Law Enforcement 2010 Coordinating Committee Weed and Seed Reentry Initiative

United States Attorney's Office, District of Arizona

Arizona's Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee Weed and Seed Reentry Recommendation Report

A tool kit for policy makers and reentry stakeholders to promote safer communities through successful reintegration strategies.









Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee

District of Arizona

United States Attorney's Office Two Renaissance Square 40 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1200 Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4408 (602) 514-7500 FAX: (602) 514-7586



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Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona is pleased to present the report and recommendations of the Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee's (LECC) Weed & Seed Reentry Initiative, for the design of a successful reentry program. This effort sought input from Arizona Weed & Seed Communities, federal, state, and local corrections, probation officers, and law enforcement officers, as well as the faith community and dozens of other reentry stakeholders. The recommendations for program design contained in this report represent countless hours of work by individuals and agencies from across the prisoner reentry spectrum who volunteered their time because of the importance of this issue and its potential to positively impact public safety in Arizona.

These recommendations are intended as a tool and guide for policy makers, executive agencies and others seeking to strengthen the continuum of reentry services from pre-release (3 to 6 months) to post-release phases (one year). There are many perspectives on reentry, but what is generally recognized is that successful reintegration of people leaving the corrections system and returning home will only help to reduce crime, costs and recidivism, and increase the safety of these communities.

We at the United States Attorney's Office wish to thank the many individuals and agencies involved in the Reentry Initiative for their outstanding effort, time, and spirit of cooperation. We look forward to continuing this collaboration for the benefit of the people of Arizona.

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DENNIS K. BURKE United States Attorney District of Arizona

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Arizona Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee's (LECC) Weed & Seed Reentry Initiative is a community based, stakeholder led initiative to promote the successful reintegration of former inmates in order to reduce crime and recidivism, and increase public safety where they live.

The goals and objectives of the Reentry Initiative are to:

- Strengthen coordination and information sharing among all reentry stakeholders.
- Address gaps in transition from courts to corrections to community service.
- Educate and prepare communities for the reintegration of ex-offenders.
- Strengthen faith-based partnerships, mentoring, and other community based partnerships to promote successful family and community reintegration.
- Address families, children, and juveniles through each phase of the reentry spectrum.

The recommendations are intended as a tool and a guide for policy makers to improve the continuum of services from pre-release (3 to 6 months) to post-release phases (one year).

Stakeholder Recommendations

- 1. Streamline the continuity of medical and behavioral health and treatment services from prison to the community.
- 2. Increase community capacity to address medical and behavioral treatment and care close to home.
- 3. Enhance diversion opportunities for non-violent offenders with medical / behavioral issues that contributed to their involvement in the criminal justice system.
- 4. Ensure access to quality housing opportunities and provide information about possible housing alternatives to prisoners prior to release.
- 5. Establish regulatory framework for transitional housing to ensure minimum standards for safety and quality.
- 6. Create specialized housing plans for mentally ill prisoners.
- 7. Prepare landlords and residents to welcome ex-prisoners into their communities by providing objective information about the men and women leaving the correctional facilities.

- 8. Collaborate across agencies to eliminate unnecessary barriers to employment and education through programs that identify needs upon entry and address transitional services prior to release including: obtaining necessary identification and gaining access to information about current employment and educational opportunities.
- 9. Raise public awareness, public involvement, and commitment to reentry success by utilizing the media, community organizations, faith-communities, and academic scholarships to increase understanding, dispel myths, and engage the community and public policy makers in successful reentry efforts.
- 10. Cultivate collaboration with faith-based (e.g., Open Table) and secular mentoring programs, and streamline continuity of mentoring from pre-release (3-6 months) to post-release (one year).

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INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee's (LECC) Weed & Seed Reentry Initiative is a community based, stakeholder led initiative in Arizona to promote the successful reintegration of men and women leaving the correctional system in order to reduce crime and recidivism, and increase public safety where they live. What began as a roundtable dialogue during the U.S. Attorney's 2008 Arizona Weed & Seed Conference, evolved quickly into a coalition of more than 60 stakeholders representing law enforcement, the courts, corrections, public defenders, probation, housing providers, substance abuse and health care providers, educators, nonprofits, the faith-based community, and other concerned citizens.

Mission, Goals, and Objectives of the Reentry Initiative

Mission

The Arizona Weed & Seed Reentry Initiative brings together a broad coalition of stakeholders in order to promote the successful reintegration of ex-offenders, to reduce crime and recidivism, to increase the safety of the communities, and to ensure the rights and safety of victims of crime.

Goals and Objectives

- Strengthen coordination and information sharing among all reentry stakeholders.
- Address gaps in transition from courts to corrections to community service.
- Educate and prepare communities for the reintegration of ex-offenders.
- Strengthen Faith-based partnerships, mentoring, and other community-based partnerships to promote successful family and community reintegration.
- Address families, children, and juveniles through each phase of the reentry spectrum.

Strategies and Outcomes

During 2008 and 2009, LECC Reentry Initiative subcommittees met in Tucson and Phoenix 24 times to assess reentry challenges and to develop key recommendations for executive decision-makers and public policy makers in Arizona. In addition, working groups were established to explore how the following issues impact former inmates: treatment and health services, housing and transportation, mentoring and faith-based community partnerships, employment and education, and community education and linkages. On November 12, 2009 a Reentry Summit held in Casa Grande brought together all stakeholders to integrate their work into a final report.

Strategies

- Meet on a monthly basis to assess current reentry efforts, share information, identify resources and plan strategies.
- Use data to determine where ex-offender populations are concentrated and where service delivery can be most effective.
- Identify resources to build capacity among stakeholders and assist strategic efforts.
- Assign subcommittees to target problem areas (gaps), develop, and implement creative strategies to address the following areas:

Treatment & Health Services

Housing & Transportation

Employment & Education

Community Education and Linkages

Mentoring and Faith-based Community Partnerships

• Develop specific recommendations for key decision makers in Arizona Reentry efforts, and convene an executive session of these key decision makers

This report begins with a brief description of the scope of the problem in Arizona and nation-wide and continues with a list of the recommendations developed by the Reentry Initiative sub-committees' members. Following these sections are more detailed descriptions of the recommendations and rationale from each of the committees that describe how they addressed their components (e.g., treatment, housing, employment, education, mentorship, etc.) of an effective reintegration system. The 10 recommendations identified in the Executive Summary and at the end of this section are intended to be a guide towards more successful outcomes in the lives of former inmates. Additional recommendations that are contained in the subcommittee sections capture some essential policy and programmatic details the subcommittee members felt were important to highlight.

