



The Official On-site Conference Newspaper of the American Correctional Association



# C O N F E R E N C E      D A I L Y

Jan. 30, 2006 – Vol. 18, No. 1



## ***WELCOME To Nashville***



**G**reetings and welcome to beautiful Nashville, Tenn., known to many as Music City U.S.A. I am delighted that you have decided to join us, and I thank you for attending ACA's 2006 Winter Conference. Nashville is a wonderful place to meet, and I am sure that you will enjoy the next few days here. In addition to the Grand Ole Opry and the Country Music Hall of Fame, there are restaurants, museums, art galleries and even a zoo. During your stay, I hope you take the opportunity to experience some of what this great city has to offer.

We have an exciting conference planned this year. Our theme is "Speaking Out and Standing Up for Corrections," and by attending this conference, that is exactly what you are doing. Getting together like this helps us to develop and refine the image that corrections projects to the world. And it is a valuable opportunity to meet friends and colleagues and catch up with what is happening in our profession. The many workshops, seminars, forums and exhibits help keep us on our toes and sharpen our skills. I urge you to take advantage of as many as

possible and continue to be an outstanding representative of corrections.

This year, we are continuing our successful Correctional Roundtable Chat Room, which will tackle such topics as disproportionate minority confinement, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), the Surgeon General's Call to Action and cross-gender supervision. Please join us from 12:30 to 2 p.m., Monday, Jan. 30, as we answer your questions about some very controversial issues in corrections. Be sure to visit the exhibit hall and see the impressive display of the latest products and services available to the field. And don't forget to stop by the displays from our membership services, publications and professional development departments to see how we can help you speak out and stand up for corrections. It's going to be a busy few days, and I hope you relax and enjoy what ACA and Nashville have in store for you.

Sincerely,

Gwendolyn C. Chunn  
ACA President

ACA welcomes the following exhibitors:

American Institute of Architects  
Booth #209

Best Plumbing  
Booth #510

Cobra Systems Inc.  
Booth # 254

Cross Match Technologies  
Booth # 103

Geovox Security  
Booth #344

Johnson Controls  
Booth #252

Kaplan University  
Booth # 105

Keith & Keith Corrections  
Booth #625

Pelco/Specpoint  
Booth # 109

White Conveyors  
Booth #617

**\*\*\*New Exhibitor\*\*\***

American Foods Group  
Booth #403

*These exhibitors are not listed in the program book.*

### **Cancelled Workshop**

**Monday 3:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.**

**C-12 Criminal Justice  
Coalitions**

# Weekend Workshops Address a Variety of Topics

## New Mexico Implements Innovative Approach to Sex Offender Supervision

By Susan Clayton

The New Mexico Corrections Department's Probation/Parole Division has developed a new approach to supervise sex offenders. Several public and private agencies have come together and formed an intra-agency team to monitor these offenders. They include: the Probation/Parole Sex Offender Unit, the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department Sex Offender Unit, clinical staff and a contracted polygraph examiner. David Jablonski, region II special programs manager for the Probation/Parole Division, outlined the benefits of this approach in a Saturday morning workshop.

Why have a sex offender unit? According to Jablonski, the main reason is public safety. Other reasons include: longer sentences for sex offenders, consequences of re-offending, media attention, increased presence of sex offenders, legislative mandates, the unique and unpredictable sex offender population, and an increase in funding and training. He told attendees to keep in mind that not all sex offenders are alike and pointed out that many have no criminal history and are often educated with well-paying jobs.

Prior to last year, sex offenders in New Mexico were lumped with the normal caseload of 100 cases per parole officer. There were no assessment tools available. "A sex offender was a sex offender," Jablonski said. No distinction was made between offenses. Therapy and outpatient counseling was optional and electronic monitoring was not mandated. And there was minimal contact with outside agencies.

The new unit was created after funding was secured in 2003. Additional staff were hired and trained, and equipment and vehicles were purchased. Staff reviewed and amended policies and procedures and developed a mission statement and goals for the unit. The new unit was functioning by 2005.

Now, the completion of an 18-month residential sex offender program is required before an offender can be released to field services. Sex offender therapy is provided during incarceration as well. Programming also has been implemented to aid in the transition from the facility to community supervision. Full diagnostic evaluations and assessments are also conducted and risk levels determined. Polygraphs are used and victims and the community are notified. "We aren't going to release anyone until we know that the community and the victims know they are coming out," Jablonski said. He noted that caseloads are

capped at 25 on new cases with a maintenance caseload of 50. "There is much more emphasis now on field work," he said.

Jablonski outlined some challenges with sex offenders including: detection and monitoring, breaking myths about sex offenders, public and community scrutiny, media attention, placement and employment, and complex and changing laws. New Mexico's new team approach involves a shared and consistent philosophy, concern for victims, seeking the media's assistance and notifying the community. The entire team consisting of the sheriff's department, polygraph examiner, probation/parole unit, transport team/investigators and sex offender therapists, is housed under one roof, which allows for collaboration by all members.

