

States' Veterans Courts Offer Treatment, Support to Eligible Offenders

Three years ago, Buffalo, New York, launched the nation's first Veterans Treatment Court. The court was designed to be a treatment program mixed with legal consequences, meant especially for veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), brain injuries, or drug dependency. Veterans who agree to the treatment plan participate in a year-long program and, upon compliance with the program, receive reduced or eliminated jail sentences.

The program in Buffalo boasts a zero recidivism rate, and has been so successful that many counties and states have replicated it. The program was originally based on the success of the drug courts across the nation and was designed with

the same "carrot-and-stick" approach. Veterans charged with an offense who plead guilty and qualify for admission to the court undergo a long, heavily supervised treatment program in exchange for a reduced sentence for their original crime. Reduction of sentence is not a complete guarantee: some offenses, like Driving Under the Influence, are not eligible for a lesser punishment. However, veterans treatment courts allow defendants to work through their mental health disorders and substance abuse problems in a safer environment.

Based on the success of the first few veterans courts, in 2010 the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI), and the

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) created the 2010 Veterans Treatment Court Planning Initiative (VTCPI). Ten jurisdictions were awarded VTCPI grants. In addition, many states have stepped in to provide funding and initiatives within their state court systems. For more information on VTCPI grants, see the Fact Sheet produced this year by the Office of National Drug Control Policy at www.WhiteHouseDrugPolicy.gov.

Forty-six veterans courts in 20 states have been opened as of June of this year. Veterans courts across the nation are at varying levels of operation and are being adapted to fit the needs of the area.

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4,813 Arrest-Related Deaths Reported for 2003–2009

The Bureau of Justice Statistics released its latest report, *Arrest Related Deaths 2003–2009 Statistical Tables*, on deaths that occur during "the process of arrest."* The report presents information on the deaths that were reported to the Arrest-Related Deaths (ARD) program for 2003–2009. Following are highlights of the report; the full document can be found on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov.

* For this data collection, BJS defines "in the process of arrest" to include all circumstances in which a person is in the custody or under the restraint of law enforcement officers. It includes situations in which a formal arrest process was neither initiated nor intended, and instances in which law enforcement personnel actively pursue or attempt to apprehend a criminal suspect, regardless of whether physical custody was established. It also includes deaths that involved law enforcement assistance in restraining and transporting individuals in need of medical or mental health care.

- There were 2,931 homicides by law enforcement officers reported to BJS; homicides were 60.1% of all reported arrest-related deaths. During this same seven-year period, approximately 98 million arrests were reported to the FBI, and 4,813 arrest-related deaths were reported to BJS.
- Males comprise 95% of all reported deaths and 76% of persons arrested.
- Individuals 17 years old or younger represent 15.4% of arrests reported by the FBI and 2.6% of all arrest-related deaths.
- Whites accounted for 42% of reported arrest-related deaths; 32% were Black, and 20% were Hispanic.
- Among arrest-related deaths attributed to homicide, 75% of decedents were reported to have engaged in violent

offenses immediately prior to or during the process of arrest.

- Seven percent of law enforcement agencies—the 1,187 state and local law enforcement agencies with 100 or more sworn personnel—report a larger proportion of arrest-related deaths (75%) than their proportion of sworn personnel (64%).

Forty-seven states and the District of Columbia participated in the data collection during the period, although some states did not submit records every year; Georgia, Maryland, and Montana did not participate during this period. The table below shows reported arrest-related deaths by manner of death and demographic characteristics.

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*Veterans Courts from page 1***ALASKA**

In Alaska, the veterans treatment court is located in Anchorage. The court is strictly limited to misdemeanors to which veterans claim “guilty” or “no contest.” The Department of Veterans Affairs determines initial eligibility for the treatment court. The VA then works with the veteran to create an individualized treatment plan,

which is approved by the supervisory judge. Participants appear in court at regular intervals to update on their progress.

ARIZONA

The City of Tucson’s Veteran’s Court is a collaboration of the Tucson City Court and The Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS). When a veteran charged with a misdemeanor wishes to participate in the veteran’s court, a judge will question the veteran to determine the level of interest and basic eligibility, and then send the veteran over to SAVAHCS. The VA further screens for eligibility and determines a treatment program to be supervised by both SAVAHCS and the presiding judge. At the end of the program, if the veteran has not reoffended, the previous charges are dismissed. According to a local paper, the *AZ Central*, Phoenix launched a similar court at the beginning of this year.

