

ReEntry Acceleration Program (REAP)

Business Association Breakfast
Columbia University
Thursday, June 29, 2017

About the Re-Entry Acceleration Program (REAP) and this Association

REAP [1] trains MBA students to deliver business training to incarcerated individuals, **[2]** coordinates with current and potential employers, and **[3]** creates a forum for new relationships to shape a solutions-focused dialog.

Our **association's mission**: “To enlist 200 business to provide 2000 FIPs with career-track jobs that lead to financial independence by 2020.”

#ColumbiaREAP

The Association's Membership and Purpose

The REAP Business Association is comprised of businesses and reentry organizations who curate and develop strategies to improve hiring opportunities for those with a criminal record. This purpose is expressed in three ways:

1. Articulating the benefits and challenges of employers.
2. Providing support and resources to member organizations.
3. Sharing insights on effective practices with a broader range of employers than has traditionally been reached.

#ColumbiaREAP

Damon J. Phillips, Co-director, the Tamer Center for Social Enterprise

Tommy Safian, Executive Director, Refoundry

Toney Earl, Founder and Executive Director, M.A.D.E Transitional Services

At the previous breakfast on April 26 we

- Formed Working Groups to help employers find:
 - a) skilled workers with a criminal history, and
 - b) resources that will support hiring a formerly incarcerated candidate.
- Nominated liaisons and secretaries for each group.
- These groups continue to develop their strategies and identify solutions for their respective topic areas.

Previous speakers:

- Koby Rotstein, Director of Business Development, Year Up
- Lynn Allen, Technical Evangelist, Autodesk

#ColumbiaREAP

To build a scalable model of civically-engaged businesses, reentry organizations, academic institutions, and others that work in concert to provide career-track employment for formerly incarcerated people that

- breaks down negative perceptions and other barriers to employment;
- provides businesses wider access to the skills, productivity, employment retention benefits of hiring from this employment pool, as well as direct financial incentives;
- reduces the recidivism rate through building long-term financial independence;
- fosters economic development in poor underserved communities;
- and builds the tax base through increased employment, wages, and profits.

Today's Agenda

7:30–8:00 a.m. | Breakfast & Seating

8:00–8:15 a.m. | Welcome

8:15–8:30 a.m. | Featured Member Introduction to the ACLU's Trone Report with Megan French-Marcelin

8:30–8:55 a.m. | Featured Working Group Presentation on Employer/FIP Narratives & "Risk" Management with Roberta Meyers

8:55–9:30 a.m. | Discussion/Planning for Working Groups

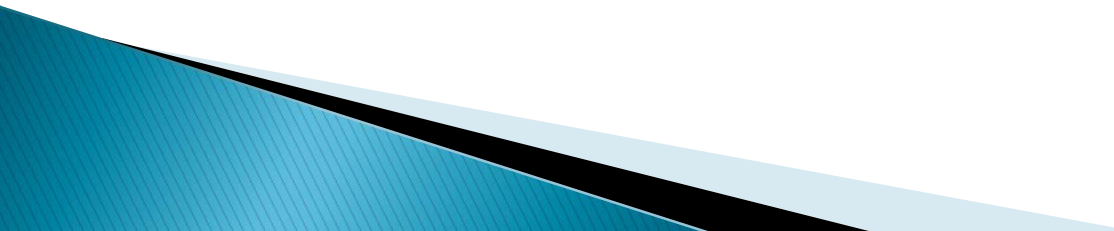
9:30–9:40 a.m. | Next Steps and Wrap-up

9:40–10:00 a.m. | Networking

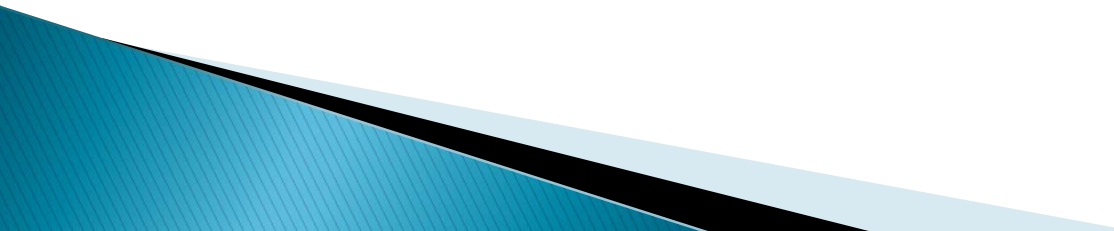
#ColumbiaREAP

Back to Business: How Hiring Formerly Incarcerated Jobseekers Benefits Your Company

Why Employer Engagement?

