Some of these programs receive state or foundation support.

An increasing number of the clients served by Goodwill agencies have some type of criminal background. In 2005, for example, at least 97 agencies served 45,000 ex-offenders.⁵² Just two years later, 119 local Goodwill agencies in the U.S. and Canada served 82,132 current and former prisoners.⁵³ Local Goodwill agencies are increasingly working closely with probation officers, courts, jails, prisons, and other partners in the community to provide comprehensive services to ex-offenders and former prisoners who are trying to reintegrate into society. Recidivism

is an all-too-common trend that increases the burden on our communities and taxpayers; therefore, the ultimate goal of these programs is to reduce recidivism.

Goodwill Industries believes that until necessary steps are taken to help former prisoners attain and retain jobs, recidivism will continue to be an escalating problem that weakens families and communities, and stretches states' corrections budgets to the breaking point. As a leader in job-training services, Goodwill seeks solutions that provide ex-offenders with the skills and the tools they need to find work, launch careers and rebuild their lives. By keeping ex-offenders and former prisoners from returning to a life of crime and incarceration, we can increase public safety and reduce skyrocketing corrections costs while better utilizing community resources to tackle other compelling issues.

As a human services organization, Goodwill Industries understands that for ex-offenders and former prisoners to re-enter society, the following must occur:

- Job training and education (including flexible schedules to allow ex-offenders to get training while working);
- Safe and affordable housing;
- Pre-release support (GED preparation, counseling, etc.);
- Substance abuse treatment;
- Services for physical and mental illness;
- Employment and career opportunities;
- Transportation;
- Minimized financial barriers; and
- Alternatives to incarceration.

Goodwill agencies are positioned and have the tools to address crime and recidivism by providing:

- Prevention opportunities including GED preparation;
- Essential employment skills training that help families to reconnect; and
- Support that helps re-entering parents care for their children post release.

Call to Action

While political scientists debate the effectiveness of deterrence versus rehabilitation, America faces an urgent crisis after nearly four decades of rising incarceration rates and corrections costs. It is unrealistic to expect local, state and federal budgets to continue to keep up with the increasing costs of corrections.

Without a comprehensive strategy for successfully transitioning ex-offenders and former prisoners back into society, the national prison crisis will continue to grow. The time is long overdue for a national conversation that scrutinizes and considers alternatives to the justice system's "get tough" response to crime, and policies that needlessly penalize ex-offenders and prisoners long after their sentences have been served. Goodwill Industries recognizes the need for legislative change at the state and federal levels to help address the problem of prisoner recidivism. Goodwill Industries calls upon key stakeholders including state and federal policymakers, judges, law

enforcement officials, service providers (including local Goodwill agencies), educators, employers, and victims to come together to create systemic changes that hold offenders accountable, minimize the negative effects on their communities and families, and support ex-offenders and returning prisoners who want to re-enter society to make a positive contribution.

Goodwill Industries International recognizes that some local Goodwill agencies may be wary of serving or employing some ex-offenders. We encourage these local Goodwill agencies to:

- Learn more about working with ex-offenders;
- Embrace ex-offenders who want to successfully re-enter their communities;
- Promote supports for ex-offenders living in their communities, including pre- and post-release counseling and support, job training, job placement and family strengthening;
- Connect and coordinate with community-based organizations that provide pre- and post-release services to ex-offenders; and
- Employ ex-offenders.

These steps may cause concern about safety and liability. The ex-offender population, like many special-needs populations, certainly presents challenges that are unique to the population and must be reflected in programming. However, unless social service providers run background checks on each client served, it can be argued that these service providers are already serving an unknown number of ex-offenders and former prisoners whose criminal backgrounds present unique challenges.

All Goodwill agencies work to contribute to a better and safer society. Social service providers that operate programs designed to meet the specific needs of ex-offenders can contribute to the improvement and safety of their communities by preventing ex-offenders from committing new crimes, reducing recidivism, helping ex-offenders to learn job skills, employing ex-offenders and facilitating job placement with local employers.

The Service Continuum for Ex-Offenders and Returning Prisoners

If our nation is to overcome the two-pronged challenge of rising incarceration rates coupled by high rates of recidivism, we need to build a national service continuum of programs for ex-offenders and former prisoners. We must have strong case management systems in place to “meet offenders where they are” while supporting them as they make their journeys toward making positive and legitimate contributions in their communities. While there are numerous pathways to becoming ex-offenders and former prisoners, the continuum consists of one, two or all three of the following actions: 1) diversion, 2) incarceration, and 3) post-release programs.

Diversion

Some individuals charged with criminal offenses can be held accountable for their crimes without being incarcerated. Diversion can be imposed both pre- and post-sentencing and is the least restrictive option that the justice system may impose.

Pre-sentencing diversion commonly occurs when the charged individual enters a plea agreement with the district attorney's office. In exchange for entering a guilty plea, the individual is sentenced to participate in programs such as job training, substance abuse counseling, or any other activity designed to hold the offender accountable while addressing an issue that may have contributed toward his or her decision to commit the criminal offense. Upon successful completion of the programs, the charges against the individual are dropped.

Post-sentencing diversion commonly occurs when an individual is found guilty of committing a criminal offense. Rather than being removed from their community to serve a jail or prison sentence, the offender may be sentenced to do community service or to participate in programs meant to address factors found to have contributed toward his or her decision to commit the criminal offense.

Incarceration

Unfortunately, diversion is often not an appropriate way to hold offenders accountable for their actions. In many cases, the interests of justice and public safety demand that certain offenses result in removing offenders from their communities. In other cases, diversion — while perhaps appropriate — is not viable simply because diversion programs are not operating in the vicinity. Regardless, the offender is incarcerated in a jail or prison for a period of time.

Hopefully the corrections facility where the offender is incarcerated will have **general training** and **pre-release programs** available for the offender. Pre-release programs differ from general training because they occur when a prisoner approaches the release date. Pre-release programs are meant to smooth offenders' transitions from correctional institutions to their communities by working with the offenders to develop plans — including housing, employment and participation in post-release programs — that will help them successfully re-enter their communities.

Post-Release Programs

Residential and community-based post-release programs represent the final phase in the national service continuum and may be classified as secure or non-secure. Secure refers to circumstances where inmates are released from a correctional facility into the secure custody of a residential program. While they may be allowed to

leave the residential facility to work or participate in a program off site, these individuals are still under the jurisdiction of the justice system. They cannot leave the residential facility without permission.

Non-secure refers to circumstances where an individual is released from a correctional facility, yet opts to participate in a program that is in a residential setting.

Most offenders who are paroled or serve out their sentences return to live in their communities after their release. These individuals may be referred to community-based counseling, job training and job placement programs, among other supports, that can help individuals who want to legitimately transition from incarceration to their communities.

A National Snapshot of Goodwill Agencies Serving Ex-offenders

(For program narratives, see appendix.)

Program	Diversion	Incarceration	Post-Release	Unique Populations
Goodwill Industries of San Antonio (TX)			community-based	
Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey (Astoria, NY)		pre-release	community-based	children of incarcerated parents
Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh)		pre-release	residential work release and community-based	non-custodial fathers
Goodwill-Suncoast (St. Petersburg, FL)		pre-release	residential and community-based	women, youth, parents, and people with substance abuse problems
Goodwill Industries of the Columbia Willamette (Portland, OR)		pre-release	community-based	men, women and youth
Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake (Baltimore, MD)		pre-release	community-based	men, women and people with substance abuse problems
Goodwill Industries of Central Florida (Orlando)		pre-release	community-based	
Goodwill of Central Arizona (Phoenix)			community-based	youth
Goodwill Industries of Michiana (South Bend, IN)		pre-release	community-based	people with substance abuse problems
Goodwill Industries of Kentucky (Louisville)		pre-release	community-based	people with disabilities
Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana (Shreveport)		pre-release	community-based	youth
Gulfstream Goodwill Industries (West Palm Beach, FL)		pre-release	community-based	
Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin (Chicago)			community-based	
Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties (CA)	post-sentencing		community-based	
Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain (Great Falls, MT)		pre-release	community-based	women including those with substance abuse problems
Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit (MI)		pre-release	community-based	
Goodwill Industries of Central Michigan's Heartland (Battle Creek)			community-based	
MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries (St. Louis)		general	community-based residential	youth, women
Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota (St. Paul)			community-based	
Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont (Charlotte, NC)			community-based	
Goodwill Industries Northwest North Carolina – Asheville Division		pre-release	community-based	
Goodwill Industries Serving Southeast Nebraska (Lincoln)			community-based	
Goodwill Columbus (OH)		pre-release	community-based	youth

Re-entry Challenges for Ex-Offenders and Their Children

The high incarceration rates our nation is experiencing have consequences for the children and families of prison and jail inmates, particularly those who are minorities. The effects of a parent's incarceration on children are numerous, including loss of financial support, social stigma, weakened parent-child relationships, poor school performance, increased delinquency, and placement in the child welfare system. These effects have long-term implications that can last long after ex-offenders have served their sentences.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, between 1991 and 1999, the number of minor children in the United States who had a parent in a state or federal prison increased by 500,000 to nearly 1.5 million.⁵⁴ The Urban Institute estimates that this number has grown to more than 2 million.⁵⁵ Minority children are more likely to have a parent in a state or federal prison. While less than 1 percent of the White children in the country have a parent in prison, 7 percent of Black children and 2.6 percent of Hispanic children in the United States have a parent in prison.

In addition to barriers faced by all ex-offenders, those who are also parents often find it difficult to reestablish relationships with their children. Often parents are incarcerated more than 100 miles from their children in institutions that have high long-distance and collect-call phone rates that limit parent-child interaction. When parents return to their families, they often find that the family dynamic has drastically changed.

If ex-offenders' children have been placed in foster care, they may have lost their children altogether. At the end of 2003, more than 29,000 children, 6 percent of the total caseload, were placed in foster care because their parent was incarcerated, according to a report, *Rebuilding Families, Reclaiming Lives: State Obligations to Children in Foster Care and Their Incarcerated Parents*, which analyzed the most recent Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data. Because three states (Alaska, New York and Wyoming) do not report parental incarceration as a reason for placement in foster care, the number is likely to be higher.⁵⁶

Under the federal Adoption Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89), states are required to file a petition to terminate parental rights for any child — regardless of age — that has been in foster care for 15 out of the most recent 22 months. Yet according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, parents in state and federal prisons respectively expect to serve 80- and 103-month sentences. In the meantime, states are also required to identify, recruit, process and approve a qualified adoptive family on behalf of these children.⁵⁷ Unless their children are placed in foster care to live with extended family, incarcerated parents are at risk of having their parental rights permanently terminated by the state, and their children placed into permanent adoptive families.

Paying child support is another significant issue faced by many ex-offenders who are parents. Child support payments usually accumulate during a parent's prison term.⁵⁸ According to a policy brief issued by the Center for Law and Social Policy, most fathers enter prison owing \$10,000 and leave owing \$20,000 in child support

payments.⁵⁹ A study on the intersection between child support cases and incarceration in Maryland finds that “on average, those currently in prison owe \$22,048 and half of them owe more than \$15,930 in past-due support. The average amount owed by those formerly incarcerated is \$17,255 and half of them owe more than \$11,554 in arrears. The comparable figures for those never in prison are \$9,392, with half owing \$4,692.”⁶⁰ Furthermore, the study finds that “16.2 percent of the active child support cases in Maryland have a non-custodial parent who is currently (3.4 percent) or was previously (12.8 percent) imprisoned. [The link between incarceration and child welfare is more pronounced among children who receive or have received TANF assistance. According to the study, “the percentages of current assistance cases (28.9 percent), and former (22.0 percent) assistance cases with a currently or previously imprisoned obligor are two to three times higher than in cases where the children has never received welfare (10.3 percent).”⁶¹ For public policy makers and program managers these data suggest that when arrears accumulate during an obligor’s incarceration, they are more likely to be arrears owed to the state than arrears owed to the custodial parent.”⁶²

When Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) (Public Law: 104-193), it gave states the authority to decide how to deal with child support payments for people receiving public assistance. Child support payments to families receiving TANF are collected from the non-custodial parents by the states. States decide the amount of child support income it will ignore when determining families’ TANF benefits (the disregard), and whether to send an additional payment for child support (the pass-through).⁶³ Most states consider all child support payments as income when calculating families’ TANF benefits. Some states allow families to keep up to \$50 per month in child support payments. Only Vermont passes through all support collected (first \$50 is disregarded). Minnesota passes through all it collects up to a court-ordered amount (no disregard), while Wisconsin passes through the state’s entire share of the support collected (full disregard).⁶⁴

When Congress reauthorized TANF as part of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, it included incentives for states to increase the amount of child support that is passed through to families on welfare. Beginning October 1, 2008, the federal government will share in the costs of a \$100 per month pass-through for families with one child and a \$200 per month pass-through for families with two or more children.⁶⁵ Research suggests that using low child support disregards combined with high child support orders is likely to create a disincentive for low-income parents to participate in the formal child support system while encouraging fathers to find income sources that are not reported.⁶⁶ With declining TANF caseloads and federal incentives to increase the amount of support states pass through, more states are taking an interest in increasing the child support they pass through to children on TANF.