CALIFORNIA

According to the state courts’ website, California veterans treatments courts are a collaboration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans’ Benefits Administration, and, in some cases, veteran mentors or veteran support groups. As of November 2010, eight veterans treatment courts were in operation throughout the state in the following counties: Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Tulare, and Ventura. Many other veterans court programs were supposed to become operational in 2011, but their status is unclear at this time.

DELAWARE

Delaware operates a statewide program through the Delaware Superior Court; however, the court physically meets in Kent County. The program also involves the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Justice Office of Public Defender, and the Treatment Access Center. Veterans with misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies can be referred to the Attorney General’s Office or the Office of Public Defenders. Once referred, the veteran can opt in to the program on a voluntary basis. The Veterans Treatment

Court operates both a diversion and probation track. In the diversion track, a guilty plea is deferred while the veteran is enrolled in the program. Upon successful completion of the program, the guilty plea is dismissed. The probation track offers specialized services (including a dedicated probation officer) to assist the justice-involved veteran in receiving substance abuse and/or mental health treatment. The first hearings for both tracks were held in February of this year.

FLORIDA

A few cities and counties in Florida have their own veterans courts. However, the State Congress has been working to create a statewide program. A report was put before the State Senate in October 2010, and a bill to create the courts passed in the Senate on April 6, 2011. In the State House, the bill, HB117, is pending. Currently, the Office of Court Improvement in the Florida Office of State Court Administrators (OSCA) oversees the state’s veterans courts.

GEORGIA

Georgia was the first state in the Southeast to create a functioning veterans court. The court was opened in Forsyth, Georgia, with the help of Hope4Heroes, a nonprofit aimed at helping veterans. Defendants with a history of military service are immediately diverted upon entering the judicial system and screened for PTSD and other disorders related to their service. If deemed eligible, the veteran undergoes an intensive treatment and counseling program. There are currently no plans to expand this program statewide.

HAWAII

A bill to create a statewide veterans court is pending in the Hawaiian State Legislature and has the support of the Hawaiian Judiciary, but the state legislature is currently adjourned. Local courts have not been created.

MINNESOTA

Hennepin County is the first county in Minnesota to have a veterans court. The court operates as a separate calendar

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The report notes that arrest-related deaths are underreported, and BJS did not generate national or annual estimates that account for partial or non-responding jurisdictions. The data are seen as more representative of the nature of arrest-related deaths than the volume at which they occur. BJS recommends caution in comparing counts of arrest-related deaths from year to year.

Status of the Current ARD Program

Since its beginning in 2003, the Arrest-Related Deaths Program has been a collaboration among state and local criminal justice and medical agencies, state reporting coordinators (SRCs) and BJS staff. The SRCs, many of whom are in state Statistical Analysis Centers, work with local agencies to identify eligible deaths, obtain information about these deaths, and report descriptive information about these incidents to BJS. BJS staff compile these reports, review them for internal consistency and conformity to the program requirements, and pro-

duce BJS reports (and updated tables on the BJS website).

Beginning in December 2011, the ARD state reporting coordinators and BJS will be assisted by a new BJS award to RTI International. RTI will help the state reporting coordinators and BJS achieve a more uniform, complete, and credible national accounting of arrest-related deaths with an increased emphasis on the efficiency and timeliness of ARD data collection, analysis, and dissemination of findings.

The Future of the ARD Program

On November 17, 2011, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee adopted, without amendment, the *Deaths in Custody Reporting Act of 2011* that passed the U.S. House of Representatives on September 20, 2011 by a wide margin. The schedule for final action by the Senate is not known.

The *Deaths in Custody Reporting Act of 2011* provides for data collection similar to that already collected by the prison,

jail, and arrest-related death components of the BJS Deaths in Custody Reporting Program. The legislation authorizes the Attorney General to reduce state allocations under several Office of Justice Programs block grant programs by up to 10% for non-compliance with the reporting requirements of this legislation. In addition, the legislation mandates death in custody reporting requirements for Federal law enforcement, correctional, and immigration agencies and their contractors. The legislation also requires that the Attorney General report to Congress within two years on how deaths in custody can be reduced and “the relationship, if any, between the numbers of such deaths and actions of management of such jails, prisons, and other specified facilities.”

