



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2013
WWW.OJP.GOV

Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
Contact: Kara McCarthy
(202) 307-1241

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AGENCIES PARTNER TO SUPPORT AND TEST INNOVATIVE REENTRY PROGRAMMING IN THREE COMMUNITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), have partnered to significantly expand the body of evidence associated with improving outcomes for individuals re-entering the community. These Justice Department agencies will support an innovative, research-based array of programming designed to improve parolees' motivation to change their behavior and to enhance strategies to alter parolees' criminal thinking using a desistance approach.

The project, Second Chance Act Demonstration Field Experiment: Fostering Desistance through Effective Supervision, is being funded through the Second Chance Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-199, section 245). BJA is funding \$1 million to each site. The unique model was developed with substantial input and guidance from an NIJ scientific review board comprised of researchers, evaluators, and practitioners with significant expertise in reentry research. It consists of parole officer training and parolee interventions based on a crime-desistance framework. Select parole officers will receive crime-desistance training focused on Effective Core Correctional Practices and Integrated Case Management and Supervision. In addition, select parolees will receive crime-desistance programming along with motivational enhancement therapy and NIC's Thinking for a Change curriculum.

“We are always looking for innovative strategies to improve offender outcomes and reduce recidivism,” said BJA Director Denise E. O’Donnell. “The development of this research-based training combined with parole agencies willing to use a randomized control trial to test the effectiveness of this training in their jurisdictions is an exciting development for the field.”

The Colorado Department of Corrections, the Iowa Department of Corrections, and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice will assist in testing this innovative new intervention. BJA will fund these agencies to implement this innovative approach and they will be required to strictly adhere to the program model.

The NIJ will fund a team from MDRC and George Mason University to conduct a randomized control trial test of the program model to assess offender outcomes post-

release, including rates of re-offending and re-incarceration (recidivism). The NIC has developed an innovative curricula aimed at improving parolee outcomes, and they will serve as the training and technical assistance provider for this effort.

NIC Acting Director, Robert Brown, Jr. said, “NIC is very pleased to be participating in this partnership with BJA, NIJ, and the three sites on this important and innovative project. This project represents the kind of collaborative efforts to combine practice and research that is a proven model for success.”

By participating in this project, jurisdictions have an opportunity to participate in a state-of-the-art effort to build new evidence in a critical area. Corollary benefits to the participating sites will be to build their capacity to implement reentry strategies more effectively, to foster desistance from crime among returning offenders, and to enhance supervision and coordination of services.

“The partnership between our agencies and the evaluation of this innovative model represents our commitment to rigorous science and dedication to lead the way in determining what works to reduce recidivism,” said NIJ Acting Director Greg Ridgeway.

For more information about this initiative, please visit
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/scadfe.htm>.

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