- ACLU is committed to cutting the prison population by 50 percent...
 - Has developed a 50 state strategy that pinpoints specific reforms to bring the numbers down
 - Commitment to eliminating racial disparities
 - Critical importance of reentry
 - Intersection of jobs and education
- 

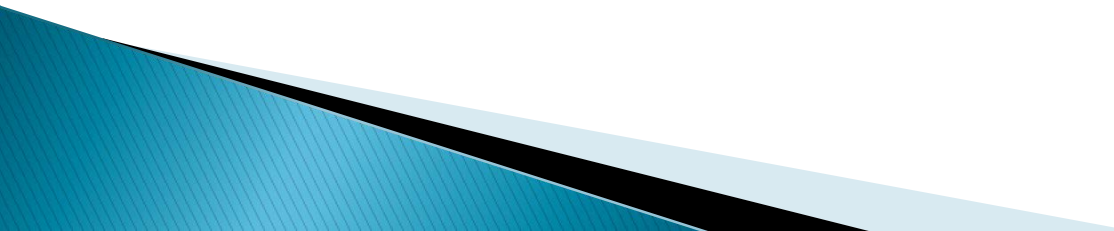
Assembling the Trone Advisory Council

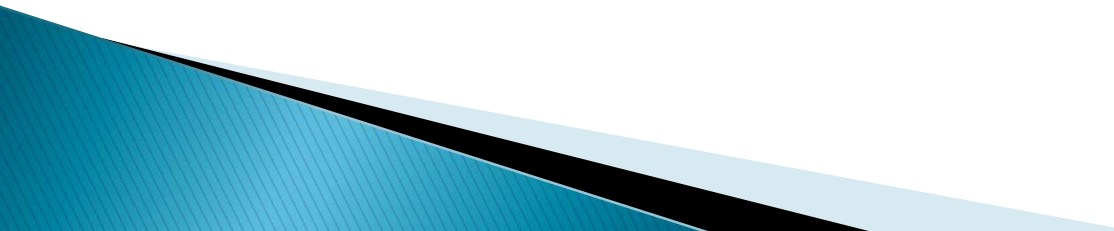
- David Trone wanted more than just to fund the ACLU, he wanted to encourage a private sector investment in reentry
 - Sought companies, large and small, that had supported ban the box and fair chance hiring
 - Participation depended on every company signing onto the White House Fair Chance pledge
 - Worked with companies to encourage them to be champions for fair chance hiring
- 

Making The Case For Business

- Deep dive research into the existing data on retention, turnover, loyalty
- Case studies from companies, large and small, who engaged in the development of fair chance practices
- Consultation with experts on the nitty gritty questions that often hold employers back

What the Research Tells Us

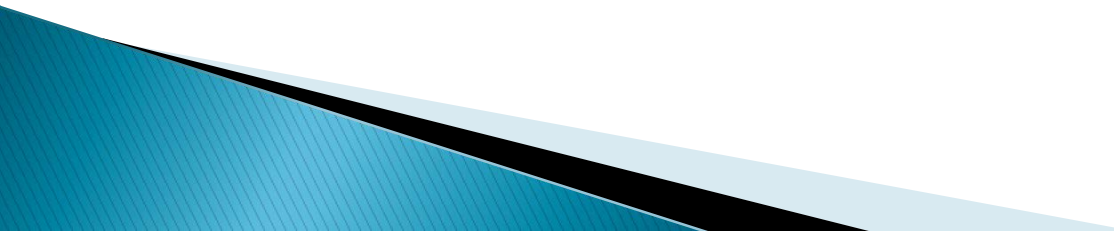
- 75 percent of formerly incarcerated individuals are still unemployed a year after release
 - Pervasive racial inequalities persist due to bias in hiring and the frequent use of race as proxy for criminal background
 - Jobs and education are critical to successful reentry
- 

- And yet.... Total Wine & More found that average annual turnover was 12.2 percent lower for employees with criminal histories.
 - Johns Hopkins found retention was highest among employees with records
 - Employment penalties have a dramatic impact on the economy
 - Employment can generate millions in new revenue
- 

Walking Employers Through Fair Chance Hiring

- Creating partnerships with experts on a variety of employment issues
 - Legal Action Center, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, National Workrights Institute
 - Critical myth busting
 - Ban the Box
 - Negligent Hiring Liability
 - Criminal Background Checks
 - The purpose of a tool kit that creates steps toward fair chance hiring in progression
- 

Outreach and Advocacy

- Business as the messenger for this work
 - And why the ACLU will take a backseat role in promotion
 - What corporation to corporation advocacy can look like
 - Importance of coalition building
 - State advocacy for Title VII compliance and oversight
- 

The ReEntry Acceleration Program (REAP)



WORKING GROUP #2:

EMPLOYERS & FORMERLY INCARCERATED PERSONS
NARRATIVES, STRATEGIES, & DATA:
MARKETING SUCCESS

REAP Employer Breakfast
June 29, 2017

Working Group Participants

17

- Roberta Meyers, Legal Action Center/National H.I.R.E. Network
- Flores Forbes, Columbia University
- Anthony Dixon, When People Work
- Carole Hutchinson, Columbia University
- Jonathan Halperin, Greyston
- Babbie Jacobs, Triskeles
- Michael Grosberg, FedCAP (resigned)

Objective

18

- Reach out to employers (large, medium, and small) in different sectors who have yet to employ FIPs to determine their reservations and concerns for hiring FIPs/people with criminal records. Identify or develop some possible narratives that counter specific negative preconceptions.