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

According to data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics National Corrections Reporting Program, and more recent data from the Arizona Department of Corrections, the number of inmates incarcerated in Arizona from 1997 to 2007 increased by 60.7 percent, from 23,484 in 1997 to 37,746 in 2007. Because only a small percentage of individuals incarcerated are sentenced to either life in prison without the possibility of parole or to death, most of the men and women sentenced to prison will return to the community. For example, approximately 19,000 individuals were released from an Arizona Department of Corrections facility in 2007 alone. Of those who are released from prison, recidivism research suggests that anywhere from half to two-thirds of individuals released from prison will be re-incarcerated within three years of their release.

Several factors complicate efforts to ensure that men and women who served a sentence in a correctional facility will not return to the criminal justice system. Many challenges face men and women who are sentenced to prison, as well as the correctional and after-care systems responsible for making efforts to positively impact behavior. Drug use and abuse, mental health disorders, and exposure to traumatic experiences, are common among those who have served a sentence in a correctional institution. For example:

- In 2004, 53% of state and 45% of federal prisoners met the DSM-IV criteria for drug dependence or abuse (Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004, October 2006).
- At midyear 2005, 56% of state prisoners, 45% of federal prisoners, and 64% of jail inmates had a mental health problem. Female inmates had higher rates of mental health problems than male inmates; 74% vs. 55% in state prisons, 75% vs. 63% of jail inmates (Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates, September 2006).
- An estimated 44% of state inmates and 39% of federal inmates reported a current medical problem other than a cold or virus (Medical Problems of Prisoners, April 2008).
- In 2004, 10% of state prisoners reported prior service in the US Armed Forces, the most recent year for which data was available (2004 Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities). The majority of veterans in state (54%) and federal (64%) prison served during a wartime period, but a much lower percentage reported seeing combat duty; 20% state and 26% federal, respectively (Veterans in State and Federal Prison, 2004, May 2007).

In addition to treatment needs and health issues, former inmates often face barriers that prevent them from obtaining safe, affordable housing, which in turn can cause community instability. Some inmates are able to live, at least temporarily, with their families, while others are left to find housing on their own. For example:

- An estimated 40% of inmates released from Arizona prisons leave without any form of stable housing.
- An inmate without housing is often referred to a homeless shelter or transitional housing program, but such housing is temporary.
- Studies show that since the early 1990's permanent housing has become increasingly difficult for former inmates to access. This is a result of the recent emphasis on growing professionalism in the rental housing market and policies promulgated by local public or quasi-public organizations (e.g., crime and drug free housing programs).
- Research demonstrates that a lack of safe, affordable housing for ex-prisoners decreases community stability by placing even more stress on family reunification, seen as an important element in lowering rates of recidivism and by increasing homelessness as exprisoners resort to living on the streets.

Rehabilitative treatment, housing, and transportation are not the only challenges facing returning former inmates. In addition to these challenges, many inmates also have significantly lower educational levels than the general population. For example:

- According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 41.3% of the prisoners in state and federal prison in 1997 did not have a high school education (Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003)
- In 1997, of the inmates in state prisons without a high school diploma or GED, 77% had a prior juvenile or adult sentence (Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003).
- When looking at the educational attainment of prisoners by race, 27% of white prisoners, 44% of African-American prisoners, and 53% of Latino prisoners had not completed high school or a GED (Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003).
- Approximately equal percentages of male and female prisoners had not completed high school or the GED, 40% and 42%, respectively (Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003).
- More than one-third of inmates in state prisons (37.5%) were unemployed or not looking for a job in the month prior to their arrest (Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003).

The data above describes the magnitude of the challenges facing recently released men and women and our correctional system's ability to rehabilitate those who enter the system. Additionally, if former inmates returning to our communities do not have the will to overcome what often seem like overwhelming challenges, even the best of programs will be fighting an uphill battle. The likelihood of recidivism is increased and their successful reintegration into their family and community is unlikely. Both secular and faith-based mentoring can assist former inmates in grappling with personal issues, address feelings of shame, and affect transformation in their way of being. For example:

- The impact of carefully structured, well-run mentoring programs can positively affect social, behavioral and academic outcomes for individuals reentering the community from prison or jail. "Compared with participants who did not have a mentor, mentored participants were 35% less likely to have recidivated within a year of being released." (Bauldry et al. 2009)
- Successful mentoring programs implement a number of key practices involving staffing, recruiting, training, supervision, and support if the mentoring efforts are going to succeed.
- The success of mentoring rests on the impact that relationships of trust can have on people's will to succeed. The success of programs like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous demonstrate the effect of these kinds of relationships, where both group and individual mentoring function as a constant and meaningful resource to the mentee.
- Mentoring can begin while the mentee is still incarcerated. If that is not possible, then the match should still be made while mentee is still in prison, so that the mentor is

available immediately upon release.

• Mentoring is most effective when there is compatibility between the mentee and the mentor and their relationship continues over a period of time-up to a year or more.

The data and research cited above suggest that effective reintegration requires that attention be placed on overcoming the issues that challenge the system's ability to affect change in behaviors including drug abuse, unemployment, poor education, limited housing options, and lack of an effective social support network. The data informed the discussions of the working groups as they developed policy recommendations. Those recommendations reflected some of the many challenges facing former inmates and those working to support efforts that would reintegrate them back into their communities in a meaningful way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Streamline the continuity of medical and behavioral health and treatment services from prison to the community.
- 2. Increase community capacity to address medical and behavioral treatment and care close to home.
- 3. Enhance diversion opportunities for non-violent offenders with medical / behavioral issues that contributed to their involvement in the criminal justice system.
- 4. Ensure access to quality housing opportunities and provide information about possible housing alternatives to prisoners prior to release.
- 5. Establish regulatory framework for transitional housing to ensure minimum standards for safety and quality.
- 6. Create specialized housing plans for soon to be released mentally ill prisoners.
- 7. Prepare landlords and residents to welcome former inmates into their communities by providing objective information about the men and women leaving correctional facilities.
- 8. Collaborate across agencies to eliminate barriers to employment and education through programs that identify needs upon entry and address transitional services prior to release including: obtaining necessary identification records and gaining access to information about current employment and educational opportunities.
- 9. Raise public awareness, public involvement, and commitment to reentry success by utilizing the media, community organizations, faith-communities, and academic scholarships to increase understanding, dispel myths, and engage the community and public policy makers in successful reentry efforts.

