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## Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable Newsletter

December 2018

### December Planning Council Meeting



Please join us for our December Planning Council Meeting for a holiday potluck as well as a shift and share exercise. This will be a casual, fun way for Planning Council members to learn more about reentry-related issues in the 86th Texas Legislative Session.

**When:** Monday, December 10, 2018 from 12:30-2 p.m.

**Where:** Goodwill Community Center  
(3rd floor training room)

[1015 Norwood Park Boulevard](#)  
[Austin, Texas 78753](#)



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### Honoring Past-Chair Helen Gaebler

At the November Planning Council meeting, Reentry Affairs Coordinator Jaime Rodriguez presented Past Chair Helen Gaebler with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of Warden Rodney Myers for her time, dedication, and compassion given in service to the Federal Correctional

Institution in Bastrop, Texas. Way to go, Helen!



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## A/TCRRT Honored at CAN Regional Summit



The [Community \\_ Advancement Network](#) recognized the Roundtable at the CAN Regional Summit in November for its contributions in advancing fair housing in Central Texas.

Some of the partners in developing the [Texas \\_ Criminal \\_ Background Guide and Template for Landlords](#) gathered recently for a photo op!

*Pictured: Paul Cauduro (Austin Apartment Association), Helen Gaebler, Bree Williams and Kelly Nichols.*

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## Reentry Advocacy Project

**Who:** Are you or is someone you are close to directly impacted by the criminal justice system? If so, please join the [Reentry Advocacy Project](#) (RAP) for a monthly conversation with other folks with lived experience with incarceration and reentry.



**What:** A project of the Roundtable, RAP engages formerly incarcerated men and women to advocate for the development and implementation of policies and practices that directly and positively impact the reentry population and their families, as well as provide guidance to the Roundtable. RAP is a place where you can get support and advice to address reentry challenges and barriers.

**When:** RAP meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 6–7:30 p.m. with pizza and informal networking starting at 5:30 p.m.

**Where:** Mt. Zion Baptist Church Zion Action Recovery Center at [2951 E 14th St.](#)

You can stay up-to-date with RAP meeting times and other events by following them on [Facebook](#).

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## Featured RAP Member: Robert Lilly

**Three words that describe you?** Resilient, intelligent, passionate

**What are the top challenges that you faced when reentering?** The top challenges I faced upon my release were lack of experience with recovery, adequate and affordable housing, guidance for realistic employment options, no immediate means of supporting myself, inner

fears, unsupportive family, ill-informed understanding of the role of the parole office.

**What resources have you found most helpful for reentering?** Case management, structured transitional living arrangements, peer recovery support familiar with incarceration.

[Read the Full Interview](#)

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## News & Resources

### Mental Health First Aid Training

If someone stopped breathing or showed signs of having a heart attack, most people would call 911 or administer CPR. But many of us don't know how to help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.

[Mental Health First Aid](#) (MHFA) is a nationally-recognized training that teaches people how to help someone who might be showing signs of a mental health issue. [Click here](#) to watch the video Integral Care launched to raise awareness about Mental Health First Aid.



Anyone can learn the signs of a mental health issue or mental health crisis. Anyone can get the tools to provide support. Anyone can make a difference in someone's life.

[Register today](#) for this free, 1-day class.

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## Informational Webinar on SAMHSA's New 2019 Criminal Justice Learning Collaboratives

[SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation](#), operated by Policy Research Associates, Inc., and known nationally for its work regarding people with behavioral health needs involved in the criminal justice system, is convening five Learning Collaboratives to work intensively with select communities on the following topics:



- Risk-Need-Responsivity
- Family Drug Courts
- Equity and Inclusion
- Competency to Stand Trial/Competence Restoration
- SAMHSA's 8 Guiding Principles for Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice

Each Learning Collaborative will bring together six local teams for an intensive learning, strategic planning, and implementation process to address local issues and needs within their topic area. Each Learning Collaborative will engage subject-matter experts and will facilitate peer-to-peer learning and information sharing.

**If you are interested in learning more about this exciting opportunity, register for one of the upcoming informational webinars by clicking a date below:**

*[Wednesday, December 5 at 1pm CST](#)*

*[Thursday, December 6 at 2pm CST](#)*

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## Texas Prison Education Initiative



[Texas Prison Education Initiative](#) (TPEI) is a group of faculty and graduate students who volunteer teach and tutor in prisons and jails in Texas. Their first class, Sociology 302: Introduction to the Study of Society, began this fall at Gardner Betts Juvenile Detention Center. Through an agreement with University of Texas Extension Office, their students are earning transferable college credit that will help jump-start their degrees once they are released.

Their next goal is to expand this program to begin teaching credit-bearing and college prep classes at Lockhart Correctional Facility, a minimum-security women's prison located just outside of Austin. There are approximately 1,000 women housed at Lockhart, and there are few educational opportunities beyond high school equivalency. They plan to enroll up to 60 women in Introduction to Sociology and a College Preparation class this January.

Learn more about the Texas Prison Education Initiative and how you can get involved by [clicking here](#).

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## 70 Million Jobs: Second Chance Employment Database

[70 Million Jobs](#) is a for-profit job placement company that helps individuals through the entire process of getting a job with a criminal record: from finding misdemeanor- and felony-friendly jobs, to building a resume and submitting applications, to getting hired.

Learn more and check out local listings by [clicking here](#).



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## New Council of State Governments Web Tool Provides Look at Legal, Regulatory Restrictions Against People Who Have Criminal Convictions

From [National Institute of Corrections: Department of Justice](#)



The new [National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction resource](#) compiles thousands of state and federal statutes into a searchable database, making it easier to identify these obscure regulations that can be triggered by a particular conviction.

The website, which will be maintained by the CSG Justice Center and is supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, offers a database that is searchable by relevant components of the consequence including offense categories, fields of employment, and jurisdiction. The website also offers additional news and resources related to reentry.

[Access the Web Tool](#)

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## Texas Judge and Sheriff Create Specialized Treatment Program for Incarcerated Veterans

Excerpted from [North Texas Veterans Court Press Release via PR Newswire](#):

VALOR (Veterans Accessing Lifelong Opportunities for Rehabilitation) is a groundbreaking program that offers work opportunities and extensive treatment alternatives for felony and misdemeanor Veteran offenders who either face the prospect of incarceration or who are already incarcerated. This program is available for veterans from across the State of Texas. The program is an unprecedented collaborative effort between the North Texas Regional Veterans Court, Collin County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) and the Collin County Sheriff's Office.



The VALOR program is rehabilitation (physically, mentally, emotionally, morally, spiritually) and reintegration focused and is designed to help Veteran defendants develop better decision-making and coping skills, provide them with the necessary tools to enhance their well-being, and assist with their reintegration into society.

[Click here](#) to read more.

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## Laura and John Arnold Foundation launches major initiative to transform probation and parole, reduce revocations to prison

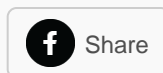
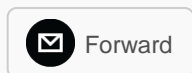


The [Laura and John Arnold Foundation \(LJAF\)](#) have announced a major new initiative to make community supervision fairer and more effective.

As part of this new work, LJAF is collaborating with the Pew Charitable Trusts to make major investments in research, policy reform, advocacy, and other strategies to improve public safety and supervision outcomes.

“Probation and parole failures contribute to exceptionally high incarceration populations, increased taxpayer burdens, and decreased public safety,” said Kelli Rhee, President and CEO of LJAF. “If we can reform these systems so they better position people for success—providing access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment, for example—we will make an enormous impact on the justice system and individual lives.”

[Click here](#) to read more.



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