The main way that child support is collected is through payroll deductions. Under Title III of the Consumer Credit Protection Act, “up to 50 percent of an employee’s disposable earnings may be garnished if the employee is supporting a current spouse or child, and up to 60 percent if the employee is not doing so. An additional 5 percent may be garnished for support payments over 12 weeks in arrears.”⁶⁷

In addition to wage garnishment, some states revoke driver's licenses if parents are behind in paying their child support. For example, South Dakota denies drivers licenses if parents owe more than \$1,000 in child support. One temporary (six-month) license is allowed in these cases. Especially in rural states, such as South Dakota, the loss of one's ability to drive to work can be a significant barrier to employment.

Parents should take responsibility for their children, and paying child support can help minimize the damage that incarceration can inflict on the parent-child relationship. However, the reality is that heavy child support debt, coupled with up to 65 percent of an ex-offender's disposable income subject to garnishment, often creates a powerful disincentive to legitimate income sources for fathers.

Client Profile: Jason⁶⁸

Jason grew up in McKeesport, PA, with his mother, stepfather and two brothers. "My step dad was an [expletive]. We had no money, and we were on welfare," Jason says. "I remember that my mom would go without eating so we [Jason and his brothers] could eat." When Jason was 10 years old, a kerosene heater caused a fire in their house. Trapped on the second floor with his younger brother Kenny, Jason suffered severe burns to his face and arms and narrowly escaped with his life. His brother Kenny was killed in the fire.

Jason started to fall behind in school and subsequently had to repeat both the 4th and 5th grades. He grew angry and directed it toward his mother. He had difficulty going to school, especially now that he was classmates with Kenny's old friends. In the 9th grade, he dropped out. "I robbed houses and stole cars, but I was never caught."

Jason started smoking marijuana when he was 18, drinking heavily when he was 19, and selling crack when he was 20. By the time Jason was 23, he'd fathered three children with three different women. "I liked women, drugs and alcohol. When I was drunk, I was a horrible monster to be around."

Jason was required to pay a total of more than \$1,300 per month for child support, yet he was earning the minimum wage. "I was lucky if I was paying \$300 per month. Whatever I didn't pay was added to my arrearages," he says. As his arrearages started to pile up, Jason's paychecks were often garnished to the extent that it discouraged him from working altogether.

Because he was falling more and more behind on his child support, a family division judge would order Jason to appear at a hearing at which point the judge would order Jason to immediately pay a lump of his arrearages. "One judge ordered me to pay \$6,000!" he recalls. "I probably spent a total of seven years in jail. It was a never-ending cycle. I was totally trapped."

In 2002, Jason's apartment was burned. Jason went to live with his grandfather until he stole about \$80 in quarters from his grandfather to buy drugs and alcohol.

"I burned every bridge I ever had." With outstanding arrests warrants, no family left willing to help him, no incentive to work, and a nasty drug habit to sustain, Jason's life had deteriorated to the point where he was panhandling and living in the burned out apartment that he had once lived in.

"The last time I did drugs or alcohol was on June 5, 2005," he says. Two days later, Jason walked in to a nearby police precinct and turned himself in. Jason was sentenced to Goodwill Corrections Center, a community-based work-release program for non-violent male offenders, where he lived for five months. The Goodwill Community Corrections program gave him a \$25 credit (he has since paid it back) to purchase some clothes at the nearby Goodwill store. Next he was informed about Goodwill's reintegration program, which not only helped him with his job search and transportation, but provided legal assistance to modify his monthly child support payments and

address the nearly \$70,000 he now owed in arrearages. “Because of Goodwill, in an instant, my total child support payments dropped by more than \$1,000 per month to just under \$400!” says Jason. “Although it’s more now (about \$500) I am keeping up with my payments and am paying down my arrearages, which is now around \$60,000.” The Goodwill’s legal team also helped Jason reestablish his visitation rights with his daughter.

While living at the Community Corrections Center, Jason got a job with a local telemarketing company. Working while living at the center allowed Jason to save money so he could find housing upon his release from the center. Goodwill’s reintegration staff was concerned that Jason was at risk of becoming homeless if he was released directly into the community. So they helped him get into the First Step Recovery Home, a residential drug and alcohol program in McKeesport.

By the time Jason left First Step six months later, he had saved enough money to rent an apartment. “I’m not going to lie to you,” says Jason. “It’s not all peaches and cream. Life comes at you.” Jason recently hurt his back while working as an overnight stocker in the local Wal-Mart’s frozen food section. “I had to take pain pills when I was recovering, but I went off of them as soon as I could because I was afraid I’d get addicted again.” Jason is unable to work while he recovers, so he receives just over \$350 a month in TANF and food stamps benefits.

Prior to his injury, Jason was regularly earning about \$9.60 an hour and netting about \$1,100 per month. Whatever Jason earns in excess of his expenses he pays toward the \$1,100 fine he was ordered to pay when he was convicted of driving under the influence more than nine years ago. Although his license was suspended for only 18 months, until he pays the fine, Jason is not allowed to drive.

“I used to wake up and look in the mirror, and I hated myself. Now I’m proud of who I see. And I have so much further to go; so much further that I want to go. I want to work and be productive.” Jason hopes that he will someday be in a position to help others as the staff at the Goodwill reintegration program helped him. In fact, the program’s staff is currently helping Jason to finish his GED while looking for scholarships or financial aid that will allow him to go to a nearby four-year university to study criminology or social work.

Re-entry Challenges Faced by Youthful Ex-Offenders

Experts estimate that approximately 200,000 young people under the age of 24 are released each year from state or federal prisons or equivalent custodial facilities in the juvenile justice system.⁶⁹ Court-involved youth have a wide range of experiences when they come into contact with the justice system. They may be placed on probation, assigned to a community corrections program, committed to a secure residential correctional facility, and subsequently put in aftercare.⁷⁰ While most youth under the age of 18 fall under the jurisdiction of their state’s juvenile justice system, some are tried, sentenced and incarcerated in the state’s adult criminal justice system.

Court-involved youth face numerous barriers to re-entry. Many have physical, mental health and substance abuse problems. Many have children. Yet most have never graduated from high school, held a job or lived independently. And many are returning to communities where poverty, unemployment, homelessness, drug addiction and crime are endemic.⁷¹ Those who have been convicted as adults have adult criminal records that may hinder them from accessing education or joining the military. Those who have been convicted of drug-related crimes are banned from receiving public assistance and food stamps.⁷²

Andy Sum, Professor of Economics and the Director of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, has lamented about a bleak trend in youth employment, in which the youth population is the hardest hit during economic downturns and the slowest to recover during times of economic growth. “Job losses for teens over the past eight years have been quite severe for nearly all major demographic, socioeconomic and geographic subgroups of teens,” Sum asserted in an April 2008 report.⁷³

While the job market has been bleak for the general youth population, the lack of jobs is a major issue for court-involved youth who often face employment barriers including low educational attainment, poor workforce preparation, poor social skills, and an absence of positive peer and adult role models.⁷⁴ Less work experience today leads to less work experience tomorrow and lower earnings down the road.⁷⁵

Client Profile: Hue⁷⁶

Hue emigrated from Thailand to St. Paul, MN, with his family when he was five years old. When he was 12, he followed in his brother’s footsteps by joining a local gang. “I did it because I wanted to belong to something. All my friends were joining gangs and I wanted to fit in.”

Hue soon started stealing cars and selling drugs. He and his fellow gang members were also burglarizing houses and assaulting people. When Hue was 19 years old, he became concerned that as an adult he could be incarcerated for a long period of time if he was caught committing a crime. While he had dropped out of school, he had earned his GED. He asserts that he had stopped his criminal activities when he was arrested for a violent crime that he had committed when he was not yet 18 years old. As a consequence, Hue spent the next four years in the Minnesota Correctional Facility in St. Cloud.

While in prison, Hue worked in the print shop doing shipping and receiving. As his release date drew near, he participated in the prison’s pre-release class, which helped him to develop his resume and obtain identification. “When I got out, it was pretty hard to get used to the world again,” he says. “I lived with my parents before I was arrested, so I had to learn how to do things like paying bills and rent.”

Hue was released into a halfway house, where he was referred to the local Goodwill’s re-entry program. For the next three months, he was paid minimum wage while he learned interview skills, participated in job training, and searched for more permanent employment. “I thought about applying at Federal Express and Target, but I decided not to bother when I heard that they don’t hire people who have felony convictions.”

Although his criminal background was a potential liability, Hue got a lucky break. Just four months after his release, a local sporting goods store hired Hue for \$10 per hour to do shipping and receiving. “They actually asked me whether I had a criminal record. I told them the truth and said I’d prove to them that hiring me would not be a mistake.” Hue also works part time at the local Goodwill, earning \$7.50 per hour, receiving and sorting donated items. By working two jobs, Hue is able to live independently. “After paying rent and utilities, I’m just breaking even.”

Hue hopes that he will be able to buy a house in several years and to be in a position to take care of his aging parents. “I was still pretty young when I went to prison and I hadn’t established my credit before then, so I’m trying to build up some credit now.”

(Since Hue discussed his experiences with Goodwill Industries International, Inc. we have learned that he has been rearrested for a technical violation of his parole.)

Re-entry Challenges Faced by Women

Since 1985, the number of women in prison increased at almost double the rate of incarcerated men — 404 percent compared to 209 percent⁷⁷ — making women one of the fastest growing segments of the prison population. With more than 1 million women currently on parole, on probation or in jail or prison, women represent 18 percent of the population that are under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system in the United States.⁷⁸

Female offenders differ from their male counterparts in significant ways that should influence how practitioners design re-entry programs for women. Compared to their male counterparts, female offenders tend to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds,⁷⁹ suffer from mental health problems at higher rates,⁸⁰ abuse drugs at higher rates,⁸¹ and are likely to have been sexually abused, with nearly 70 percent of incidents occurring before they turned 18 years old.⁸² Female offenders (65 percent) are also more likely than men (55 percent) to be parents.⁸³

While both men and women are affected by policies that ban people who have committed drug-related offenses from receiving public assistance or accessing public housing, they disproportionately affect female ex-offenders because women are incarcerated for drug-related offenses at a higher rate than men. In 2004, 24,600 women — 28.7 percent of female inmates in state prisons, compared to 18.9 percent of male inmates in state prisons — were incarcerated for drug-related offenses.⁸⁴ Many female prisoners will return to states that ban people who have been convicted of drug-related offenses from receiving public assistance, such as TANF and food stamps. Many will also return to municipalities where the local housing authority prevents them from accessing public housing.