10. Cultivate collaboration with faith-based (e.g., Open Table) and secular mentoring programs, and streamline continuity of mentoring from pre-release (3-6 months) to post-release (one year).

The stakeholders involved in the LECC Reentry Initiative recognize that the correctional system cannot address all these challenges alone. Instead, the challenges facing former inmates and the correctional system should be addressed by the correctional system in partnership with the communities to which these men and women will return. LECC Reentry Initiative stakeholders strongly believe that the criminal justice system in partnership with community and faith-based agencies can effectively address the needs of returning former inmates and the communities to which they return. LECC Reentry Initiative stakeholders and their agencies stand ready to work in partnership with the criminal justice system to enhance the safety of Arizona's communities by improving the outcomes of former inmates.

TREATMENT AND HEALTH SERVICES

Recommendations Summary

- 1. Streamline continuity of treatment and health care from prison to communities.
 - Ensure inmates receive a comprehensive health assessment at intake.
 - Develop an "in-reach" program that provides soon to be released inmates with information and assistance with the transition of treatment and health care services from the facility to the community.
 - Conduct pre-screening for AHCCCS eligibility for all inmates one month prior to release.
 - Develop methods to ensure portability of medical records into and out of correctional facilities.
 - Develop effective collaborations between community-based organizations and Arizona correctional facilities to seamlessly transition the treatment and health services needed by returning former inmates.
- 2. Increase communities' capacity for meeting the treatment and health service needs of for mer inmates.
 - Create a web site for re-entry resources that is developed, organized, and kept up to date specifically with former inmates and their treatment and health care services in mind.
 - Make more accessible to former inmates the treatment and health services they need by
 placing them in the communities where a disproportionate number of former inmates
 live.
- 3. Enhance diversion opportunities for non-violent offenders with mental health or substance abuse issues that contributed to their involvement with the criminal justice system.

Each year, thousands of men and women are released from Arizona correctional facilities. Of those released, significant percentages have drug dependence issues, mental health issues, and physical health issues that must be addressed to maximize the likelihood of successful reentry into their neighborhoods. The challenge for "the system" is to ensure that the treatment and health service needs of former inmates are met, not only in correctional facilities, but also in our communities. Therefore, of critical importance are the availability of the treatment and health services in the institution and the seamless transition of those services from prison to the community.

The recommendations that follow were developed during the course of several meetings of treatment professionals, re-entry specialists, homeless advocates, and criminal justice professionals. They are not intended as a model for comprehensive re-entry services; rather, the issues

and policy recommendations that appear in this document are those that rose to the surface during the discussion of the current re-entry system and the barriers to effective substance abuse and mental health treatment, and health care services of returning former inmates.

Recommendations and Rationale

Streamline continuity of care from prison to communities.

The problem facing many former inmates is how to continue the substance abuse, mental health, and physical health treatment they are receiving in our correctional facilities without interruption. For individuals with substance abuse issues, continuing in treatment is a critical factor in staying sober. For individuals with mental health disorders, uninterrupted treatment, including staying on the medications that effectively treat their disorders, is critical to healthy living. Finally, individuals with physical health needs, if not cured of the ailment while in the correctional facility, will require medical attention in the community. Providing these services in and out of facilities can decrease the likelihood of returning—this is especially true of substance abuse and mental health treatment.

Ensure inmates receive a comprehensive health assessment at intake and prior to discharge.

Every inmate entering the correctional system should receive a comprehensive health assessment at intake and discharge from the facility. This will ensure that the medical needs of inmates will be met while they are in the correctional facility and ensure that the progress made is documented at discharge. The assessment of the inmates health status prior to discharge will also ensure that any ongoing medical needs will be documented and inform the transition of care from facility to community.

Develop an "in-reach" program that provides soon to be released prisoners with information and assistance with the transition of treatment and health care services from the facility to the community.

In order to prepare inmates for their return to our communities, it is critical that they have the foundation of a supportive and caring network to meet their treatment and health needs. Given the dynamic nature of the treatment system, having staff from treatment and health care organizations that serve former inmates work with inmates before they leave the facility will provide up to date information on the services that will be the foundation upon which the former inmates can rely once they return to our communities.

Conduct pre-screening for AHCCCS eligibility for all inmates one month prior to release.

According to the AHCCCS eligibility policy manual, an individual who is an inmate in a penal institution is ineligible for AHCCCS. This policy makes it critical for soon to be released inmates to be pre-screened to establish AHCCCS eligibility, and if determined to be eligible, to begin the process for AHCCCS reinstatement. Timely AHCCCS reinstatement is critical for treatment to continue in the community uninterrupted.

Develop methods to ensure portability of medical records into and out of correctional facilities.

Facilitating the sharing of medical records that document the care received while in a correctional facility, is critical to the seamless transition of health care to the community upon release. These medical records should include the assessments and treatments received before and during incarceration. Recognizing that it can be very difficult to obtain medical records on individuals from health care providers across the state and nation, the emphasis of this recommendation is on the portability of medical records from the correctional facility to the community. At the same time, developing a cost effective process for obtaining medical records that document the care received by individuals before they are admitted to a facility should also be a priority.

Develop effective collaborations between existing community-based organizations and Arizona correctional facilities to effectively transition the treatment and health services needed by returning former inmates.

Returning ex-prisoners are faced with a multitude of challenges as they transition from facility to community. Although we recognize that former inmates must take responsibility for their own care, correctional facilities can support those efforts by building an effective, collaborative relationship with the agencies and organizations that will continue to serve inmates once they leave the facility.

<u>Increase communities</u>' capacity for meeting the treatment and health service needs of exprisoners.

It is commonly recognized that the overwhelming majority of individuals sentenced to prison will be returning to our communities. In order for the needs of the community to be met, former inmates must have access to the services that will affect the likelihood of their returning to prison. Treatment and health services that are available in the community will increase the use of these services and decrease the likelihood of former inmates victimizing the community and its residents.

Create a web site for re-entry resources that is developed, organized, and kept up to date specifically with former inmates and their treatment and health care services in mind.