Regardless of whether this legislation passes or not, BJS has said that the success of the ARD program, and the ability of this program to provide valuable information, will continue to depend on the

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Table 1: Number of Reported Arrest-Related Deaths, by Manner of Death and Demographic Characteristics, 2003-2009

Demographic Characteristics	All Manners	Homicide	Suicide	Intoxication	Accident	Natural Causes	Unknown
Total	4,813	2,958	541	525	272	244	273
Sex							
Male	4,594	2,851	517	490	259	218	259
Female	218	107	24	35	13	26	13
Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Race/Hispanic Origin							
White, non-Hispanic	2,026	1,233	327	178	95	110	83
Black, non-Hispanic	1,529	937	80	217	111	85	99
Hispanic	949	599	110	109	55	29	47
Other*	150	107	12	17	4	4	6
Unknown	159	82	12	4	7	16	38
Age							
Under 18	127	99	6	5	13	0	4
18-24	909	685	80	53	54	10	27
25-34	1,391	893	140	177	65	41	75
35-44	1,238	658	159	190	78	66	87
45-54	752	390	105	84	45	75	53
55 or older	317	188	44	11	12	52	10
Unknown	79	45	7	5	5	0	17

* Includes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, and persons of two or more races.

Utilizing and Integrating Incident-Based Reporting Systems in Sexual Assault Cases

By Alex Wagner, Director of Institutional Research and Planning, Fisher College

The Center for Leadership in Public Service (CLPS) at Fisher College in Boston is part of a research team collaborating on a National Institute of Justice-funded research project entitled, *Forensic Evidence and Criminal Justice Outcomes in a Statewide Sample of Sexual Assault Cases*. The research team consists of researchers from the Children and Family Research Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS), Saint Xavier University in Illinois, and the CLPS. The project researchers will be guided by an expert advisory board that includes the Massachusetts Crime Reporting Unit (CRU) and the Massachusetts Association of Crime Analysts (MACA), among others.

Forensic evidence in sexual assault cases can corroborate victim reports, help criminal justice professionals prove that assault has occurred, particularly for child victims, and identify unknown suspects through DNA matching. Surprisingly little is known about how common forensic evidence is in sexual assault cases and what impact it has on criminal justice outcomes. The study will examine how often different types of forensic evidence are available (e.g., blood samples, saliva samples), at what point in the case the evidence becomes available, and how much this evidence increases the chances of an arrest and criminal charge. Additional questions include whether forensic evidence has a greater impact in child or adult victim cases, and whether the impact is greater if specialized nurses called Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) conduct the forensic medical examinations.

This study has three goals: (a) to provide a detailed description of forensic evidence in sexual assault cases, including its timing relative to criminal justice out-

comes; (b) to examine the relationship of forensic evidence to criminal justice outcomes; and (c) to analyze the effect of forensic evidence in key segments of the sample: cases with child victims, cases with stranger assailants, and cases with SANEs conducting the examination. The research objectives include 1) examining the frequency of different types of forensic evidence; 2) assessing the timing of forensic evidence availability vis-à-vis arrests and filing criminal charges; 3) assessing the relationship of forensic evidence to arrests and filing criminal charges; 4) assessing whether the relationship of forensic evidence to outcomes is stronger in cases with child victims and in cases with stranger suspects; 5) comparing SANEs versus non-SANE medical providers on forensic evidence and on arrests and filing criminal charges.

There is no single source of crime data, incident-based or summary, which can provide answers to these study goals and research objectives. The 18-month project will therefore link data from a variety of diverse data sources to integrate relevant variables into an analysis data set. Beginning in January 2012, the research team will work with several public agencies in Massachusetts to combine information from databases on health care providers' examinations of victims, crime lab analysis of sexual assault evidence kits, and police records of arrests and criminal charges. The team will draw a random sample of 650 sexual assault cases reported in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts between 2008 and 2010 from a database of more than 12,000 documented sexual assault cases with medical examinations maintained by EOPSS. Using unique, anonymous case identifiers, data will be merged from multiple incident-based reporting sources: 1) Provider Sexual Crime Reports (PSCR), a mandatory form on assault and victim characteristics filled out by medical providers and stored in EOPSS'

database, 2) non-electronic data from the Massachusetts State Police and Boston Police crime laboratories, from which data on forensic evidence and injury will be abstracted and put into spreadsheets, and 3) police incident data from the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) provided by the Massachusetts State Police Crime Reporting Unit (CRU) and a Boston Police database—electronic databases that provide information on arrest and criminal charges as well as victim, offense and assailant characteristics. These data sources will be linked via a sequence of pairwise matching identifiers. The CLPS will be working closely with the CRU and MACA to ensure the successful linkage of the data and the efficacy of the analysis data set. Utilizing these incident-based reporting systems will allow the researchers to examine the data for relationships between offenses, offenders, victims, and arrestees in a manner that will provide answers to the goals of the study as well as the research objectives.