For the estimated 16,005 female parents who were incarcerated in 2004 for drug-related offenses,⁸⁵ these policies are likely to be a barrier toward reuniting them with their children. According to the BJS numbers in 2000, 41.8 percent of women in state prisons reported that transfer payments,⁸⁶ including welfare, Social Security and SSI, were their main income source during the month prior to their incarceration.⁸⁷ With fewer financial resources available, some mothers subject to the ban may be compelled to place their children in the care of others due to their financial inability to care for them. More fortunate mothers may be able to place their children in the care of friends or relatives. Some others may be forced to resort to foster care.⁸⁸

Regardless of their offense, some mothers who return from prison may have permanently lost their children due to provisions in the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA). Under the law, states may permanently terminate parental rights when a child has been living in foster care (exception for foster care arrangements with extended family members) for 15 of the last 22 months. Yet 10 percent of mothers in state prisons reported that their children were in a foster care home, agency or institution, and on average, mothers are incarcerated in state prisons for 49 months, with more than 55 percent expecting to serve sentences of 24 months or greater.⁸⁹

Client Profile: Sheryl⁹⁰

Sheryl Uribe started hanging out in San Francisco's Mission District, associating with gang members and smoking marijuana when she was in high school. By the time she was 18, she had dropped out of high school and was a single mother. She started using heroin and developed an addiction. She managed to stay clean for about two years during which time she worked in various retail jobs, earned her GED and took some classes at City College. But she then married a man with whom she started using heroin and crack again — this time for 10 years.

Sheryl was first arrested for drug possession, which resulted in her being court-ordered to participate in a diversion program. "I was able to use drugs the whole time I was in that program," she recalls. "They rarely tested me." She soon returned to her life on the streets of San Francisco. She developed physical problems due to her drug use and was arrested on numerous occasions for drug-related offenses. Her mother — now the legal guardian for Sheryl's daughter — moved to the East Coast.

Eventually, Sheryl was arrested in San Mateo County. After spending six months in jail, she was placed on probation and transferred into the custody of the San Francisco authorities to answer for outstanding arrest warrants in San Francisco. She was given probation and ordered to participate in a work program, but she never showed up. Two months later she was arrested on another drug-related charge, thus violating her probation in both San Francisco and San Mateo. As a first result, she spent six months in the San Francisco jail, where she participated in the jail's substance abuse treatment program called Sisters in Sober Treatment Empowered in Recovery (SISTER). She developed respect for a counselor who gave her a glimmer of hope and helped her to stop using drugs. Next, she was transferred to the San Mateo County authorities, who sentenced her to serve a 16-month sentence. While much of her time served was applied to her sentence, Sheryl spent three months at California's Valley State Prison for Women in Chowchilla. "Even though I stayed clean in prison, I thought I would die an addict," she says.

When Sheryl was released she started using crack again. During a surprise visit, her drug use was discovered by her parole officer. "He said, 'Sheryl, you have a choice. Go to a program or go back to prison.'" The next day, September 9, 2004, Sheryl was admitted to Walden House. "That was the last day I ever used drugs," she says.

After six months, Sheryl was released. While searching in vain for a job, she received approximately \$300 from the TANF program and stayed temporarily with a friend. "I had a criminal record, no clothes for interviews, and I felt really self conscious in front of prospective employers because I had lost most of my teeth," she recalls. "Nobody would hire me. I was ready to give up."

Tempted to start using drugs again, Sheryl visited her counselor at the SISTER program who referred Sheryl to Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties, which employed her as a transitional employee, paying \$7.75 per hour to work on its loading docks. "After getting that job, I set two goals for myself," she says with a big toothy smile. "Get my teeth fixed, and get hired onto Goodwill's staff."

After nine months, Sheryl was hired onto Goodwill's staff, first as a cashier and then assistant manager of the Goodwill's As-Is Store. She was named Employee of the Month nine times in a row. "In my 13 years at Goodwill Industries I have never seen a harder-working, more dedicated, more dependable, or more honest employee," says Sheldon Callum, manager of the As-Is Store.⁹¹ In October 2007, Sheryl was promoted to an employment specialist position, where she inspires clients who face similar obstacles that she's already worked to overcome. Clean and sober for three years, Sheryl is working to rebuild her relationship with her now-14-year-old daughter, who continues to live with Sheryl's mother.

In 2008, Goodwill Industries International presented Sheryl with its Achiever of the Year Award. Sheryl considers the key elements that helped her overcome her addiction and successfully re-enter society — caring people (including her mother, an officer in the San Francisco Police Department, counselors at SISTER and Walden House, her parole officer, close friends, and the people she works with at Goodwill); and the self-confidence and self-respect she gained from working at Goodwill.

Re-entry Challenges Faced by People with Health Problems (Physical Health, Mental Illness and Substance Abusers)⁹²

According to a report issued by the Urban Institute, nearly all of the people who leave prison have a physical health, mental health or substance abuse problem. Furthermore, the report finds that a significant number of returning prisoners have more than one of these health conditions — approximately four in 10 men and six in 10 women. “Policymakers and practitioners would be well served to adopt a new paradigm that recognizes health as a universal rather than a special needs concern among returning prisoners,” the study states. “Given that health problems influence re-entry outcomes, and that nearly all returning prisoners have health issues, an assessment of health needs should be part of each individual’s reintegration planning process.”

Barriers Faced by People with Physical Health Problems

According to the Urban Institute’s report, most returning prisoners (half of men and two-thirds of women) report having been diagnosed with a chronic physical health condition. One-fifth has reported having been diagnosed with a chronic communicable disease such as hepatitis, tuberculosis or HIV. While the report notes that most received some health treatment while in prison, one-third of men and one-quarter of women who had chronic health conditions reported that they did not receive treatment while they were incarcerated. Diseases that are most likely to result in treatment while incarcerated are diabetes, HIV and high blood pressure. Chronic health conditions that are less likely to result in treatment during incarceration include back pain, hepatitis and tuberculosis.

Both during incarceration and after release, these chronic conditions have serious public health implications if untreated or if treatment is interrupted. Even when prisoners’ health conditions are treated during incarceration, treatment is often interrupted when a prisoner is released because it often takes several months for Medicaid benefits, which are suspended during incarceration, to be restored. This does not mean that returning prisoners do not receive health care for their conditions. The Urban Institute’s report asserts that one-third of men and women reported that they visited an emergency room, and one-fifth reported being hospitalized. “Although respondents utilized health services after release, it appears that they sought care for acute episodes of illness and that continuity of care eroded.” Post-release, the Urban Institute’s research also suggests that health conditions of returning prisoners tend to decline.

Returning prisoners who have chronic health conditions experience homelessness at a rate that is similar to that of the general returning prisoner population. However, returning prisoners with physical health problems are more likely to experience difficulty sustaining their housing and tend to move around more than other returning prisoners. While returning prisoners with health problems are just as likely as those without to find employment in the first few months after their release, their employment rates are lower over time. If their health condition deteriorates, their physical health may make it more difficult for them to perform their work duties and, therefore, may have negative

employment outcomes. Returning prisoners with physical health problems also tend to engage in more criminal activity after their release than those who do not have physical health problems. However, while men with physical health problems tend to be returned to prison at higher rates, women with physical health problems — although they engage in more criminal activity — are not more likely to be returned to prison than women without physical health problems. On a positive note, despite similar levels and longer periods of substance abuse, male returning prisoners who have physical health problems tend to abuse substances at a lower rate than other male returning prisoners.

Barriers Faced by People with Mental Health Problems

Research shows that a disproportionate number of correctional inmates and ex-offenders have mental health problems. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (as of mid-2005), 56 percent of inmates in state prisons, 45 percent of federal prisoners and 64 percent of jail inmates had mental health problems. Female inmates had higher rates of mental health problems compared to males. Seventy-three percent of females and 55 percent of males in state prisons and 75 percent of females and 63 percent of males in local jails had mental health problems.⁹³

Research conducted by the Urban Institute also suggests that returning prisoners with mental health conditions have poorer employment outcomes compared to other returning prisoners, despite having had similar employment histories before their prison terms. Research suggests that post-release access to mental health treatment would help reduce the recidivism rates for people with mental health needs. While six out of 10 people receive mental health treatment during prison, research indicates that approximately half of these people stop treatment or cease taking their medication immediately after they are released from custody. The study's respondents reported high rates of health care utilization during their first eight to 10 months after returning from prison, yet only half reported that they received mental health treatment. This suggests that respondents with mental health conditions managed to receive episodic, acute care for physical or mental problems but were not able to maintain continuous treatment for their mental health conditions.

Cost and the lack of health insurance are often barriers to continuing mental health treatments. A report issued in 2004 found that having Medicaid benefits at the time of release from jail helps reduce recidivism for offenders with severe mental illnesses, "but Medicaid benefits alone were not enough to keep people with severe mental illness out of jail."⁹⁴ In addition to ensuring that individuals with severe mental illness have Medicaid, the study suggests that access to effective treatments, stable housing, employment and other community supports are needed to reduce recidivism for people who have severe mental illnesses.⁹⁵ Compared to the general returning prisoner population, returning prisoners with mental health conditions experience higher rates of homelessness, reduced employment outcomes, lower levels of family support and higher levels of criminal involvement.

Re-entry Challenges Faced by Substance Abusers

Research suggests that a large majority of returning prisoners have problems with drug and alcohol abuse. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, about 74 percent of state prisoners and 76 percent of local jail inmates who had a mental health problem met criteria for substance dependence or abuse.⁹⁶ Similarly, the Urban Institute's research found that most people in prison had reported using drugs (75 percent of men and 83 percent of women) or alcohol (57 percent of men and 55 percent of women) at least once in the six months leading up to their prison term. In addition, about two-thirds of all men and women involved in the study reported using illegal drugs or becoming intoxicated more often than once a week in the six months leading up to their prison terms.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that 16 percent of jail inmates,⁹⁷ 19 percent of state prison inmates, and 16 percent of federal prison inmates admit that they committed their crimes in order to get money to buy drugs.⁹⁸ Of the four crime categories on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's crime index (violent, property, drug and public order) incarceration for drug-related offenses represent the fastest crime category.

Clearly, crime prevention and re-entry strategies must include drug and alcohol treatment. Yet, despite the fact that most prisoners and returning prisoners have histories of drug and alcohol abuse, few receive treatment during or after incarceration. While roughly four out of 10 returning prisoners involved in the Urban Institute's study reported participating in some treatment services while incarcerated, only one-quarter of men and 14 percent of women reported participating in formal drug or alcohol treatment programs while in prison. The study also finds that participation in substance abuse treatment services dropped considerably after release.

Returning prisoners who are substance abusers face multiple barriers to successful re-entry. They often return to communities and families where substance abuse is a pervasive problem. Since drug use and alcohol intoxication can be parole violations, this puts them at risk of arrest and incarceration. Returning male substance abusers tend to report more housing uncertainty and mobility than others, while returning female substance abusers tend to experience homelessness at higher rates. Returning prisoners with substance abuse problems report that they are employed for less time compared to others. The research suggests that returning substance abusers manage to maintain employment for the first two to three months; however, by the time they have been out of prison for eight to 10 months, they report employment at significantly reduced rates compared to others. Due to this trend, among others, returning prisoners who are substance abusers are more likely than others to support themselves, at least partially, through illegal activities. These trends put returning substance abusers at an increased risk for arrest and incarceration.

Client Profile: Anita⁹⁹

Anita Quinones lived in Puerto Rico with her grandmother until she went to live with her mother in the Bronx when she was 7 years old. When Anita was 14, New York's Bureau of Child Welfare removed Anita from her home when it discovered that she had been sexually abused by her stepfather for the past nine years. While in the child welfare system, she lived in a number of group homes for adolescent girls in New York City and started experimenting with drugs and alcohol. She suffered a nervous breakdown when she was 21, and started heavily using crack cocaine. She was addicted for more than eight years.

Between 1991 and 1999, Anita was arrested numerous times and spent a significant amount of time in and out of jail. In the meantime, she gave birth to three girls. Due to concerns about Anita's mental illness, however, the child welfare system eventually took Anita's two oldest daughters (born in 1993 and 1994). Anita's parental rights were subsequently terminated and the children were permanently adopted by a family that lives in Rhode Island.

On November 29, 1999, Anita was arrested for selling crack cocaine. "I did it to support my habit," she says. As a result, she was incarcerated in three state corrections facilities (Bedford, Albion and Taconic). Due to her incarceration, Anita's youngest daughter (born in 1998) was placed in the child welfare system. Again, Anita's parental rights were permanently terminated. The child was adopted and the records sealed.