Although there are many agencies and organizations that serve former inmates, they are part of a fragmented and dynamic system that can be difficult to navigate. There are also many resources for identifying community-based agencies, but none are effectively organized with the former inmate in mind. Given the needs of former inmates and the power of the internet, a web-based, dynamic, community referral site that lists all the agencies and organizations that serve former inmates and the services they provide would be a critical resource for both the former inmate and those who assist these men and women in effectively reentering our communities.

Make more accessible to former inmates the treatment and health services they need by placing them in the communities where a disproportionate number of former inmates live.

It is also well known that a few communities in Arizona will absorb a disproportionate share of former inmates. Community-based treatment and health services should be placed where there is the greatest need. When opportunities are provided to assist community-based treatment and health service agencies in the placement of their programs, those areas across the state and in our cities and towns that absorb a disproportionate share of returning ex-prisoners should be prioritized for new programs.

Enhance diversion opportunities for non-violent offenders with mental health or substance abuse issues that contributed to their involvement with the criminal justice system.

It is becoming increasingly clear that treating non-violent offenders with mental health or substance abuse issues in the community is more effective than putting them in prison. In 1997, the Urban Institute published a report that stated, "Imprisonment for drug crimes is not a cost-effective sanction compared to treatment or intermediate sanctions, and its overuse for lower-level drug offenders represents a misallocation of scarce prison resources."

Evaluations of drug courts and mental health courts have revealed promising outcomes for participants. These are just two examples of promising approaches to holding offenders responsible for their crimes, which have higher success rates than prison. Opportunities for expanding the use of these courts and other models for sanctioning offenders in the community and reducing recidivism rates should be explored.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION

Recommendations Summary

- 4. Ensure access to quality housing opportunities and provide information about housing alternatives to inmates prior to release.
 - Reform public housing/HUD Guidelines that prohibit former inmates from obtaining housing services.
 - Reform Crime Free Housing policies to reflect the same statewide. Educate property owners and ex-prisoners on crime-free housing policies and the intent of those policies to not exclude former inmates who are law abiding from obtaining housing.
- 5. Establish a regulatory framework for transitional housing to ensure minimum standards for safety and quality.
 - Develop effective collaborations between community-based organizations and Arizona correctional facilities to seamlessly transition released prisoners to housing services in the community.
- 6. Create specialized housing plans for soon to be released mentally ill offenders.
- 7. Prepare landlords and residents to welcome ex-prisoners into their communities by providing factual information about the men and women leaving correctional facilities.
 - Increase community capacity for meeting the housing needs of ex-offenders.

Recommendations and Rationale

Ensure access to quality housing opportunities and provide information about housing alternatives to inmates prior to release.

Reform the public housing/HUD Guidelines that prohibit ex-prisoners from obtaining housing services.

Non-Profits and other developers of affordable housing often must rely on public funding, most generally Housing and Urban Development (HUD) monies, to assist in the development of affordable housing. However, starting in the mid 1990's, the City of Phoenix Housing Department stipulated that any developer accessing HUD funding (Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program funds, etc.) to develop a property would be prohibited from renting to anyone who had been charged with a felony during the previous ten years. In 2002, the requirement, on the advice of city attorneys, was dropped. However, properties that were developed during the time of the restriction still have language incorporated into their deeds with time restricting rentals to former inmates.

Reform Crime Free Housing policies so they are the same in all Arizona communities. Educate property owners and ex-prisoners on policies so that ex-prisoners are not unfairly barred from obtaining housing.

Restrictions associated with Crime Free Multi Family Housing and Public Housing should be made uniform state-wide. Additionally, sharing such information with inmates before release would provide them with a better idea of what a property manager can and cannot do as far as property restrictions are concerned. Housing restrictions related to sex offenders need to be reevaluated so that such individuals have options that do not result in homelessness or living in poverty. Explanations of sex-offender levels should be general public knowledge so that the citizens of Arizona have a better understanding of the relationship between sex offending and risk of re-offending.

Ensure ex-prisoners receive access to quality housing opportunities in the community by publishing and providing, prior to release, a resource list of housing facilities that meet the minimum quality standards.

A list of possible housing alternatives, or specific communities, should be available to exprisoners prior to their release, especially to those who no longer have meaningful social support networks in the community. Materials should also be developed for landlords that will answer questions they may have about renting to ex-prisoners.

Establish a regulatory framework for transitional housing to ensure minimum standards for safety and quality.

Develop effective collaborations between community-based organizations and Arizona correctional facilities to seamlessly transition released prisoners to housing services in the community.

Half-way housing, such as that provided by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, should be a requirement as part of an inmate's sentence. This would give former inmates the opportunity to better integrate into society through becoming gainfully employed while evaluating housing options in their home communities.

Emphasize the need to have income in order to access housing during the discharge planning process.

Discharge planning should start at beginning of an inmate's sentence. More emphasis should be placed on having a legitimate income source to access housing when leaving correctional care. An important aspect should be an emphasis on pre-release applications for re-instatement, upon release, of public benefits such as Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance, Veteran's Benefits, etc. for those unable to work.

Create specialized housing plans for soon to be released mentally ill inmates.

Former inmates who suffer from mental health disorders can face additional challenges when returning to the community. These challenges can be overcome with additional pre-release

assistance that focuses on finding safe and secure housing near the services needed by the mentally ill.

<u>Prepare landlords and residents to welcome former inmates into their communities by providing factual information about the men and women leaving the correctional facilities.</u>

Increase community capacity for meeting the housing needs of former inmates.

Create educational materials about renting to former inmates for landlords. Prepare materials to educate general public about the demographics of the State's inmate population. The intent of these materials is to provide an objective perspective on crime and criminals from which community members can make an informed decision on how they might support former inmates.

EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Recommendations Summary

- 8. Collaborate across agencies to eliminate barriers to employment and education through programs that identify needs upon entry and address transitional services prior to release including: obtaining necessary identification and gaining access to information about current employment and educational opportunities.
 - Improve collaboration with critical government agencies (e.g., Vital Records, Arizona Department of Transportation-Motor Vehicle Division, Social Security Administration) to ensure all soon to be released inmates have the identification necessary for obtaining employment, transportation, housing, shelter, and education.

Designate an Arizona Department of Transportation-Motor Vehicle Division (AZ-MVD) employee to work at the prisons on a regular basis to provide state identification cards to inmates that are scheduled to be released within 2 weeks.

