



Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable Newsletter

June 2013

Greetings!

As we are now a little more than halfway through 2013, we'd like to share the latest reentry news at the local, state, and national levels as well as the primary initiatives our committees are undertaking. Additionally, below you'll find important updates on the legislative session that just ended.

UPDATE ON COMPLETED LEGISLATIVE SESSION

During the 83rd Legislative Session, the [A/TCRRT Policy Reform Agenda](#) partnered with the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition (TCJC), the Texas Public Policy Foundation, ACLU, and many other organizations promoting progressive reentry legislation. Thanks to the TCJC, [here](#) is an interactive document that provides a comprehensive update on 50 successful smart-on-crime policies, as well as the criminal justice Sunset legislation and the state budget. It also offers information on "tough on crime" bills that were defeated, and vetoed bills.* They have also compiled a convenient summary of the successful new policies in each bill, which can be found [here](#). Check [our website](#) for more information.

*Note that the Solutions for Confinement & Reentry Bills start on page 8 and the Sunset Legislation Pertaining to Texas' Corrections and Criminal Justice Agencies start on page 10.

Rundberg Project

Community members in the Rundberg area are invited to a Restore Rundberg Meet & Greet Reception on **July 10, 2013 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** at the Greater Austin Merchants Cooperative Association building, 8801 Research Blvd. The event is free and open to the public.

At the reception, you can learn about the Restore Rundberg Project and meet members of the Restore Rundberg Revitalization Team which includes City of Austin staff, Austin Police Department officers, University of Texas researchers, and community members. Find out how to get involved in the project or even apply to join the leadership team yourself. For more information, please visit the project [website](#). Download the [flyer](#) and help spread the word in your community!

Camp Good News: 17 Travis County Kids Experience Camp!

Seventeen children with an incarcerated parent had a week of fun in Navasota at Camp Good News! As a coalition of stakeholders that promote public safety through reduced recidivism, we recognize the value of supporting children and families of the incarcerated. Providing opportunities like Camp Good News help to address the personal hurdles these children face as well as promote breaking the generational cycle of crime. Thanks to the many organizations, churches, companies, and dedicated volunteers that gave their time, energy, and donations so the kids could have memories that will last a lifetime.



Keep Austin Affordable Campaign

Keep Austin Affordable is a coalition of business, faith, and community leaders calling for investment in affordable housing by putting city bonds back on the ballot in November 2013. They have launched their awareness campaign with a rally in early April and will be hosting, planning, or engaging in a variety of community events and media outreach in the next few months. Investment of City of Austin affordable housing bonds from 2005 has made a huge difference in our community. With a loss of 40% of federal housing funding in the past five years, it is important that our community continue to diversify all funding options to help us meet our goals and close the gap on our needs around housing. For more information, see the Keep Austin Affordable [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

6th Annual National Prisoner's Family Conference

The goal of this conference is to strengthen the prison family and promote successful reentry and reunification, ultimately reducing the recidivism rate in the country. To that end, the National Prisoner's Family Conference provides critical connections and information to improve the quality of life for the entire prison family and offers ample networking opportunities with those from across the country serving the prisoner and their family. **Hosted in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas February 19-21 of 2014**, the National Prisoner's Family Conference hopes to provide a forum to improve the quality of life for the prison family through increased awareness, education, and networking promoting positive relationships that reduce risks created by the incarceration of a loved one. For more information, please visit <http://prisonersfamilyconference.org/>, email info@prisonersfamilyconference.org, or call (915) 861-7733.

TCSO Hosts National Conference

The Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) is honored to host the inaugural Vision Summit: Looking Toward the Future of Re-entry in Austin, TX from **September 10-13, 2013**. Considerable, positive reform is occurring all around the country and our agency is excited to support the efforts of re-entry advocates. We believe through enhanced communication, coordination, and collaboration across vested parties that we can make our communities safer by reducing recidivism, improving re-entry outcomes, and assisting those who return from jail and/or prison. Refer to this [attendee information packet](#) for more details on the Summit. We would love to have you attend, so please [register](#) as soon as possible as SPACE IS LIMITED! Also, please share this event information with individuals interested in the reentry field. This Summit promises to be an informative, collaborative, and networking event. Further information is available by contacting Mary E. Moran, Summit Co-Chair, at (512) 854-5463 or emailing mary.moran2@co.travis.tx.us.

Employment in the News

The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) issued its enforcement guidance for employers on hiring policies for the "special needs population" i.e., persons with criminal backgrounds. These guidelines are continually being updated to avoid violation of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Additionally, monetary incentives have been created to encourage businesses to consider expanding their hiring practices of former offenders such as the [Work Opportunity Tax Credit](#) and the [Federal Bonding Program](#). The A/TCRRT's Employment Committee's "[Benefits of Hiring Former Offenders](#)" presentation provides a overview with information specific to Texas.

As you can see, 2013 continues to be a busy and invigorating year. The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable wants, needs, and IS you!

Find out more about how you can [get involved](#).

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Save the Dates!

Support Systems Committee

Date: July 16, 2013
Time: 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Evidence Based Practice Committee

Date: August 5, 2013
Time: 11:30 am -12:45 pm

XOffenders' Council

Date: August 5, 2013
Time: 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Planning Council

Date: July 8, 2013
Time: 12:00 to 2:00 p.m

More Information on Reentry

Interest in reentry is rapidly expanding around the country. The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable has a page on its website where you can find resources for keeping up with nationwide trends in reentry. To see it, click [here](#).