When asked about her experience in prison, Anita responds, "I wasn't a person in prison. I was a number, 01G0900... I spent most of my time in my cell." She was required to participate in a drug-education program, but individual and group therapy were not offered. When she did meet with the prison's mental health professional, they frequently spent no more than five minutes with Anita before changing her medication. She eventually attempted suicide, which resulted in her being placed under mental health observation in the prison's segregated housing unit.

Before Anita's release on December 15, 2004, a prisoner re-entry specialist from Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey, Inc. visited Anita and convinced her to participate in Goodwill's re-entry program. "If I hadn't had them, I wouldn't have made it." Upon Anita's release, Goodwill arranged for temporary housing before finding her a spot at the Bowery Residence Committee (BRC), a facility for men and women with mental illness and chemical dependence. She completed BRC's drug rehabilitation program. Goodwill also provided Anita with a therapist and connected her to other resources and supports for females returning to New York City from prison. She currently pays \$232 per month to live in Goodwill's Terrace Apartment building, which provides barrier-free housing for 200 families.

In addition to her mental health problems, Anita has a number of physical health problems including arthritis, asthma and an overactive bladder. She explains that Medicaid benefits didn't start for 45 days after she was released; therefore it was difficult for her to get her medication immediately.

"Now my challenge is to find a job," Anita says. "But when employers hear about my record, they don't want to have anything to do with me." Anita's mental health condition also creates barriers to employment. "I've had various jobs in restaurants and retail stores, but I can't handle being around too many people or too much pressure," she says.

While Anita struggles to find a job that accommodates her needs, she receives \$714 per month from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and \$162 per month from the Food Stamps Program. Because Anita depends on SSI, earning too much could affect her monthly benefit. "I worked part time for the Bowery Residence Committee for five months, but then I earned too much and my SSI check was reduced," she asserts. "I don't think I'm ready to work full time. So I'm looking for a part-time job that will allow me to earn as much as I can without affecting my SSI."

Having earned an associate's degree from SUNY Morrisville with a 3.11 grade point average, Anita would also like to resume her education someday. "I'm not too sure about all the pressure and the people I'd be around," she says. "Plus, all the medication I've had to take over the years has affected my memory."

Re-entry Challenges Faced by Elderly Individuals

Longer sentences, reduced use of parole, growing incarceration rates and a rapidly aging general population are commonly cited reasons for the rapid growth of elderly inmates in prisons nationwide. According to the U.S. Department of Justice's National Institute of Corrections, between 1992 and 2001, the number of inmates 50 years old or older in state and federal prisons nearly tripled, from 41,586 to 113,358.¹⁰⁰ Because the average annual cost of incarcerating elderly inmates is between \$60,000 to \$70,000¹⁰¹ — compared to \$22,650 per year for younger populations — the aging prison population is an increasing cause for concern among state corrections stakeholders.

While experts have not reached consensus about the age an offender must be to be considered “elderly,” many agree that prison conditions and long histories of substance abuse, alcohol abuse and smoking cause the aging process to accelerate for most prisoners. The National Institute of Corrections estimates that the average age acceleration for prisoners, age 50 and over, is 11.5 years.¹⁰²

Older offenders face a number of unique barriers when they re-enter their communities. Many older ex-offenders may have physical and mental disabilities common to those experienced by the general aging population. When older prisoners are released from prison, especially after serving long sentences, they are likely to lack family support systems that are willing or able to help secure housing. Furthermore, they are often ill-equipped to cope with life — including employment — on the outside. Without resources to help older offenders access health care, secure long-term housing or find employment, some may become willing to violate parole if they cannot find adequate housing and medical care.

Client Profile: William¹⁰³

William was 15 years old when he was adjudicated as a delinquent youth and sent to a detention center for boys in Arkansas. When he was 18 years old, William was released from juvenile detention angry, stubborn, and without a high school diploma or GED. “It [juvenile detention] was just a school for criminals,” William reflects.

By 1975, William suffered from alcoholism and felt disconnected from society. He stole a car and drove it across a state line. This represented the first of five criminal convictions — three that were violent — that would result in William spending a total of nearly 20 years of his life in prison.

William recalls that he usually worked when in prison. “I was able to save enough money to help me get a place when I got out.” He describes how he earned his GED and learned job skills, such as upholstery, while in prison in hopes that he could get a job after his release. “I’d look for work, but I just couldn’t get a job. Eventually I got frustrated and would start doing the things that would cause me to land back in prison,” he explains.

As William aged in prison, he observed that young gang members represented a growing part of the prison population. He became concerned that some may try to victimize him and that his response to such an encounter would add time to his sentence. “I just stayed in my cell more and minded my own business, but I’d try to help some of the young guys if they were open to my help.” he says. “They [younger inmates] called me ‘Old School’ or ‘Unc,’” he recalls. “I’d try to mentor them and urge them to improve themselves before they got out.”

On September 27, 2006, William was released from prison. He was 59 years old, tired, wary of the gangs in prison, and ready to change. He went to live in a halfway house for two years under intensive supervised release (ISR), which gave him 90 days to find a job. William got a job working in a local food processing plant. "I was making good money," he asserts. Unfortunately a misunderstanding caused a violation of William's parole. As a result, he was sent back to prison for more than three months and he lost his job. When William was released again to the halfway house under ISR, he asked an old friend he'd known in prison if he knew about any jobs. His friend told William to apply for a job at the local Goodwill.

When William started Goodwill's re-entry program in May 2007, he had a very spotty work history. He had cycled in and out of prison so frequently that he was never at a job long enough to maintain steady employment. Also, because he had violent convictions and a theft conviction on his record, employers were reluctant to give him an opportunity to prove his desire to change. "The re-entry program is a good program. They got your back." Through the program, William received employment services, job training, counseling, transportation assistance, food assistance, clothing vouchers and a transitional employment placement.

William's transitional employment assignment was at the Goodwill Outlet store in St. Paul — a kind of "last chance" store for clothing and other items that were not purchased in regular Goodwill retail stores. From day one, William had an extremely upbeat attitude, quickly becoming a staff favorite. Despite the many barriers to employment William faced, he did everything he could to keep a smile on his face and everyone else's.

In addition to having a long criminal record, William had his age working against him with potential employers. What work history he had was in industries like warehouse and production, which typically are amenable to hiring people with criminal backgrounds. But while William no doubt has the energy and commitment to work a physically-challenging job, his outward appearance suggests he might struggle. So William had to lower his expectations somewhat in order to find a full-time job. In late December, the Goodwill's job club helped William find a part-time job earning \$9 per hour canvassing for a national community-mobilization organization. Braving the cold and severe Minnesota winter, William walked door to door, conducting surveys, registering people to vote and circulating petitions.

He has moved out of the halfway house and is now living independently. He was recently promoted by the national organization into a full-time position and is now earning nearly \$13 per hour. He still has his job at Goodwill, but plans to stop soon. "Working two jobs doesn't give me time to eat like I need to. I'm a diabetic, so I can't eat too much fast food," he says. "I'll miss the good people." Aside from his diabetes, William asserts that he is in good health, but he worries about his access to health care. "Right now, I'm covered by Minnesota's health care plan, but I'm concerned that I may earn too much money to qualify for that now."

Opportunities Created by Federal Laws or Regulations

Re-entry programs such as those authorized under the Second Chance Act, the Federal Bonding Program, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit are useful supports for ex-offenders and returning prisoners. However, the experience of local Goodwill agencies that serve former offenders and prisoners informs us that these supports, while helpful, are not enough.

Second Chance Act¹⁰⁴

In response to the nation's alarming incarceration and recidivism trends, the Second Chance Act of 2007 was signed into law on April 9, 2008. Goodwill Industries was active in the efforts that led to passage of the Act, and now advocates for Congress to provide financial support for the programs and activities authorized by the new Act. Among the \$330 million in funds authorized by the Second Chance Act over two years for re-entry programs are:

- Up to \$55 million in FY 2009 and 2010 for existing adult and juvenile offender state and local re-entry demonstration projects.
- Up to \$10 million in FY 2009 and 2010 for the Department of Justice to issue grants of up to \$500,000 to entities including state, tribal and local courts; and state agencies, municipalities, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, territories and Indian Tribes that have agreements with courts to take the lead in establishing a re-entry court.
- Up to \$10 million in FY 2009 and 2010 for the Department of Justice to award grants to states, local governments and Indian tribes to develop and implement comprehensive family-based substance abuse treatment programs as alternatives to incarceration for non-violent parent offenders; and implement prison-based, family-based treatment programs for incarcerated parents who have minor children.
- Up to \$20 million in FY 2009 and 2010 for the Department of Labor to award grants to nonprofit organizations to provide transitional services to assist eligible ex-offenders (18 years old and over) in obtaining and retaining employment in coordination with One-Stop partners established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- Up to \$10 million in FY 2009 and 2010 for the Department of Justice to award grants to states, units of local government, territories and Indian Tribes to provide training to prisoners for technology-based jobs and careers during the three-year period before release from prison, jail or a juvenile facility.
- Up to \$15 million in FY 2009 and 2010 for the Department of Justice to make grants to states, units of local government and Indian tribes to improve the provision of drug treatment to offenders in prisons, jails and juvenile facilities; and reduce the use of alcohol and other drugs by long-term substance abusers during the period in which such long-term substance abusers are in prison, jail or a juvenile facility, and until the completion of parole or court supervision of such long-term substance abusers.
- Up to \$15 million for FY 2009 and 2010 for the Department of Justice to award grants to nonprofit organizations and Indian Tribes to provide mentoring and other transitional services to adult and juvenile offenders re-entering the community.

Federal Bonding Program¹⁰⁵

Employers often reject job seekers who have criminal records because they believe that these applicants may be untrustworthy. While most employers purchase commercial Fidelity Bond insurance to protect against loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e., theft, forgery, larceny and embezzlement), insurance companies will not usually cover “at-risk” employees because they are designated by insurance companies as being “not bondable.” As a result, at-risk job applicants are routinely denied employment. Only through their participation in the Federal Bonding Program (FBP) can they become bondable.

The FBP was created in 1966 by the U.S. Department of Labor as an employer incentive that guaranteed the job honesty of at-risk job seekers. The bonds issued by the FBP serve as a job placement tool by guaranteeing to the employer the job honesty of at-risk job seekers. Employers receive the bonds free-of-charge as incentives to hire hard-to-place job applicants. The Department of Labor experiment has proved to be a great success, with over 42,000 job placements made for at-risk job seekers who were automatically made bondable. Since approximately 460 proved to be dishonest workers, bonding services as a job placement tool can be considered to have a 99 percent success rate.

Bond issuance can apply to any job at any employer in any state, and covers any employee dishonesty committed on or away from the employer’s work facility. Any full- or part-time employee paid wages (with Federal taxes automatically deducted from pay) can be bonded, including persons hired by temp agencies.

When the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 decentralized job training and other employment and training services, the Department of Labor ordered a redirection of the FBP and required that state and local funds (including WIA and other Federal allocations) be used to purchase bonds. Any public agency or private community-based-organization or private industry group now can directly acquire bonds and deliver bonding services through purchase of a bond package in accordance with the Guidelines on the Purchase and Use of Fidelity Bonds issued by The McLaughlin Company. The McLaughlin Company serves as the exclusive agent for TRAVELERS, which issues Fidelity Bonds nationwide under the FBP. Fidelity Bonds can be purchased in packages of 25, 50, 75 and 100 bond units. Each bond unit provides \$5,000 employee dishonesty insurance for a six-month period. Costs for bonds cannot be charged to any employee or job applicant.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit¹⁰⁶

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is an incentive for private sector businesses to provide on-the-job training and employment opportunities to people in nine target groups, including ex-felons who have been released for less than one year and who are known to have significant barriers to employment. In exchange for providing employment opportunities to people representing one of the target populations, employers may claim a federal tax credit. The WOTC can be as much as \$2,400 for each new adult hire (must work a minimum of 120 days or 400

hours), \$1,200 for each new summer youth hire (must work a at least 90 days between May 1 and September 15), or \$9,000 for each new long-term family assistance recipient hired over a two-year period.