Assist inmates in obtaining a birth certificate 6-8 weeks prior to their release date.

Request a Social Security Administration (SSA) representative to visit prisons and jails in Arizona on a regular basis to assist inmates with obtaining a social security card.

- Develop a method for tracking how many inmates are released with and without the identification needed for gaining employment, transportation, housing, and education
- Develop Resource Centers that are available to inmates in every facility at each level federal, state, county that meet the educational and employment needs of prisoners (e.g., GED, job development, college courses, computer access, etc.)
- Implement an assessment tool that identifies employment and educational strengths and weaknesses at intake. The tool should allow for scheduled reassessment as the inmate progresses through the confinement period.
- Develop collaborative resource centers in the community where multiple reintegration services are housed under one roof so that former inmates can efficiently and effectively obtain the services they need to overcome bureaucratic and geographic barriers to gaining employment.
- Develop a reentry website that provides updated and statewide community information on employment services, educational programs, volunteer programs, and supportive services for former inmates.

• Encourage state and federal appropriations for employment and educational services specifically to assist with former inmates reintegration (e.g., allocation of staff, specific training for One Stop employees and community college systems, collaborative reentry center, and other needed reintegration services).

Recommendations and Rationale

Collaborate across agencies to eliminate barriers to employment and education through programs that identify needs upon entry and address transitional services prior to release including: obtaining necessary identification and gaining access to information about current employment and educational opportunities.

Improve collaboration with critical government agencies (e.g., Vital Records, Arizona Department of Transportation-Motor Vehicle Division, Social Security Administration) to ensure all inmates have the identification necessary for obtaining employment, transportation, housing, shelter, and education.

Designate an Arizona Department of Transportation-Motor Vehicle Division (AZ-MVD) employee to work at the correctional facilities on a regular basis to provide state identification cards to inmates that are scheduled to be released within 2 weeks.

Assist inmates in obtaining a birth certificate 6-8 weeks prior to their release date.

Request a Social Security Administration (SSA) representative to visit prisons and jails in Arizona on a regular basis to assist inmates with obtaining a social security card.

Develop a method for tracking how many inmates are released with and without the identification needed for gaining employment, transportation, housing, and education.

Together, these recommendations are designed to eliminate barriers to prisoners obtaining the identification needed to secure employment and receive educational and other services. A multi-agency, collaborative, and in-custody approach to obtaining identification prior to release is just one model for supporting former inmates in their quest for employment and educational services after release.

Implement an assessment tool that identifies employment and educational strengths and weaknesses at intake. The tool should allow for scheduled reassessment as the inmate progresses through the confinement period.

Develop Resource Centers that are available to inmates in every facility at each level – federal, state, county – that meet the educational and employment needs of former inmates (e.g., GED, job development, college courses, computer access, etc.)

A resource center in the correctional facilities would provide a single place for soon to be released inmates to obtain information that might assist them with securing employment upon release. This one-stop resource center could also serve as the contact site for outside employers

to participate in prison employment programs. Documenting the employment and educational strengths and weaknesses is needed to assess the effectiveness of employment and educational supportive services.

Develop collaborative resources centers in the community where multiple reintegration services are housed under one roof so that former inmates can efficiently and effectively obtain the services they need to overcome bureaucratic and geographic barriers to gaining employment.

There is often a disconnect between the services former inmates need, where those services are located, and where the former inmate lives. It is well known that some communities absorb a disproportionate share of returning former inmates, thus, the employment and educational services former inmates need should be placed in these communities. Similar to the one-stop resource center model, the agencies that serve former inmates should be housed under one roof to ease access to services.

Develop a reentry website that provides updated and statewide community information on employment services, educational programs, volunteer programs, and supportive services for returning former inmates.

Although one-stop, collaborative, community-based resource centers may eliminate many of the bureaucratic and geographic barriers facing former inmates who are seeking employment and educational opportunities, an additional cost-effective resource for former inmates would be a website where they can search for employment services and educational programs at any time, day or night, to improve their opportunities for successful reintegration.

Encourage state and federal appropriations for employment and educational services specifically to assist with former inmates reintegration (e.g., allocation of staff, specific training for One Stop employees and community college systems, collaborative reentry center, and other needed reintegration services).

Recognizing the difficult economic times at the state and federal level, there remains a great need for resources to assist in the building of a service infrastructure that can handle the number of former inmates that will be returning to our communities. These resources would support the building of a reentry support infrastructure that includes the hiring and training of correctional and program staff, enhancing the involvement of the community college system in educating former inmates, and other critical service needs of former inmates.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION, LINKAGES AND OUTREACH

Recommendations Summary

- 9. Raise public awareness, public involvement, and commitment to successful reentry of former inmates by utilizing the media, community organizations, faith communities, and academic scholarships to increase understanding, dispel myths, and engage the community and public policy makers in successful reentry efforts.
 - Create linkages with community resources and social networks from prison to communities.
 - Develop a mechanism to solicit community support for former juveniles and adult former inmates.
 - Increase communities' capacity in understanding the need for supporting effective reentry of former inmates.
 - Develop a public education campaign that explains the cost effectiveness of reentry programming through meetings, seminars and presentations to:

Policy makers at state and local levels Business organizations/employers Faith organizations Other community based organizations

- Explore the possibility of an academic partner developing a special report on the issue of reentry in Arizona.
- Convene a town hall for policy makers, service providers and former inmates to increase understanding of reentry issues.
- Develop a web-based newsletter on reentry issues that would provide best practice information and success stories about individual cases and programs.
- Receive government leaders endorsement for education and employment programs.
- Promote and endorse former inmate reintegration through public service announcements and other media outlets.

Recommendations and Rationale

Raise public awareness, public involvement, and commitment to successful reentry of former inmates by utilizing the media, community organizations, faith communities, and academic scholarships to increase understanding, dispel myths, and engage the community and public policy makers in successful reentry efforts.

Community "misinformation" is a significant barrier to assisting ex-offenders. The community is often misinformed when it comes to understanding the role the community can play in supporting ex-prisoners and keeping their communities safe. Educating the community about former inmates and the influence they have over both the barriers and the opportunities facing former inmates is critical to gaining the community support needed to serve former inmates upon their release.

Outreach and education to community members using public service announcements, print media, and speakers' bureaus would provide objective information about former inmates and the critical role the community can play in supporting former inmates as they transition from prison to our communities

Create linkages between community-based resources and social support networks that serve returning former inmates.