This NIJ-funded research is intended to also provide practical implications for policy- and decision-makers. EOPSS will disseminate results of the study to the Undersecretary for Forensic Science, the Director of the State Police Crime Laboratory, the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, the Massachusetts Association of Crime Analysts, the Massachusetts District Attorney's Association, and the Massachusetts SANE program. Massachusetts has already shown leadership in developing systemic responses to sexual assault with the growth of its Provider Sexual Crime Report database and its unique development of a statewide SANE program and a pediatric evidence kit. By highlighting strengths and challenges in the state's forensic response to sexual assault, these data will further promote system development in Massachusetts, which could inform system development in other states as well. 🇺🇸

SAC Directors Elect Executive Committee for 2011-2012

The new Executive Committee of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) was announced at the annual business meeting of state Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) Directors, which was held on October 19. Because there was no annual JRSA conference this year, the meeting was held as a Webinar, and the election of officers was accomplished by mail-in ballots. The new officers are **Phillip Stevenson** (AZ), President; **Stephen Haas** (WV) Vice President; **Carmen Dorsey** (ME) Secretary/Treasurer; **Lisa Broidy** (NM) and **Lisa Shoaf** (OH), Delegates; and **Jackie Vandercook** (TN), Past President. **David Olson**, Professor, Criminal Justice Department, Loyola University Chicago, will serve as the delegate appointed by President Stevenson to represent non-SAC members.



Phil Stevenson is serving his first term as President of the Association after serving previously on the board as Vice President, Secretary/

Treasurer, and Delegate, as well as on the Association's Training, Technical Assistance, and Technology Committee, the Research Committee, and the Data and Information Sharing Committee. He is the Director of the Arizona Statistical Analysis Center (AZSAC), which serves as the research arm of the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission and contributes to statewide policy development and practice by providing statistical research and analyses of Arizona's criminal and juvenile justice systems. Dr. Stevenson is a member and past chair of the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership Epidemiology Work Group, and is a member of the Children's Action Alliance Juvenile Justice Advisory Board and the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts Juvenile Justice System Improvement Team. He also serves as Vice Chair of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative Privacy and Information

Quality Working Group and is a member of the Global Standards Council, which are subcommittees of the Federal Advisory Committee that advises the U.S. Attorney General on justice information sharing and integration initiatives. In 2012, he will also be serving as Co-Chair of Arizona's National Instant Criminal Background Check System Task Force. Since moving to Arizona in 2006, Dr. Stevenson has been recognized by Arizona Governors Napolitano and Brewer for his work on substance abuse issues in Arizona and by the United States Attorney's Office, District of Arizona for his work for a statewide reentry initiative. Dr. Stevenson received his bachelor's and master's degrees in sociology from the University of Arizona and his Ph.D. in sociology from Loyola University Chicago.



JRSA's Vice President is Stephen Haas, Director of the West Virginia SAC. He has served as Principal Investigator and Project Director

on several state and federally funded research projects and evaluations and has published numerous research reports and academic papers. His recent work centered on the use of core correctional practices in offender reentry; the deterrent capacity of media awareness campaigns designed to reduce gun crime, gun availability, and violent crime; the statistical accuracy of crime statistics; racial profiling; and the use of the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) in effective reentry case planning. Dr. Haas is a former G. Paul Sylvestre Award recipient and is a nationally recognized consultant and Master Trainer on the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI). He holds a B.A. in psychology and political science from The Ohio State University, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati.



Carmen Dorsey is JRSA's Secretary/Treasurer. Ms. Dorsey is Director of the Maine SAC, located at the

University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service. She also directs the Muskie School Justice Policy Program, which informs policy development and practice in civil, criminal, and social justice systems in Maine and the nation and provides opportunities for students to learn and apply research skills outside the classroom. Ms. Dorsey has over 20 years of experience working with justice and public welfare policy and practice issues in government, university, and nonprofit settings. She received her law degree from the University of Maine School of Law and bachelor's degree in political science from Wellesley College.



Lisa Broidy, Director of the New Mexico SAC, is a delegate on JRSA's Executive Committee. The New Mexico

SAC is housed at the University of New Mexico, where Dr. Broidy also directs the Institute for Social Research and is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology. Dr. Broidy's research interests run from theoretical to applied. Her theoretical research focuses particularly on gender differences in the causes and consequences of criminal behavior. Her applied research interests focus on systemic responses to domestic violence and on offender reentry. In addition to serving on JRSA's board, she is an Executive Counselor for the American Society of Criminology.