Road Blocks

19

- NEGATIVE IMAGES & LABELS
- EMPLOYER FEARS
- DISCRIMINATION
- SKEWED DATA ON RECIDIVISM
- LIMITED PORTRAYALS OF SUCCESS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION



Keys to Success

20



- USE PEOPLE-FIRST LANGUAGE
- USE AN ASSET BASED APPROACH
- TRUTH TELLING
- NEW DATA COLLECTION
- COMPILE TESTIMONIALS FROM EMPLOYERS & FIP TO SHOW PEOPLE 5, 10, 15 YEARS

	Myth	Reality
Unredeemable?	Once a criminal always a criminal.	Research shows that criminal history is not a sound predictor of future criminal behavior. Such behavior diminishes substantially as person matures (click), and those having served longer sentences for more serious crimes are the least likely to reoffend (click).
Unemployable?	People with criminal records lack skills & work history.	Correctional facilities provide an array of skills to incarcerated people; participation in academic and vocational programs is required. Transitional and other organizations offer new skills and reinforce existing skills after (click).
Untrustworthy?	People with criminal records are less trustworthy and reliable.	There is no evidence that people with criminal records are less trustworthy than other employees. Since its inception, federal bonds established to protect employers against possible loss caused by formerly incarcerated employees have been used by employers only one percent of the time (click).
<p>No financial incentives for employers?</p> <h1>Myth Busters</h1> <p><i>"What we are suggesting is that when it comes to the application, give folks a chance to get through the door. Give them a chance...."</i></p> <p>President Barack Obama</p>	There are no financial incentives to hire people with a criminal history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses can save up to \$2,400 per year in federal tax savings for each formerly incarcerated person hired within a year of his/her release (click). • The federal bonding program issues employers \$5,000 to \$25,000 in reimbursement insurance against the risk of theft of money or property in the first six months of employing (click). • Employers can claim a federal tax credit of up to \$3,000 for each full- or part-time employee who is an Empowerment Zone resident (click). • In the Enterprise Zone Program, manufacturers, warehouse distributors, and service-related businesses get benefits for establishing Urban Job Programs, including a 5-year, 80% abatement of local property taxes and a 10-year, 25% credit on business tax (click).
Unlawful to just deny employment?	Discrimination based on having a criminal record is lawful.	Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes discrimination against persons with criminal records illegal (click).

When People Work

Office Phone: (646) 480-5736

Cell: (917) 715-4972

Email: anthony@whenpeoplework.com

Website: whenpeoplework.com

Recommendations

22

- Marketing strategy must be to share the faces of FIP that are currently in the marketplace by industry, profession and trade (not just reentry field)
- Map common reentry pathways to employment or specific companies
- Map which organizations are working on similar projects so as not to duplicate efforts
- Create an Ambassador Corp from the 30% of successful FIPs
- Compile the successful narratives of folks that have written their stories in books
- Create a story share program that can elevate the success narratives similar to [Story Corp](#) and [The Story Exchange](#)

Questions

23

- What is the timeframe and duration of the this project ?
- Is there a budget and/or resources for implementation or does that also need to be recommended by the Working Group?

Today's Agenda

7:30–8:00 a.m. | Breakfast & Seating

8:00–8:15 a.m. | Welcome

8:15–8:30 a.m. | Featured Member Introduction to the ACLU's Trone Report with Megan French-Marcelin

8:30–8:55 a.m. | Featured Working Group Presentation on Employer/FIP Narratives & "Risk" Management with Roberta Meyers

8:55–9:30 a.m. | Discussion/Planning for Working Groups

9:30–9:40 a.m. | Next Steps and Wrap-up

9:40–10:00 a.m. | Networking

#ColumbiaREAP

Working Groups

Employer Working Group Topics

1. Knowledge & Learning
2. Employer/FIP Narratives & “Risk” Management
3. Member Outreach Strategies
4. Building & Refining the Business Case

Employee Working Group Topics

5. Expanding Computer & Tech Literacy
6. Employee Skills
7. Career Transitions & Pathways

Association Measurements and Comparisons

8. Setting the Stage: The Current State of Employment for FIPs
9. Effectiveness & Accountability of the Business Association

#ColumbiaREAP

Working Groups Directions

- Working Groups will work on creating presentations of their findings.
- Presentations should cover what the focus of your group will be and your **top two priorities**.
- Please include project timelines, what resources you will need, and what you seek from the Business Association.
- These presentations will be distributed to other groups.

#ColumbiaREAP

Next Steps

- Complete your Working Group presentations.
- Consider potential employer narratives for the Business Association to explore as illustrated by Roberta Meyers.
- For the next breakfast on **September 26**, please consider at least one employer representative that you think should attend.

#ColumbiaREAP

We'd like to hear from you (will take one minute or less!)

Go to www.menti.com and use the code 18 41 28

#ColumbiaREAP