Legal and Regulatory Barriers

Barriers to Employment

Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act protects individuals from the denial of employment by certain employers because of arrests that do not lead to conviction unless there is a “business justification,” or because of a criminal conviction unless there is a “business necessity.”¹⁰⁷ However, states, rather than the federal government, set most policies and legal standards governing the employment of individuals with criminal records. According to the Legal Action Center, 45 states have no standards governing the hiring practices of private employers. In these states, private employers may deny employment to anyone who has been convicted of a crime or a certain category of crime.¹⁰⁸ The Legal Action Center also asserts that 36 states do not have standards regarding how public employers consider employment applications for people with criminal histories, while 29 states lack standards that govern the “relevance of conviction records for applicants for occupational licenses.”¹⁰⁹ It’s also important to note that most states allow employers and occupational licensing agencies to consider whether an applicant has been arrested even if the arrest did not lead to a conviction.¹¹⁰

Barriers to Education

People who are incarcerated in a state or federal penal institution are not eligible to receive federal Pell Grants.¹¹¹ In addition, people who are convicted of possessing or selling drugs while in school and receiving federal student aid are ineligible for any grants, loans or work assistance programs. Under the Higher Education Act, people who are convicted of possessing controlled substances are ineligible for federal student aid for one year after the date of their first conviction, two years after the date of their second conviction and indefinitely ineligible after their third conviction. People who are convicted of selling controlled substances are ineligible for receiving federal financial aid for two years after their first conviction and indefinitely after their second conviction.¹¹²

On August 14, 2008, President George W. Bush signed an act to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. The new law (Public Law 110-315) includes a provision that allows a student who is ineligible for federal financial aid due to drug convictions to restore their eligibility if the student passes two random drug tests.¹¹³

Further more, the new law authorizes the establishment of a program to fund state correctional education agencies, including pre-release facilities, to help eligible incarcerated people (males and females 35 years old or younger) to acquire educational and job skills.¹¹⁴

If Congress appropriates funds for the new program, it would help eligible incarcerated people acquire educational and job skills through 1) coursework to prepare students to take college-level courses; 2) the pursuit of a postsecondary education certificate, or an associate or bachelor's degree, provided by a regionally or nationally accredited body while in prison; and 3) employment counseling and other related services that start during incarceration and end no later than one year after release.¹¹⁵

Barriers to Public Housing

In addition to finding employment, ex-offenders need to find safe and stable housing if they are to successfully re-enter their communities. While public housing could be a useful resource in providing housing to ex-offenders, local Public Housing Authorities — in the interest of public safety and forced to decide how to allocate their limited public housing units to an overabundance of applicants — may use the existence of a criminal background to automatically disqualify applicants.

Federal laws and regulations outline public housing eligibility and eviction standards, including those for people who have a criminal background. While the laws and regulations grant broad authority to public housing agencies to determine who to prohibit or evict from public housing, the laws and regulations require law enforcement agencies to provide criminal background information to public housing agencies. Specifically, public housing agencies are required to deny applicants who have criminal backgrounds that fall under two categories: 1) an individual or a household member who has been convicted of manufacturing methamphetamines “on the premises of federal assisted housing;” and 2) an individual or a household member who “is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program.”¹¹⁶

The laws and regulations also require public housing agencies to deny admission to people who have, within the past three years, been evicted from public housing because they or a household member were engaged in drug-related criminal activity. However, the public housing agency has the authority to grant admission if it determines that “the evicted household member who engaged in drug-related criminal activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program approved by the public housing agency; or the circumstances leading to the eviction no longer exist (for example, the criminal household member has died or is imprisoned).”¹¹⁷

Public housing agencies are also required “to establish standards that prohibit admission of a household to the public housing agency’s public housing program if it determines that any household member is illegally using controlled substances, or if the public housing agency determines that a household member’s illegal use of controlled substances or alcohol abuse threaten the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.”¹¹⁸ When determining whether to deny admission to such applicants, the public housing agencies may consider whether the household member in question is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program.¹¹⁹

The law also grants the authority to public housing agencies to deny admission to public housing if it determines that an applicant or any member of the applicant's household has ever "engaged in any drug-related or violent criminal activity or other criminal activity which would adversely affect the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents."¹²⁰ After "a reasonable period," the public housing agency may require the applicant, as a condition of admission, to submit sufficient evidence to ensure that the applicant in question has not engaged in criminal activity during the reasonable period. The law does not define "reasonable period."

Food Stamps and Cash Assistance

In 1996, Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) (Public Law: 104-193), which replaced the federal entitlement program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), with a welfare block grant program called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). In addition to implementing a five-year lifetime limit (60 months) on the amount of time a family with an adult can receive federally funded assistance, and increasing work participation rate requirements on states in exchange for giving states broad state flexibility on program design, the PRWORA denies TANF assistance and food stamps benefits for certain drug-related convictions.

Anyone convicted of a federal or state felony for conduct that occurred after August 22, 1996 (the date the law was enacted) involving the possession, use or distribution of drugs is permanently ineligible to receive TANF assistance or food stamps.¹²¹ Households whose members are subject to this ban remain eligible to receive TANF and food stamps, although benefits are reduced as though the offender in question was not a member of the household. However, the income of the offender counts toward the household's income.¹²²

The law includes a provision that allows states to pass legislation that limits or eliminates the denial of assistance and benefits for certain drug-related convictions.¹²³ "The drug felon ban does not apply to Medicaid or to non-federal assistance that a state may provide through its own general assistance program or other separate state program."¹²⁴ According to the Legal Action Center, 17 states have adopted the federal ban without modification, 21 states have limited the ban in some way to enable those with drug felony convictions to receive food stamps and cash assistance if they meet certain conditions, and 12 states have eliminated the ban entirely.¹²⁵

Adoption and Safe Families Act

In response to reports about enormous foster care caseloads coupled with long-term foster care placements, Congress passed the Adoption Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89). Under the law, states are required to file a petition to terminate parental rights (TPR) for any child, regardless of age, that has been in foster care for

15 out of the most recent 22 months. In the meantime, states are also required to identify, recruit, process and approve a qualified adoptive family on behalf of these children.¹²⁶

There are three exceptions to this rule. First, states are not required to terminate parental rights if the child, while in the legal custody of the state, is in the physical custody of an extended family member. States may also opt not to terminate parental rights if doing so is not in the child's best interest. Lastly, a state that has failed to make an effort to reunify a family may not terminate parental rights.¹²⁷

While the law simply aims to protect the rights of children by limiting long-term foster care placements, one of the collateral consequences is that the families of offenders are at serious risk of being permanently dissolved.

Loss of Voting Rights

As many as 4 million ex-offenders with a felony conviction are not allowed to vote in a total of 35 states that do not automatically restore a person's voting rights when they are released from prison.¹²⁸ Of these 35 states, two permanently disenfranchise all people with felony convictions unless the government approves; eight permanently disenfranchise at least some with felony convictions unless the government approves; 20 restore voting rights upon completion of sentence including prison, parole and probation; and five restore voting rights automatically after release from prison and discharge from parole.¹²⁹

Prisoners who re-enter society should be allowed to fully re-enter and participate in the democratic process. When ex-offenders return to their communities to live, work and support their families, they become stakeholders in their communities' government. Prohibiting ex-offenders from voting has not been proven to deter people from committing crime. Instead, it disproportionately disenfranchises racial minorities and the high-poverty communities in which they live by ensuring that their important issues remain low priorities among legislators who need not concern themselves about the issues of non-voters. Furthermore, it sends an unintended signal that ex-offenders and former prisoners are second-class citizens and outcasts who have nothing positive to contribute to society.

Military Eligibility¹³⁰

Ex-offenders, particularly those who complete their sentences at a relatively young age, may look to the military for stability and as a resource that would teach them discipline while offering valuable hands-on training and educational benefits once they complete their service. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding an individual's conviction, if the military believes a person has committed a serious felony or a number of other serious offenses, the person is not eligible to serve in the military. This includes cases in which the individual was adjudicated in a juvenile court, and when records have been sealed or expunged.

If a person has a criminal background that makes them ineligible to apply to serve in the military, they may apply for a criminal background waiver. Criminal background waivers for individuals believed to have committed the most serious offenses must be approved by high-ranking members of the military branch in question. For example, Category 1 offenses, as defined by the Air Force, “may only be waived for entrance into the Air Force by the Air Force Recruitment Service’s Commander or Vice Commander.”¹³¹

In general, the following are among the conditions that will result in applicants being determined ineligible for enlistment, and waivers will not normally be granted:

- Criminal or juvenile court charges filed or pending against them by civil authorities; (Applicants with juvenile felony offenses who have had no offenses within five years of application for enlistment may be considered for a waiver in meritorious cases.)
- Individuals under civil restraint, such as confinement, parole or probation;
- Subject of initial civil court conviction or adverse disposition for more than one felony offense;
- Subject of initial civil court conviction or other adverse dispositions for sale, distribution or trafficking (including intent to distribute) of cannabis, or any other controlled substance.

Recommendations

Systemic and Local Level

- **A National Service Continuum for Ex-Offenders and Returning Prisoners**
 - Improve the connection between corrections and social services agencies.
 - Encourage workforce agencies to implement strategies that take the needs of ex-offenders into account.
 - Work with local stakeholders to build a social service network to connect ex-offenders to pre- and post-release supportive services such as treatment, counseling, housing assistance, education (including GED and ESL), and job training and placement.
 - Ensure that there are resources in the community for people who have committed crimes against people.

- **Employers**
 - Encourage employers, including Goodwill agencies, to offer appropriate employment opportunities that could be filled by ex-offenders.
 - Provide technical assistance to these employers to ensure that they understand their liability and appropriately place ex-offenders.
 - Unless it is relevant to the available position, discourage employers, including municipal and state governments, from asking for arrest and conviction information on employment applications.

- **Housing**
 - Urge local housing authorities to implement procedures that allow case-by-case decisions about whether to deny access to public housing for people who have been convicted or who are related to people who have been convicted of drug-related crimes.
 - Work with drug offenders to ensure that they successfully complete drug rehabilitation programs, and work with public housing authorities to ensure that their completion and subsequent public housing eligibility are quickly recognized.

- **Education**
 - Improve access to education by encouraging community colleges to offer classes during non-traditional hours, and/or distance-learning opportunities.
 - Encourage universities to restore scholarships that were revoked due to a criminal conviction.

- **Corrections**
 - Reduce barriers to prisoner-family contact.

- **Military Service**
 - Educate ex-offenders about military restrictions while encouraging those who may qualify to serve to work with recruiters.

State Level

- **Prisoner Re-entry Preparation**
 - Require prisons to provide assistance and adequate planning time to inmates who will soon be released.
 - Require prisons and jails to provide access to GED and ESL programs, substance abuse treatment, counseling, vocational rehabilitation and job training.
 - Prohibit jails and prisons from releasing inmates without identification, such as driver's licenses, government ID cards and social security cards.

- **Job Training**
 - Allow participation in job training to count toward work requirements if mandated by parole.

- **Employment and Career Opportunities**
 - Create incentives for employers who hire ex-offenders.
 - Target professional prohibitions to prevent ex-offender access to circumstances related to their crimes.

- **Minimize Financial Disincentives for Finding Legitimate Employment**
 - Pass through all child support payments to families.
 - Set realistic support and restitution orders.
 - Automatically suspend child support obligation or set orders at zero during incarceration.
 - Provide information to parents and families during the prison intake process.

- **Expungement**
 - Implement a process that allows people to correct inaccuracies in their criminal background records.
 - Allow non-violent ex-offenders to petition the state to expunge or seal their criminal records after a reasonable amount of time without a conviction.

- **Sentencing**
 - Increase alternatives to incarceration, such as diversion.
 - Reconsider state mandatory minimums and adultification laws. Give judges the flexibility and tools they need to identify offenders who would respond to sentences that hold them accountable for their crimes while minimizing the negative affects associated with their incarceration.

- **Transportation**
 - Repeal laws — such as banning driver's licenses — that limit ex-offenders' access to job opportunities.