There are various community resources and social support networks throughout the state of Arizona ready to assist the former inmate population. Unfortunately, there are also many gaps in service to former inmates, most commonly due to the absence of a structure that facilitates sharing of information and resources. Establishing a common network for these organizations to collaborate and share ideas would assist in closing the gaps that sometimes prevent former inmates from receiving the support they need and has been effective elsewhere.

Develop a mechanism to solicit community support for former juveniles and adult former inmates into our communities.

Many Arizona communities have some kind of community organization in place—several of these community organizations would be open to assist former inmates or, if they are already serving former inmates, are willing to expand their services. In many cases these organization are unaware of the extent of the need and the roles they can play in supporting the reintegration of former inmates.

Increase communities' capacity in understanding the need for supporting effective reentry of former inmates.

To gain, increase, and keep community support of returning former inmates, the community must be aware of how this issue affects them. Information on the former inmates population, including how community support can impact recidivism should be shared with our communities.

Develop a public education campaign that explains the cost effectiveness of reentry programming through meetings, seminars and presentations to state and local policymakers, business owners and their employees, faith-based organizations, and other community-based organizations.

Continued education and awareness of cost-effective reentry efforts to stakeholders such as policy makers, employers, faith organizations, and other community organizations will assist in

supporting sustainable efforts to assist former inmates.

Explore the possibility of an academic partner developing a Special Report on Reentry in Arizona.

A reentry report, produced by an objective and neutral third party that could be accessed by agencies and community members would provide much needed validation of the need for statewide reentry services.

Use the Special Report on Reentry and other materials to convene a town hall for policy makers, service providers, and former inmates to increase understanding of reentry issues.

Town hall meetings would allow community members and former inmates an opportunity to discuss pertinent concerns regarding reentry services. An open forum such as a town hall meeting would encourage dialogue between community member, former inmates, and service providers that might otherwise not be possible.

Develop a web-based newsletter on reentry that would provide best practice information and success stories about individual cases and programs.

A statewide web-based newsletter can be an effective tool for sharing best practices across the state. It would also be an appropriate mechanism for disseminating information regarding programs, educational opportunities, town hall meetings, and current reentry services.

FAITH-BASED AND MENTORING

Recommendations Summary

- 10. Cultivate collaboration with faith-based (e.g., Open Table) and secular mentoring programs, and streamline continuity of mentoring from pre-release (3-6 months) to post release (one year).
 - Provide corrections officials with necessary training and information about mentoring and its benefits, and ensure that they know how to link returning former inmates with mentoring services.
 - Build a mentor network that provides a sufficient number of trained mentors to match with inmates before they are released.

Recruit mentor candidates through faith-based and other community organizations.

Screen and select mentors, ensuring an adequate number of mentors from secular and faith backgrounds, including those with a background of incarceration.

Train mentors with proven training materials that prepare them for the range of activities and circumstances they will encounter when working with former inmates.

Recommendations and Rationale

Mentoring can be a significant element in increasing successful reentry of former inmates and in reducing recidivism. The recommendations below address the need to promote mentoring to those reentering our communities and to ensure that the quality of the relationship will assist former inmates in addressing the challenges they will face.

Ideally, the mentor-mentee relationship begins prior to the inmate being released from prison and that the relationship between the mentor and the former inmate continues in a seamless fashion (e.g., no change in mentors). Some organizations provide for mentoring prior to release; others make the match before release, so that the mentor is waiting for the former inmate immediately upon release. Although it is not always possible to link a mentor with a prisoner prior to release, it is important to note that former inmates are particularly vulnerable in the days immediately after release, so the more timely support by a mentor, the greater the likelihood of success.

Ensuring an adequate number of trained mentors is an essential ingredient to effective reentry. Having an adequate supply of qualified mentors has not always been possible. It will be essential to increase the supply of mentors so that every former inmate that is looking for a mentor will have the opportunity.

<u>Cultivate collaboration with faith-based (e.g., Open Table) and secular mentoring programs,</u> and streamline continuity of mentoring from pre-release (3-6 months) to post release (one year).

Provide corrections officials with necessary training and information about mentoring and its benefits, and ensure that they know how to link returning former inmates with mentoring services. The discussion of mentoring options—with a choice of secular or faith -based programs—should also be included in pre-release packets given to inmates upon their release.

The first source for information on mentoring for former inmates is the staff that works in our correctional facilities. For those who are released without receiving information on mentoring, parole and probation officers are an additional source of mentoring information for the former inmate. A critical component of the training for correctional staff, probation officers, and parole officers is a discussion of the benefits of mentoring for former inmates.

Build a mentor network that provides a sufficient number of trained mentors to match with inmates before they are released.

It is very common for those just released to have overwhelming feelings of disorientation and hopelessness. Many former inmates want to return to their communities and even though they may understand the potential pitfalls of associating with their old friends, those are the relationships they know and seek out. A mentor can assist the former inmate with the emotional feelings and negative influences of the past and present in the days immediately following their release.

Recruit mentor candidates through faith-based and other community organizations.

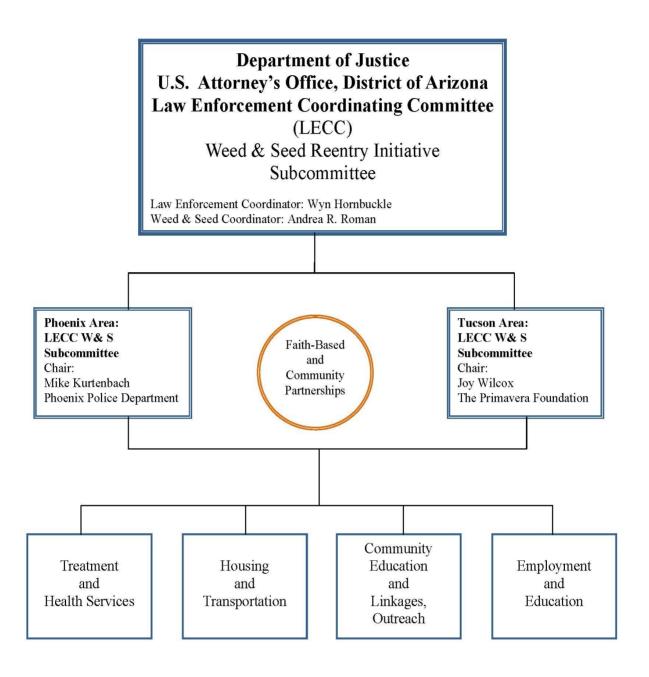
Engaging faith-based and other community-based organizations that are in the communities that absorb a disproportionate share of former inmates to assist with recruiting potential mentees is a promising strategy for identifying successful mentors. Although this does not preclude identifying mentors from other communities, mentors and former inmates that have community in common is a shared history that can be the foundation upon which the mentoring relationship is built.