"It's important to have productive offenders," Jablonski said. "Give them a sense of worth so they can succeed; we don't want them to get frustrated and have a lot of down time because that can lead to revictimization." This involves keeping offenders busy, implementing employment mandates and community service, counseling obligations, restitution and frequent reporting.

Jablonski also stressed the benefits of this intra-agency approach including: ensuring shared information, avoiding duplication of similar tasks, centralizing reporting and registration of offenders, promoting communication and cooperation between agencies, reducing recidivism and re-victimization, creating and maintaining positive public relations in the community, encouraging a more efficient method to hold offenders accountable, sharing resources, expanding the use of global positioning satellite (GPS) electronic monitors and, of course, increasing public safety.

There have been positive results. In just one year, there have been 38 arrests during joint operations, 11 of which were for failing to comply with registration requirements. There have been no new sex offenses from current caseloads, no major incidents of reoffending and no record of re-victimization. Collaboration has occurred on three major unsolved sex crime investigations, and four computers and 400 pounds of pornography have been seized. More than 200 hours of specialized sex offender training have been conducted.

"It's important to be proactive in the approach," Jablonski said, "We can't just lock them up and throw away the key." He stressed that the reality is that the majority of sex offenders will be released into the community and they must be supervised differently in order to protect the public. In closing, Jablonski said, "We cannot always dictate their behaviors, but we can attempt to be proactive and use available resources to contain their activities."

*The Conference Daily is made possible by the sponsorship of The GEO Group, Inc.*



## Teaching Ethics to Inmates

By Michael Kelly

When we think about ethics, we normally think about how we conduct ourselves in our personal and professional lives. We do not often think about inmates. After all, they have already demonstrated their ethical lapses. That is why they are incarcerated. However, Carolyn Lincoln, president and CEO of Baby Steps Inc., and a volunteer at Indian Creek Correctional Center in Chesapeake, Va., thinks about inmates and ethics a lot. At a Saturday morning workshop, "Teaching Ethics to Inmates," she explained how she believes that teaching the principles of ethics is an important first step to helping inmates change their criminal behavior and can be a valuable tool for reentry. Indian Creek Correctional Center uses her ethics classes as part of their pre-release transitional program.

Lincoln uses interactive learning through discussions with inmates about character, morals and value definitions. "Inmates already have critical thinking skills," she said. "Get them to use them." She recognizes that inmates' values are not necessarily based on ethics. When having them articulate what they value — what is important to them — money and material goods often top the list. They have used their critical thinking skills to get what they want through crime. Lincoln explains to the inmates that their thinking has led them to some success — even though they are incarcerated, they have survived in what is a very dangerous lifestyle. "Most inmates don't expect to live long," she said, but so far, they have made it.

After identifying values, Lincoln discusses morals with the inmates. She starts out with certain ideas that are easy to agree on, such as murder and sexual assault. Something like substance abuse is often less cut and dried for the inmates, however. Often, Lincoln says, she can get inmates to agree that using illegal drugs is wrong, and many will say, "But I don't take them, I only sell them." In response, Lincoln tries to get them to see that providing illegal drugs for others, too, is wrong. "Doesn't that make you a predator?" she asks them.

For inmates, this kind of interaction is part of the process of relearning how they use their critical thinking skills to direct their thinking toward behavior that is productive, not anti-social. Critical thinking shows them that ethics is involved in everything that they do, and they learn to start thinking about others, not just themselves.

Lincoln makes a point of stressing family. She hopes to interrupt what she calls "the familial prison cycle." Even though many inmates place material wealth highest on their list of values, it is possible to get the inmates to agree that family is important and to focus on that as an important value. "None of these inmates want to see their kids go to prison," she said, and inmates can learn that their behavior has a powerful impact on the people they love. If

they are not around, they have a much weaker hand in influencing what happens to their family.

Lincoln related a poignant example from one of her inmate students. He contacted her some time after transitioning back into his community and told her that his grown daughter had begun spending much more time with him, often going everywhere he went. At first, he thought she was just keeping an eye on him to make sure he stayed out of trouble. But his daughter later explained that she truly enjoyed his company and simply wanted to be with him more. The former inmate told Lincoln that for the first time he understood that the ethics classes were not just about him, but they deeply affect the lives of people around him, as well.

Unfortunately, there is no hard data to measure the classes' effect on recidivism. Scarce funds have made that impossible, so far. However, each of her classes at Indian Creek has about 10 or 15 inmates, and about three or four of them from each class will usually call and let her know how they are doing. It's not hard science, but it's enough information to make Lincoln feel optimistic about the value of teaching ethics to inmates.