- **Voting Rights**
 - Restore voting rights to ex-offenders and former prisoners

Federal Level

- Appropriate the full authorization level for the Second Chance Act.
- Create incentives for One-Stop operators to make pre-release contact with prisoners.
- Work Incentives — Expand financial incentives for ex-offenders to accept low-wage jobs.
- Employers — Improve and publicize the federal bonding and tax credit programs to assist employers who hire individuals with criminal records.
- Education — Restore Pell grants to some prisoners. Support alternative education programs that serve ex-offenders. Provide incentives to community colleges and universities to accommodate ex-offenders who want to improve their education.
- Family Strengthening — Protect children, yet be judicious when implementing policies, such as terminating parental rights, that prevent families from reunifying.

Recommendations for Goodwill Agencies and Other Social Service Providers

- Learn about serving ex-offenders.
- Offer ESL and GED programs.
- Offer soft-skills training that helps families reconnect.
- Provide support that helps re-entering parents to care for their children after they are released.
- Reach out to the administrators of jails and prison in your territories to offer supports for prisoners that will prepare them for their release.
- Educate other service providers about serving ex-offenders and former prisoners.
- Build and strengthen relationships with stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Learn about and get involved in existing local, state, and federal efforts to promote systemic and legislative change.
- Suggest including legislative proposals on state and regional associations' legislative agendas to address barriers faced by ex-offenders and former prisoners.

Appendix: A National Snapshot of Goodwill Prisoner Re-entry Programs¹³²

Goodwill Industries and Prisoner Re-entry

In 2005, the Goodwill Industries International Member Services Center began collecting information about Goodwill agencies in the U.S. that work with courts, jails, prisons and other community partners to help former prisoners make a safe and successful transition back into society. This document provides an overview of the innovative prisoner re-entry programs currently being implemented by local Goodwill agencies in the United States as of September 15, 2008.

As the nation's leading provider of job training services, Goodwill Industries is uniquely positioned to be a leader in the successful re-entry of ex-offenders into mainstream society and for feasible alternatives to incarceration. Long before the nation's growing corrections crisis reached epidemic proportions, local Goodwill agencies throughout the U.S. had been working with this population.

Goodwill members offer a variety of programs that serve ex-offenders, including job training, mentoring, housing, job placement and retention services, as well as support for substance abuse and mental health issues. In 2007, almost 120 local Goodwill agencies helped more than 82,000 current and former prisoners. The ultimate goal of these programs is to reduce recidivism.

Goodwill Industries of San Antonio (TX)

Goodwill Industries of San Antonio was named the top program in the nation for placing ex-offenders in jobs in 2007, serving more than 14,000 ex-offenders. The agency leads a collaboration of faith- and community-based providers in an efficient, seamless service continuum for non-violent offenders. Goodwill of San Antonio's "Learn While You Earn" project features transitional employment, job retention support and continuous case management, in addition to job placement, counseling, and referrals to alcohol and drug treatment facilities. In each of these service areas, the agency collaborates with other providers. The program gives non-violent ex-offenders a range of job-related and social support services designed to facilitate their re-entry into society.

Goodwill Industries of San Antonio was awarded three rounds of funding from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) for the organization's successful ex-offender workforce program: \$660,000 in its first year; \$656,000 in the second year; and \$550,000 in the third year. Goodwill Industries of San Antonio had the top enrollment in the country with over 800 individuals. Goodwill works with the following agencies and organizations under a non-financial arrangement: Texas Department of Criminal Justice, U.S. Supervision Office, the Texas Workforce Commission, Project RIO, Alamo Work Source, Family Services Association, Crosspoint, Inc. and Catholic Charities.

Contact: Clarke Mosely

Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey (Astoria)

Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey (Astoria, NY) operates several programs serving ex-offenders including: Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (PRI) – Project TEAM; Project TEAM Expansion (PTE); and Mentoring Children of Incarcerated Parents. The agency served close to 9,300 ex-offenders in 2007.

The Prisoner Re-entry Initiative – Project TEAM, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, targets non-violent individuals leaving state prisons. The program works in a close partnership with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, the New Jersey State Parole Board, and the Essex County One-Stop Center to provide an array of

services including pre-release services, case management, training, job development and mentoring. The program also includes a mentoring component. Mentors are recruited from faith-based and community organizations in addition to ex-prisoners who have successfully returned to their communities. Mentors meet on a bimonthly basis in group-mentoring settings to provide program participants with opportunities to feel a stronger connection to their communities. Mentoring helps improve the program's retention rate as it offers services that the client considers pertinent to their case.

Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey has plans to expand this program to include one-on-one mentoring. This program is not available as an alternative to incarceration.

Project TEAM Expansion is an extension of the PRI initiative and serves only individuals who are on parole after serving sentences for violent convictions. Funded through a private foundation, PTE offers pre-release services, case management, job development and retention services. It is located on site at Opportunity Reconnect, the Newark Re-entry Centre, and has access to the Parole Department, the Department of Corrections, and Legal Services (which assists New Jersey residents with any legal matters from traffic violations to child payment orders). PTE is also being expanded to serve an additional 150-200 participants.

The "Another Chance Initiative," to be funded by the end of 2008 by the State of New Jersey, will allow Goodwill to provide job coaching to individuals leaving prison and returning to the City of Newark. Approximately 80-100 individuals are expected to be served by this program.

Mentoring Children of Incarcerated Parents is a new program that aims to work with children in Newark who have incarcerated parents. While the program works with mothers and fathers, it targets its services to children with incarcerated mothers. Funded by a private foundation, the agency expects to work with 135 children over a three-year period. Mentoring Children of Incarcerated Parents offers group mentoring sessions and many fun activities for the children to enjoy.

Contact: Alexandra Fisher

Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh)

Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Pennsylvania serves individuals in the Allegheny County region of the state through a variety of programs including the Community Reintegration Program and the Economic Stability for Fathers Project.

The Community Reintegration Program is an intensive case management program designed to reduce recidivism by focusing on the goals of job placement and job retention. Services begin while individuals are incarcerated in the Allegheny County Jail and continue upon their release. The program offers assessments, job readiness classes, life skills training, conflict resolution, anger management and case management. Individuals work with their reintegration specialist to develop a service plan that will support successful reintegration into the community by addressing the domains of employment/training, health and wellness, family, basic life needs and housing. The Allegheny County Department of Human Services, through the Workforce Investment Act and the Human Services Development Fund, fund the program. The Allegheny County Jail Collaborative — whose partners include the Allegheny County Jail, the Allegheny County Health Department and the Allegheny County Department of Human Services — oversees the program.

The Economic Stability for Fathers Project is designed to help non-custodial fathers develop and maintain positive, active, financial, and responsible relationships with their families and children. The project works with non-custodial parents referred through the court system from the Allegheny County Family Division and the community. The project focuses on the outcomes of employment, employment retention and, if employed at enrollment, wage improvement. Individuals receive job readiness, job search and placement assistance in addition to intensive case management and legal education support. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and private

foundations fund the project. Partners include the Allegheny County Family Division and the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development and School of Law.

Contact: Mike Olack

Goodwill-Suncoast (St. Petersburg, FL)

Substance abuse treatment and work-release programs are essential as offenders restart their lives. Goodwill-Suncoast operates a range of programs that address these critical areas.

The **Suncoast Work-Release Center** serves female non-violent offenders transitioning from Florida correctional facilities. Women leave the state corrections facilities to live at a Goodwill corrections facility in St. Petersburg for three to nine months. While working at least 35 hours per week, participants receive assistance finding employment and attend counseling sessions and life skills classes.

The **Largo Residential Re-entry Center** serves non-violent male offenders transitioning from Florida correctional facilities. Program participants leave the state corrections facilities to live at a Goodwill corrections facility in Largo for three to nine months. While working at least 35 hours per week, participants receive assistance finding employment and attend counseling sessions and life skills classes.

The **Hillsborough County Residential Re-entry Center** is a residential work-release program for nonviolent offenders who are finishing their sentences in the federal prison system and/or are referred as a sanction for violation of their federal probation. The program's goal is to reintegrate program participants into the community. Participants live at the Goodwill corrections facility in Tampa while working in the community. The program is three to six months. During their stay, clients receive assistance finding and retaining employment and attend counseling sessions and life skills classes.

The **Community Partnership Program** is a six-month residential program serving non-violent offenders referred by the Florida Department of Corrections at the Goodwill corrections facility in St. Petersburg. For the first two months, participants receive intensive substance abuse treatment, working with Goodwill counselors to face the reasons for their addiction and learning to live drug-free. Participants receive job placement assistance and are also able to earn their GED. During the next four months, participants leave the facility each day to work in the community, and then return after work to continue treatment. After participants complete the six-month residential portion of the program, they begin the aftercare phase, in which they attend weekly counseling sessions while living and working in the community.

Intensive Day/Night Outpatient Treatment Program provides intensive, short-term substance abuse treatment for adult offenders who are in need of a more structured environment and assistance to deal with their substance abuse problems than traditional outpatient treatment, but who are not in need of residential treatment or prison confinement. The program, operated at Goodwill's Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Center in Tampa, consists of three, eight-week phases, during which participants receive intensive counseling and rehabilitation services while living and working in the community. Services include group and individual counseling sessions, assistance with employment, budgeting, interpersonal adjustment and referral to community resources. Participants attend four-hour sessions four times a week during Phase I, three times a week during Phase II, and two times a week during Phase III.

Juvenile Substance Abuse Intervention Services provides substance abuse intervention and education to adolescents who have been identified by the Hillsborough County school system, Hillsborough County court system or various referral sources as having substance abuse problems or being at risk of developing substance abuse problems. The six-month outpatient program operates out of Goodwill's Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Center in Tampa. Upon entering the program, individuals undergo an intensive evaluation and substance abuse intervention. Program participants attend weekly group sessions featuring discussion, films, workbooks and other

materials designed to educate them and prevent future drug use. Goodwill provides coordination with the court system, parents or guardians, legal representatives and the treatment team.

Outpatient/DUI Counterattack Program is a phased program, varying in length, designed to provide substance abuse treatment for individuals arrested in Hillsborough County for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol and for individuals seeking substance abuse treatment. Services are provided at Goodwill's Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Center in Tampa. Following an initial assessment, clients attend group drug treatment classes once a week for four, eight or 12 weeks, and attend individual counseling sessions once every two weeks.

Goodwill's Nurturing Parenting Program offers intensive services to families whose children have been removed from their homes. The focus is counseling and education in parenting, substance abuse treatment, anger management, life skills and educational assistance when necessary. Goodwill also provides vocational assistance to help unemployed parents find stable employment.

Contact: Chris Ward

Goodwill Industries of the Columbia Willamette (Portland, OR)

Goodwill Industries of the Columbia Willamette provides employment services to men and women nearing release from correctional institutions as well as at-risk youth in the states of Oregon and Washington.

Job Connection is a job search placement program that provides job-seeking skills training to men and women about to be released from correctional facilities to enter the workforce. The agency also provides direct placement services to individuals with a criminal record. Goodwill Job Connection staff conduct on-site visits to inmates at eight correctional facilities including the Columbia River Corrections, Coffee Creek Corrections, Multnomah County Jail, U.S. Probations, several Oregon state prisons and the Washington State Department of Corrections. The Job Connection curriculum offers several training courses to inmates on resume building, interviewing techniques, job search skills, and job search goals.

Job Connection's Youth Outreach Component networks with local schools to provide job search training to youth ages 16-20. The curriculum includes training in job search techniques, resume building, interviewing, first impressions, communications skills, conflict management and office equipment instruction.

Contact: Gary VanAllen

Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake (Baltimore, MD)

Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake has a long and successful history of working with low-skill and marginalized workers. Goodwill conservatively estimates that 30-40 percent of their clients in the Baltimore region have criminal justice involvement. In light of this, Goodwill has established several initiatives specifically designed to help ex-offenders make a smooth transition into their communities.