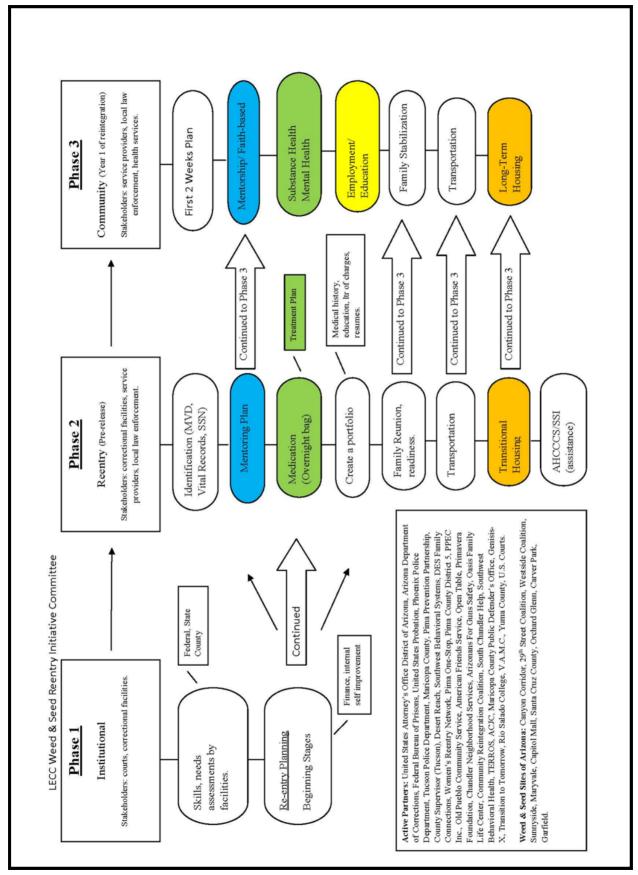
Screen, select and match mentors, ensuring an adequate number of mentors from secular and faith backgrounds, including those with a background of incarceration.

It is important to provide mentors that former inmates will be comfortable with and from whom mentees will learn, receive encouragement, and find inspiration. When a former inmate seeks a mentor, having a good match available will be an immediate success. The quality of mentors, their training, and the matching process all help determine the success of the mentoring relationship.

Train mentors with proven training materials that prepare them for the range of activities and circumstances they will encounter when working with former inmates.

Currently, the quality of training varies tremendously among mentoring organizations. It will be important for mentoring organizations to identify best practices in Arizona and elsewhere. Training of mentors including cultural competency, is a key ingredient in the success of mentoring.





Contact Information

For more information regarding this report please contact one of the following individuals.

Wyn Hornbuckle

Law Enforcement Coordinator

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona Patrick.hornbuckle@usdoj.gov

Andrea R. Roman

Weed & Seed Coordinator

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona Andrea.roman@usdoi.gov

Michael Kurtenbach

Phoenix Chair

Lieutenant, Phoenix Police Department mike.kurtenbach@phoenix.gov

Joy Wilcox

Tucson Chair

Advocacy Coordinator, The Primavera Foundation jwilcox@primavera.org

Phillip Stevenson

Director, Statistical Analysis Center Arizona Criminal Justice Commission pstevenson@azcjc.gov

Penelope Pestle

Principal

Potential: Community Systems Change

ppestle@cox.net

Anna Wheeler

Program Manager, Prisoner Re-entry Partnership The Primavera Foundation awheeler@primavera.org

LECC Weed & Seed Reentry Initiative Member Listing

EECC Weed & Seed Recitify	Tillitative Melliber Elisting
Bagwell, Keith	
Ballesterors, Demetria	
Beal, Barbara	Bureau of Prisons
Benavidez, Manuel	Genesis-X
Berman, Karen	ASPC-F-NU
Bixby, Barbara	Westside Coalition
Bland, Gabriele	Southwest Behavioral Systems
Bogicevic, Danica	Department of Veteran's Affairs
Bolton, Nancy	Arizona Department of Corrections
Burt, Brad	
Bustamante, Rebecca	
Cary, Matt	
Caldwell, Patrice	
Choate, David	
Clark, Mark	
Convie, Michele	
Colgan, Brian.	
Coomer, Nancy	
Cordero, Annel	
Crouse, Tiara.	
De La Pena, Dwayne	
DiFillipo, JoAnn	
Dominguez, Greg	
Dowling, Christine	
Echavarry, Mark	Pima County
Eigo, Tim.	
Eitnier, Jerry	
Ervin, Bonnie	
Evans, Coral	
Fagan, Sandy	
Feldman, Lindsey	
Freeman, Hillary	
Frietz, Roberto	Canitol/ Maryvale Weed & Seed
Garcia, Yvonne	V A M C
Glover, Robin	
Gonzalez, Ana	
Gonzalez, Maria	
Graser, Dayna	
Griego, Jean	
Gust, Fred	
Haley, Dan	
Harmon, Dorothee	
Harper Ana	
Harris, Arlyn	
Hayward, Teresa	
Hellman, Karen	
Henderson, Walter	
Hensler, Theresa	
Herberman, Erinn	
Hinsberg, Joe	
Hogan, Katti	
Johnson, Carol	
Johnson, Sherry	
Jones, Nick	Old Pueblo Community Service/ CEO

	0
	Open Table
	SMMHC, Inc.
	Bureau of Prisons
Labayen, Annette	
	Pima County Faith-Based Program Manager
	Pima County Public Defenders Office
	Phoenix Police Department
	Bureau of Prisons
	RN Cardonlet, The Program Reentry Housing
	U.S. Probation
	Pima County Juvenile Center
	Department of Veteran's Affairs
	Pima County
	U.S. Probation
	Orchard Glen Weed & Seed
	Maricopa County Public Defenders Office
	Old Pueblo Community Services
	Tucson Police Department
Paddock, Cathy	
	Arizona Supreme Court
	ReEntry, Arizona Department of Corrections
Prover Coords	
Dighter Dat	
	Maricopa County Adult Probation
Schultheis Kerri	Arizona Women's Education and Employment (AWEE)
	PPEP, INC
	Orchard Glen Weed & Seed
	The Community Housing Partnership
	Maricopa County Public Defender's Office
	TERROS, Inc.
	Bureau of Prisons, FCC Tucson
·	radic i robution