*Continued on page 4*



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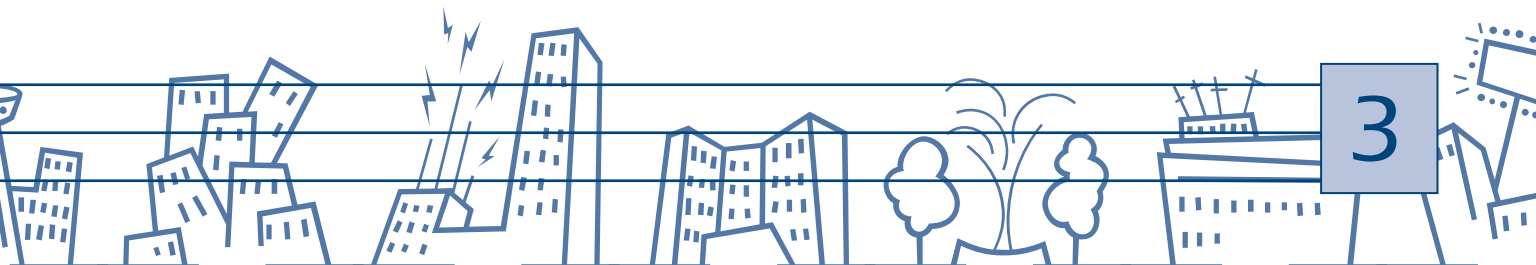
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## Non-English Speakers in Correctional Settings

By Dana McCoy

Inmate populations in correctional institutions are becoming more diverse and are increasingly populated with persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). Jails and prisons in many instances have limited staff who are bilingual. If the challenges associated with inadequate communications with the LEP incarcerated population are not addressed, they can pose institutional security and safety issues.

Research conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice has shown that there is limited guidance or “best practices” being used on the subject of LEP in the corrections field in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 13166. Title VI states that no person shall, “on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Executive Order 13166, titled, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency,” was created to improve access to federally conducted and assisted programs and activities for persons, who as a result of national origin are limited in their English proficiency.

Presenters Linda Quash and Brooks Singer, attorneys in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice discussed the legal ramifications surrounding this issue, as well as the importance of creating and implementing a Language Assistance LEP Plan. A person with LEP is one who does not speak English as a primary language and has limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English.

There are several reasons why an institution should develop and implement an LEP Plan. The most critical reason is to comply with federal law. Others include: to avoid putting lives at risk and increase staff safety, to maintain safety and order in a correctional or detention facility, and to ensure LEP individuals an understanding of their rights, their compliance with institutional rules and regulations, and receiving meaningful access to corrections services.

Before a plan is developed, a self-assessment must be conducted to determine if one is necessary. There are four factors that should be considered. They are demography — the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered; frequency of contact — the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program and/or activities; importance — the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service to people’s lives; and resources — the resources available and costs associated with them. The level of resources and the costs may have an impact on the nature of the language assistance provided. Smaller recipients with more limited

budgets are not expected to provide the same level of language services as larger recipients with large budgets.

“You want to avoid putting lives at risk and create a stable environment for both inmates and correctional staff,” said Singer. As a result, there are quality control measures that should be considered prior to implementing the plan. Assessing and qualifying officers and staff as bilingual is critical. “Corrections officials must really know the true language proficiency of their staff,” Singer reiterated.

Interpreters also must be trained on the institution’s code of conduct, their role as an interpreter, the importance of confidentiality and understanding corrections terminology. Another component of the plan is to develop a Language Assistance Resource List that includes protocol information, a listing of bilingual staff (the language(s) they speak, their shift, rank, etc.), interpreters, telephonic interpretation and list of translated materials.

Officials must also consider how to implement the plan. This includes identifying officials responsible for the implementation, use of general orders/directives on how, when and where to access language assistance, and how language assistance will be handled for particular encounters. Training is essential for both new hires, just entering the academy, and for seasoned veterans who have been with the institution for a long period of time. Communication is also a vital part of implementing the LEP plan. Spreading the word through signage, memorandums and bulletins are effective methods to accomplish this.

Once the plan has been put in place and implemented, it should be monitored, re-evaluated and updated on an ongoing basis. A process for determining whether new documents, programs, services and activities needs to be implemented and should be made accessible for LEP individuals, and provide notice of any changes in services to the LEP public and to employees. Exemplary practices and additional information regarding LEP can be found at [www.lep.gov](http://www.lep.gov).

### Correctional Roundtable Chat Room

ACA is once again offering the Correctional Roundtable Chat Room to attendees. It will be held today from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. in Presidential Chamber C. It will address four topics: disproportionate minority confinement, the Surgeon General’s Call to Action, the Prison Rape Elimination Act and cross- gender supervision. A subject matter resource person(s) will be available at each table to provide answers to your questions, Web site reference information and contact information on his/her respective topic. There will be no formal presentation, but rather small group discussions. Join us for this unique educational experience.

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