Supporting Ex-Offenders in Employment, Training and Transitional Services (SEETTS) was established in 2001 by the Baltimore Goodwill and the Metropolitan Transition Center (MTC) to specifically target ex-offenders returning to Baltimore City. Goodwill and the MTC worked together to design a pre- and post-release vocational training and case management system. One of two major components, seven weeks of job readiness training, takes place at the Metropolitan Transition Center. Baltimore City Community College provides pre-GED and GED instructors. The second component takes place at Goodwill's career center located in Baltimore and involves final job preparation and placement. The community component serves men and women who are on parole supervision or probation regardless of previous program involvement. Individuals who did not participate in the first component are required to participate in five to seven weeks preparation for employment.

SEETTS was evaluated by the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and rated as an effective re-entry program in its application of evidence-based practices aimed at reducing recidivism. In addition to the SEETTS program at the MTC, Goodwill also established a vocational training component at its headquarters on Redwood Street, which targets ex-offenders already in the community who continue to encounter barriers to employment. Individuals currently on parole are also eligible for training and assistance at this location.

Baltimore City Drug Treatment Court (BCDTC) Program began in 2006 as a collaboration between the Baltimore Goodwill and the Baltimore City Drug Treatment Court Program to help drug treatment court participants get off drugs and alcohol and back working in the community by providing job readiness training, life skills training and employment placement services to drug court participants. The Goodwill program offers a comprehensive set of services, including job readiness training, employment placement services, and a full case management program, to support DTC clients as they transition out of the criminal justice system and back into the community.

According to an evaluation commissioned by the Office of the Courts of the State of Maryland (AOC), over 95 percent of clients who completed the program were placed in transitional, temporary or competitive employment, exceeding the initial expectation of 40-80 percent of all referrals to Goodwill.

Contact: Phil Holmes

Goodwill Industries of Central Florida (Orlando)

Goodwill Industries of Central Florida offers an innovative employment-centered program for soon-to-be-released inmates through the Job Connection Center, housed at the Orange County Corrections Department's 33rd Street Jail.

The Job Connection Center provides an array of employment-related services including a computer lab, career and labor market information, and a resource library. The program is funded entirely from Goodwill retail revenues. Each qualifying inmate has the opportunity to meet with a member of the Job Connection staff, who conducts an assessment of the inmate's vocational assets and recommends appropriate vocational services. Prior to their release, inmates have the opportunity to participate in a multi-day "Job Club" to hone their interview skills, polish their resumes, and to receive encouragement and motivation to succeed. Inmates with limited work experience may be referred to Goodwill's GOAL program for short-term transitional employment.

Contact: Linda Rimmer

Goodwill of Central Arizona (Phoenix)

Goodwill of Central Arizona operates three innovative programs serving ex-offenders including Choices for Changed Lives, Transitional Jobs and the Maricopa Youth Alliance (MYA).

Choices for Changed Lives provides job readiness training, job development and placement, and support to maintain employment for individuals ages 18-29 who have recently been released from federal or state prison. The program is supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Labor. Goodwill provides work readiness training using the Goodwill Works program, module-based curriculum which includes soft skills, life skills and job preparation skills (resume preparation, interviewing skills, and job retention). Goodwill provides job development and placement services to each participant, as well as support after placement to help them maintain employment.

Goodwill's Transitional Jobs Program provides part-time paid employment, job readiness training, job development and placement, and retention support to individuals with barriers to employment, with an emphasis on ex-offender population. Goodwill Mission Services collaborates with two Goodwill retail locations to provide time-

limited (three to six months) part-time employment in a retail store setting. Participants receive support from an employment specialist to learn retail skills, while also receiving job readiness training, and job development and placement services. Once employed, participants receive support from their assigned employment specialist or job coach to promote job retention. Goodwill's Transitional Jobs program has fostered partnerships with local faith-based organizations that promote successful prisoner re-entry.

Youth Workforce Development Programs provide job readiness training, job development, placement, and educational support to youth ages 14-21. Goodwill works closely with three partner agencies including Arizona Call-A-Teen and Youth Resources, Child and Family Resources and Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development in metropolitan Phoenix to provide services to special populations of youth including youth with disabilities, homeless youth, pregnant and parenting youth, and youth offenders within the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County. Each partner plays a critical role in meeting the complex needs of youth. Within the partnership, youth are able to receive services that focus on employment, work readiness, occupational skills training and education support to complete their high school diploma or GED.

Youth are assigned a dedicated case manager who works with them one-on-one to assess their individual goals, strengths and obstacles to securing and maintaining full-time employment. In addition to a case manager, each youth also has the opportunity to be matched with an adult mentor, if requested. The program also has an academic enrichment program that offers GED prep, credit recovery and occupational skills assessment using computer-based and classroom instruction. Full-time Learning Center educators, with training in special education, work with youth using non-traditional classroom techniques for engaging and maintaining youth participation.

Contact: Sanzanna Lolis

Goodwill Industries of Michiana (South Bend, IN)

Goodwill Industries of Michiana serves ex-offenders with substance abuse problems throughout Indiana through the Access to Recovery (ATR) grant.

Access to Recovery is a joint venture between the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction and the Indiana Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives that provides vouchers for qualified adults to access drug and alcohol addiction services. The Access to Recovery target population includes people recently released from the criminal justice system, pregnant women, mothers, and users of methamphetamine. Access to Recovery services are available for adults that are at or below 200 percent of the poverty guidelines. Goodwill staff serves as Care Coordinators in the Access to Recovery Program. Goodwill Care Coordinators work with clients directly, helping them to identify the most appropriate services to aid them in their recovery from chemical addiction or dependency. Goodwill provides vouchers to the client to obtain Access to Recovery funded services and also helps clients connect with any related support services they need. Goodwill also provides follow-up services to help participants to maintain sobriety.

Contact: Debie Coble

Goodwill Industries of Kentucky (Louisville)

Goodwill Industries of Kentucky works with ex-offenders with disabilities referred from the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). An OVR counselor, assigned to Northpoint Prison in Burgin, KY, meets with prisoners near the end of their sentences or prior to parole. Ex-offenders are then directed to Goodwill for assistance finding a job. A Goodwill employment specialist provides case management services, helping participants find housing and other social services. The employment specialist also arranges for each ex-offender to have a psychological exam paid for by the OVR.

The OVR provides each client with transportation assistance such as a bus pass and a monthly maintenance check until they receive their first paycheck. The OVR also provides a voucher for clothes in a Goodwill store or Value City and if necessary, will pay for any work tools and equipment the participant needs.

Ex-offenders often learn about Goodwill's services through word of mouth. In such cases, the Goodwill employment specialist meets with those candidates to determine their eligibility for the program. Once the determination is made, Goodwill coordinates their enrollment with the OVR.

Contact: Sharon Duke

Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana (Shreveport)

Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana currently has two programs that serve ex-offenders. The Goodwill covers 26 parishes in north Louisiana and offers re-entry services to 10 parishes in northwest Louisiana.

The Community Youth Reintegration program, with funding from the Louisiana Office of Youth Development, serves youth and their families during the process of reintegration. Youth are referred while they are in detention where Goodwill begins working with the family and the youth preparing for the return. Prior to release, Goodwill staff begin working with the family teaching parenting skills, conflict resolution and communication skills. They also help the family by making sure the youth will have what he or she needs when returning home, such as clothes and a bed. Together, the youth, family and Goodwill develop a plan that includes school and work, treatment, and monitoring for when the youth is to be released. When the youth is released Goodwill works closely with the probation officer by meeting with them weekly and sending monthly progress reports. The program also hosts a monthly dinner for families, youth and probation officers. Training is provided at the monthly dinner. A newsletter is also sent out monthly providing parents information about community resource and parenting tips.

The Open Placement program is partially funded through United Way of Northwest Louisiana. The program serves anyone who is looking for employment. More than 50 percent of the program participants have criminal records of some sort. The program is free and often accessed by other nonprofits in the community. The program provides a one-day job readiness class and individual assistance from a job placement specialist. The program places about 450 people a year in community employment for 30 days or more and has a 74 percent 90-day retention rate. The local probation officers and bail bondsmen send a continuous stream of program participants. Judges often order clients to access Goodwill services as a "pre-trial diversion" method.

Contact: Julie Bass

Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin (Chicago)

Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago has long served families with wide-ranging services designed to help people with disabilities or economic disadvantages successfully find and maintain employment. Goodwill especially focuses its comprehensive employment support for ex-offenders, the deaf and hard of hearing and low-income young fathers.

The Chicago Goodwill serves clients who face various barriers to success, such as having a criminal record, lacking education or having a disability. Goodwill helps to address these needs not only with job training, but also with case management, connecting families to services such as child care, legal assistance and mental health therapy. Goodwill also provides transportation, clothing vouchers and guidance on expunging eligible charges from criminal reports.

Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago offers on-site services at two locations, downtown Chicago and in Englewood, a neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. The agency's offerings include job readiness classes,

retail and customer services training, job placement, counseling, on-the-job coaching and referrals to community resources.

Goodwill provides linkages to a broad array of resources and job retention support. Goodwill partners with the non-custodial unit of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for referrals and other needed services. Goodwill also has cooperative agreements with the Chicago Workforce Investment Board, Hospitality Academy, Chicago Urban League and Catholic Charities, as well as other supportive agencies that assist program participants in overcoming barriers to employment. Goodwill receives program funding from a combination of state, county, corporation, foundation, and private donations.

Contact: Vickie Coffey

Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties (CA)

Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties, Inc. manages the Back on Track program (BOT), a unique public-private, systems-change initiative that demonstrates the economic and social efficacy of offering career development alternatives for young adult drug sales offenders facing a felony and incarceration. Back on Track is the first program in the nation to use a Deferred Entry of Judgment (DEJ) in place of a felony conviction for narcotics sales.

Deferred Entry of Judgment suspends the criminal proceedings with a plea of guilty for qualified defendants for a period as outlined in the court-approved program. Upon successful completion of the program, the defendant is allowed to withdraw the guilty plea and the case is dismissed. If unsuccessful, the court imposes final judgment and sentencing.

Back on Track helps qualifying offenders successfully move out of the criminal justice system as they gain life and workplace skills, maintain steady employment, make contributions to their local community, decrease dependence on the street economy, and meet their parental responsibilities.

Throughout their enrollment, individuals receive intensive support and supervision through teamwork and shared resources. Back on Track participants are challenged to hold themselves accountable for their past crimes by giving back to their communities. After graduating from a rigorous 12-month program, all charges are dropped and each participant is either gainfully employed or pursuing ongoing education.

Goodwill collaborates with the San Francisco Office of the District Attorney, the Public Defender's Office and Private Defense Bar, the Superior Court, Child Support Services, and the Family Service Agency. Goodwill is currently designing a comprehensive independent evaluation with the help of the RAND Corporation and has obtained \$90,000 in grant funding from the JEHT Foundation and \$110,000 from the Rosenberg Foundation to support the evaluation.

Contact: Carlos Serrano Quan

Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain (Great Falls, MT)

Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain manages prisoner re-entry programs in Idaho and Montana including the Women's Re-entry Initiative, the Pre-Release Program, and day reporting services to the Idaho Department of Corrections.

The Women's Re-entry Initiative is a national pilot project partially funded through Public/Private Ventures (P/PV). The agency is the only research site in the nation that assists women ages 18-35 while they are in prison and as they transition into two specific regions of the state. This is a two-year program that focuses on assisting the women with all aspects of re-integration, including housing, state support services, clothing, and substance abuse and mental health treatment. The agency manages an advisory council that has prominent members of our community including a legislator, Department of Health and Welfare and the Idaho Department of Correction. The agency has applied for funding from the Idaho Millennium fund (Idaho's tobacco settlement) and United Way.

Pre-Release Program The agency operates a Pre-Release Program assisting men leaving Idaho's minimum-, medium- and maximum-security prisons. The agency's counselors meet with the men in the prison and create a re-entry plan. The agency also coordinates housing, I-9 documentation, and state support services for them. At the minimum-security prison, the agency provides services for individuals completing their sentence but not on parole. The prison funds the program.

Day Reporting Services in three regions of Idaho are managed by the Goodwill as part of a contract with the Idaho Department of Correction. Day Reporting is an employment-based program that assists individuals on felony probation and parole with finding and maintaining employment as well as accessing community resources. This three-year grant began October 2007.