Wantland, Lori	U.S. Probation
	Adult Probation— Arizona Supreme Court
Wethers, Jan	Arizona Department of Corrections
	Amphi North Tucsor
Wisniewski, Elizabeth	Bureau of Prisons
	South Chandler Help
Wright, Linda	Pima Prevention Partnership
Wyse, Cathy	Maricopa County Adult Probation
	Southwest Behavioral Health

Resource Listing

Angelspeak

Address: P.O. Box 6541 City/ State/ Zip: Scottsdale, AZ 85261

Phone Number: (480) 993-6869 Website/ E-mail: carolmanetta@earthlink.net

Arizona Women's Education and Employment (AWEE), Kerri Schultheis

Address: 640 N. 1st Ave. City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85003 Phone Number: (602) 223-4335 Website/ E-mail: www.awee.org

Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.

Westside Workforce Development Center

Address: 3150 N. 35th Avenue, Suite 5 City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85017

Phone Number: (602)296-6485 Website/ E-mail: www.cplc.org

The Community Housing Partnership

Louisa Stark

Phone Number: (602)253-6905 Website/ E-mail: communityhousing@qwestoffice.net

Concilio Latino De Salud, Inc.

Address: 546 E. Osborn Rd., Suite 22 City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85012 Phone Number: (602)285-0970 Website/ E-mail: www.concilio.org

Dignity Program

Address: 4132 West Kaler Drive City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85051

Phone Number: (623) 931-6560 Website/ E-mail: communityvisions@hotmail.com

Florence Center

Transition Program

Address: 800 E. Butte Avenue City/ State/ Zip: Florence, AZ 85232 Phone Number: (520) 868-1588 Website/ E-mail: www.centralaz.edu

Genisis-X Reentry Services

Address: 2304 North Third Street City/ State/ Zip: Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Phone Number: (928) 214-1048 or (928) 600-6699 Website? E-mail: genisisx@aol.com

GINA's Team, Sue Ellen Allen and Diane Panetta

Address: P.O. Box 36 City/ State/ Zip: Scottsdale, AZ 85252

Phone Number: (480) 343-8185 Website/ E-mail: ginasteam@hotmail.com

Loved Ones of the Incarcerated

Address: P.O. Box 1479 City/ State/ Zip: Bisbee, AZ 85603

Phone Number: (520) 234-6076 Website/ E-mail: lovedonesoftheincarceratedchanges@gmail.com

Maricopa County Public Defender's Office, Jeremy Mussman

Address: 620 W. Jackson, Suite 4015 City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85003

Phone Number: (602) 506-7711 ext. 38308 Website/ E-mail: http://www.pubdef.maricopa.gov

Resource Listing

New Beginnings Treatment Center, Inc.

Address: 7474 N. La Cholla Blvd. City/ State/ Zip: Tucson, AZ 85741

Phone Number: 520-293-8085 Website/ E-mail: Pamela HenleyJohnson, CEO,

phenleyjohnson@nbtcinc.com

Jeanne Klopfenstein, Business Development Manager jklopfenstein@nbtcinc.com

Old Pueblo Community Foundation

Address: 4501 E. 5th Street City/ State/ Zip: Tucson, AZ 85711

Phone Number: 520-546-0122 Website/ E-mail: www.oldpueblofoundation.org

The Partnership (Pima)

Address: 3130 E. Broadway, Suite 180 City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85716

Phone Number: (520) 791-2711 Website/ E-mail: http://thepartnership.us/newsite/index.php

Phoenix Police Department, Michael J. Kurtenbach

Website/ E-mail: mike.kurtenbach@phoenix.gov

Pima County Community College District

Inmate Transition Reentry

Address: 401 North Bonita Avenue City/ State/ Zip: Tucson, AZ 85709 Phone Number: (520) 574-0024 ext. 36240 Website/ E-mail: www.pima.edu

Potential, Community Systems Change

Address: 1197 E. Josephine Saddle Place City/ State/ Zip: Green Valley, AZ 85614

Phone Number: (520) 625-1368 Website/ E-mail: ppestle@comcast.net

The Primavera Foundation, Inc

Address: 141 W. 40th St. City/ State/ Zip: Tucson, AZ 85713

Phone Number: (520) 547-3341 Website/ E-mail: www.primavera.org

PPEP Inc.

Portable Practical Education Preparation

Address: 802 East 46th Street City/ State/ Zip: Tucson, AZ 85713

Phone Number: (520) 622-3553 Website/ E-mail: www.ppep.org/bsimcoe@ppep.org

RIAZ

Recovery Innovations of Arizona

Address: 2701 N. 16th St., Suite 316 City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85006

Phone Number: (602)650-1212 Website/ E-mail: marilynf@recoveryinnovations.org

The Salvation Army

Adult Rehabilitation Center

Address: 1625 South Central Avenue City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85004

Phone Number: (602) 256-4525

Resource Listing

Sunnyside One-Stop

Address: 2304 N. Third Street City/ State/ Zip: Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Phone Number: (928) 779-7011 Website/ E-mail: sunnysideonestop@aol.com

Superstition Mountain Mental Health Center

Address: 879 N. Plaza Drive, Bldg A City/ State/ Zip: Apache Junction, AZ 85217

TEAMS

Transitional Employment and Mentoring Services

Address: 2333 West Northern Avenue #5 City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85021

Phone Number: (602) 296-3421 Website/ E-mail: www.teamsaz.org

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Incarcerated Veteran Reentry

Address: 650 E. Indian School Rd. City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85012

Phone Number: (602) 277-5551 or 1-800-554-7174

U.S. VETS

Address: 804 East Jones Avenue City/ State/ Zip: Phoenix, AZ 85040 Phone Number: (602) 305-8585 Website/ E-mail: www.usvetsinc.org

WReN

Women's Re-entry Network

Phone Number: (520) 991-7970 Website/ Email: www.wrenaz.org/ mconvie@aol.com