Contact: Delanie Valentine

Goodwill Industries of West Michigan (Muskegon)

Goodwill Industries of West Michigan provides a broad range of prison in-reach, employment training, job placement, life skills, transportation, and support services for persons on parole and probation through the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) and the Michigan Office of Community Corrections.

The MPRI program at Goodwill operates solely with the Muskegon County Correctional Facility. Inmates discharged from the facility go to the MPRI InReach facility in Muskegon to participate in a two-month program consisting of behavioral management, financial classes and job prep classes. With a wrap-around transition team, they map out a plan for successful transition into everyday life. Once inmates complete the program, parole officers will recommend services to be provided by Goodwill. Goodwill staff, closely linked with the local parole offices, create individual plans for each prisoner, and work with families and communities to ensure effective parolee supervision and accountability.

Contact: Thomas Griffin

Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit (MI)

Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit operates two successful programs serving ex-offenders, Flip the Script and the Transitional Jobs Re-entry Demonstration Project (TJRD).

As transitional work programs, both place participants into temporary, wage-paying jobs while providing ongoing support and assistance. The temporary jobs provide former prisoners with much-needed income in the period just following release; they also allow program staff an opportunity to identify and try to resolve any workplace behaviors that may cause participants problems in a permanent job. After a few months in the transitional job, participants get help looking for a permanent position and then receive additional post-placement support.

Flip the Script works with inmates prior to and after release through a partnership with Wayne County Jails and Courts. The program targets minority males aged 18-30 providing them with an intensive curriculum centered on training and/or retraining participants in the critical areas of mathematics, reading enrichment, positive relationship

development, parenting skills and workplace ethics. Goodwill Detroit reports that 91 percent of the ex-offenders completing the Flip the Script program have not recidivated or had any serious contact with the criminal justice system since the program's launch in July 2003 through June 30, 2008.

Transitional Jobs Re-entry Demonstration Project (TJRD), modeled after Goodwill Detroit's Flip the Script program, prepares parolees to become role models and assets in the workplace and community by creating a network of opportunities including career development while including a spiritual focus. The TJRD project, launched in 2007, is the result of a partnership between Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, the State of Michigan's Corrections Department and the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI). Goodwill Detroit's program is partially self-funded with additional funding from MPRI and the Joyce Foundation. The TJRD project serves all parolees regardless of age or ethnicity in the City of Detroit and Wayne County.

The Wayne County Court 36th District and Circuit Court systems recently approached Goodwill of Greater Detroit to design the county's prison diversion program based on the Flip the Script program. Wayne County is Michigan's largest county and historically has the largest amount of prisoners returning to the community. Plans to replicate the TJRD program are still in development.

Contact: Keith Bennett

Goodwill Industries of Central Michigan's Heartland (Battle Creek)

Goodwill Industries of Central Michigan's Heartland also works with the MPRI. The Goodwill provides an eight-week paid transitional employment program to clients upon their release from prison. The agency's counselors begin the re-entry process by meeting with potential clients in prison for an initial re-entry planning session. Upon release, the participant is enrolled in an eight-week job readiness training session offered in a classroom setting. Goodwill also provides support services to participants including help obtaining identification documents (birth certificates, social security cards and driver's licenses), work clothing and tools.

The Battle Creek Goodwill has established relationships with a number of employers in the community who are willing to provide temporary employment to their program participants. As a transitional employment program, Goodwill serves as the employer of record, eliminating cumbersome documentation requirements for the employer. The MPRI pays half of the program participant's wages while the employer pays the other half. The employer is not obligated to employ the program participant, however, in many cases they choose to do so. The program is considered successful and will be complete its third fiscal year in fall 2008. The agency's program does not target any particular gender or age group. However, in recent months the agency has received referrals from the Michigan State Rehabilitation Association.

Contact: Carol Bush

MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries (St. Louis)

MERS/Goodwill operates several re-entry programs in the St. Louis area including Juvenile Offender Transition (JOT), halfway houses and community partnerships.

Juvenile Offender Transition is a diversion program, supported through public and private funds, that was developed in partnership with the St. Louis City Juvenile Court to address needs of youth under court supervision in the city. This program uses both facility- and community-based models. As part of pre-release services, MERS/Goodwill provides employment-related classes to youth at the detention center; these classes address job readiness skills as well as career exploration. In addition, intensive case management, vocational evaluation and counseling, skills training, and employment services are provided to youth released under supervision from the detention center. As part of their condition of release, these youth are mandated to take GED classes or complete

school, and to participate in Goodwill employment services. The agency works in partnership with court officers, the public schools and families of the youth. This program serves 80 youth per year.

MERS/Goodwill operates two **halfway houses** for women — one federally funded and one funded by the state of Missouri. The halfway houses are for women transitioning into the St. Louis area community. Pre-release case management and employment services are offered as part of the program. These programs serve over 150 individuals a year.

MERS/Goodwill also **collaborates with several area agencies** in a U.S. Department of Labor funded program offering wrap-around case management services to ex-offenders reintegrating into the St. Louis area. The Goodwill works with Area Resources for Community and Human Services to place federal and state felons being released from five different prisons.

Contact: Jeff Cartnal

Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota (St. Paul)

Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota provides services to ex-offenders through a variety of programs including Re-entry Works, the Prisoner Re-entry Initiative, the Minneapolis Employment and Training (METP) Adult Services program, and the Minneapolis Public Library job club.

Re-entry Works Project is part of a multi-state demonstration project funded principally by the Joyce Foundation. The goal of the project is to inform public policy officials about effective methods of preparing ex-offenders for stable employment, reducing their likelihood of committing additional crimes, and improving public safety. The program targets males 18 years or older who are released from a Minnesota State Correctional Facility within 90 days. This transitional employment program provides comprehensive services such as intensive case management services, skills training services, job development, and placement and advancement services, along with many support services. Many Re-entry Works participants also take advantage of Goodwill/Easter Seals' in-house forklift training program as a way to increase their skill set and improve their employability.

The Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (PRI), funded through a contract with the Minnesota Department of Corrections, provides work experience, automotive and construction skills training, and placement/retention services to recently-released ex-offenders. PRI is jointly-funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Justice.

Ex-offenders are eligible for **Minneapolis Employment and Training (METP) Adult Services** because of the Goodwill's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) contract with the City of Minneapolis. In addition, the agency receives funding from the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership board to provide industry cluster training (including the Construction or Automotive Skills Training programs) for any low-income Minnesotan.

Goodwill's relationship with the **Minneapolis Public Library** in providing employment assistance to Minneapolis residents led to a request by the Library system to provide bi-monthly job search assistance services to Minneapolis residents at the library located in North Minneapolis, the Twin Cities' neighborhood with the highest concentration of individuals with criminal records.

Contact: Sheila Olson

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont (Charlotte, NC)

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont, in partnership with Energy Committed to Offenders (ECO) created Mecklenburg Opportunities for Re-Entry Network (MORN), a coalition of faith-based and community organizations, the police department, Department of Corrections, Goodwill and U.S. and North Carolina probation officers to serve

the ex-offenders transitioning back into the community. Established in 2005, the program's partners include ECO, Charlotte Saves, Hope Haven, Exodus Foundation, Summit House, Changed Choices, Prison Fellowship, Metrolina Aids Project, Brown Angel, Jacobs Ladder, Central Piedmont Community College, Urban League, North Carolina Division of Community Corrections, Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office, CMPD, Covenant Prison Ministries, and FAVAR Ministries. Two career fairs were conducted with approximately 500 individuals served and almost 20 participating employers. Year two doubled the level of committed employers to 40. The third career fair is scheduled for mid-October 2008. Event planners anticipate attendance by 300 ex-offenders and 40 employers. Fairs were funded by the larger member organizations in 2006 and 2007 with Goodwill assuming expenses and responsibilities for data management, marketing and employability skills training. The coalition established bylaws in 2008 to include membership dues to sponsor the career fair.

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont has a collaborative relationship with the U.S. Probation Office for the Western District of North Carolina, serving re-entering persons throughout the Charlotte area. State and federal probation officers work with the Goodwill to serve the re-entering individual with testing and employability skills. Goodwill's GCDF Career Development Specialists provide the training at local Job Connection Centers as well as at jail sites and state probation offices.

Contact: Peg Smith

Goodwill Industries Northwest North Carolina – Asheville Division

Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina operates a re-entry program serving two prisons in Western North Carolina. The agency launched the project in July 2007 and has served 259 individuals thus far, and placed 89 into community employment. The program consists of a 12-week pre-release program that involves collaborating with a variety of community agencies and providers that meet with prisoners before their release. After release, participants contact the agency within 72 hours and Goodwill works with participants to help them find housing and employment as well as other community contacts they might require. The agency serves the Buncombe County Correctional Center for men and the Swannanoa Correctional Facility for women at this time. Each site has approximately 15 inmates enrolled in the program at any given time.

Contact: Dan Bradshaw

Goodwill Columbus (OH)

Goodwill Columbus' Workforce Development department received a \$248,000 grant in 2008 from the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services to fund a unique re-entry apprenticeship effort. The Cook Apprenticeship Program (CAP) provides young adults, ages 18 to 21 who are ex-offenders or who have dropped out of school, with a combination of job readiness, soft skills and on-the-job training to become a cook at a popular local restaurant.

Those enrolled in this program receive a small stipend designed to cover transportation and meals. If the student has performed well during the 10-week training period, then the management staff at the local restaurant agrees to consider the apprentice first for any upcoming job openings. The students have the opportunity to receive starting restaurant wages of approximately \$8 per hour and can work their way up to positions earning as much as \$13 per hour. Those not hired by the partnering restaurant continue to work with a Workforce Development Employment Services Specialist at Goodwill to find employment.

The Cook Apprenticeship Program at Goodwill Columbus is scheduled to continue through June 2009, and will consist of five consecutive cycles serving six young adults during each cycle. Goodwill exerts a great deal of energy during the recruitment process to ensure that selected apprentices are best suited to the program. Program recruitment efforts include blanketing the community with informational fliers, holding orientation sessions and conducting informal assessments with the aid of trained evaluation specialists. The Workforce Development team

at Goodwill also makes connections with other service providers in the area who work with the same population. Young adults who are selected for a cycle begin CAP by spending two weeks in a classroom at Goodwill's Battelle Career Education Center. There they learn job-seeking and soft skills through a combination of lectures and group activities. They also learn restaurant skills and business mathematics to prepare them for the upcoming apprenticeship. The two-week training period culminates in a meal on the last day, cooked by CAP students for Goodwill staff. This exercise also serves as an assessment tool for Goodwill staff to determine who should continue on in the apprenticeship program.

After the classroom training, select students begin their apprenticeship at the Buckeye Hall of Fame Café, a popular local restaurant specializing in serving sports fans of the nearby Ohio State University. The restaurant portion of the training lasts eight weeks. Apprentices work at the restaurant four days per week where they cycle through various positions, including food and banquet preparation. They also learn safety procedures and restaurant policies. Students return to Goodwill one day each week for a classroom refresher on basic business skills and to access how the apprenticeship is proceeding.

Goodwill Columbus also serves adult ex-offenders through a partnership with LTT Staffing, a faith-based organization. The employees at LTT Staffing go into prisons to work with soon-to-be-released prisoners in an effort to prepare these individuals for a successful re-entry into the community. LTT Staffing then makes referrals to Workforce Development, a division of Goodwill Columbus. At Goodwill, ex-offenders are given extensive vocational evaluations including assessments for academic abilities and career interest inventories. At the end of a week of assessments, ex-offenders spend their mornings at a worksite and their afternoons attending classes to develop soft and job seeking skills. While at Goodwill, each ex-offender has access to a Transitions Counselor who assists issues related to successful re-entry into the workforce.

In June 2008, Goodwill Columbus became an approved Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) provider. This Adult Parole Authority certification allows four certified Contract Service Providers from the Workforce Development team to offer training services inside prisons. The Workforce Development team is often invited to participate in prison job fairs and other employment related activities.

Contact: Lutrell Jolly

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