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The other delegate to the Executive Committee is Lisa Shoaf, Director of the Ohio SAC and acting chief of the Policy and Research section of the Office of Criminal Justice Services, where the SAC is housed. As a Research Analyst, she was responsible for conducting and reviewing evaluations of Ohio's criminal justice programs, including a process evaluation of the Akron Mental Health Court and a study of the Akron Weed and Seed program. Dr. Shoaf became SAC Director in 2004. Her primary responsibilities are to facilitate access to criminal justice statistics and to generate statistical reports and publications. She has collaborated with multiple state and federal agencies on information sharing projects such as the National Violent Death Reporting System and the Death in Custody Reporting Program. Most recently, she and her colleagues have been involved in a multi-city effort to implement a crime reduction initiative based on the Boston Ceasefire strategy. Dr. Shoaf received her education from The Ohio State

University, where she received a B.S. in psychology in 1993 and an M.A. in psychology in 1997. She received a Ph.D. in 2002 in cognitive psychology.



Tennessee SAC Director Jackie Vandercook is JRSA's Past President. She is the Statistics Assistant Director with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and serves as the manager of Tennessee's state National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) program. She has worked at TBI since 1991, when she started the SAC. The SAC began implementation of the state NIBRS program in 1996, and achieved NIBRS certification with the FBI in 1998 and 100% statewide reporting in 2000. Ms. Vandercook currently provides support to the Tennessee Fusion System and is the state's point of contact for implementation of the FBI's Law Enforcement National Data Exchange (N-DEx) program. Ms. Vandercook earned a bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of Tennessee, and is a past president of the Association of State Uniform Crime Reporting Programs (ASUCRP).



David Olson currently serves as a professor in the Criminal Justice Department at Loyola University Chicago, and as the Research Coordinator for the Cook County Sheriff's Office of Reentry Policy through an agreement between Loyola and the Sheriff's Office. For nearly 20 years Dr. Olson worked at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, where he was a Senior Scientist, and directed Illinois' Statewide Drug and Violent Crime Control Strategy Impact Evaluation Program. Dr. Olson has served as staff to numerous statewide commissions in Illinois, and was recently appointed by the Illinois Governor to separate five-year terms on the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice and the Illinois Department of Corrections Advisory Boards. Dr. Olson received his B.S. in criminal justice from Loyola University Chicago, his M.A. in criminal justice from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and his Ph.D. in political science/public policy analysis from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he was the recipient of the Assistant United States Attorney General's Graduate Research Fellowship. 🌸



In Memory of Rick Kern

Rick Kern, Director of the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, and former Virginia SAC Director and JRSA President, passed away on December 13 at age 58 after a long battle with cancer. In a public statement, Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell

praised Rick as a "brilliant scholar, devoted public servant and leading criminologist" who left a lasting legacy in Virginia's criminal justice system by taking the lead in the development of the truth-in-sentencing laws when Virginia abolished parole in 1994. Dr. Kern was nationally and internationally known for his work in offender recidivism and risk assessment, and was well-respected, and well-liked, by his colleagues around the world.

Rick served JRSA in many ways over many years. In addition to serving as Vice President and President of the Association,

he served as Chair of the Research Committee and, most recently, as Appointed Non-SAC Delegate on the Executive Committee in 2008 and 2009. Rick was in demand as a speaker—and was a regular presenter at BJS/JRSA national conferences—not only because his work at the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission served as a model for other states, but also because he was a dynamic presenter with an outstanding ability to communicate equally well to politicians, practitioners, and researchers. He was co-editor, with Bill Bales of Florida State University, of a very well-received special issue of the *Justice Research and Policy* journal devoted to sentencing and corrections.

He leaves behind his wife Denise and three children. He was a valued friend and colleague to many, and we will miss him. 🌸

Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, and Oregon SACs Win National Publication Awards

Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) in Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, and Oregon were awarded JRSA's Phillip Hoke Award, which recognizes outstanding efforts by SACs to publish useful and high quality reports. The contest is judged by a panel of criminal justice professionals (including former SAC directors and staff) using set criteria, and awards are given in two categories: Statistical/Management Reports and Research/Policy Analysis. The awards were presented at JRSA's Annual Business Meeting of Statistical Analysis Centers, which was held in October.

In the Statistical/Management category, Colorado won the large SAC division (five or more staff) for *Crime and Justice in Colorado: 2008-2010* by Kerry Cataldo, Kim English, Linda Harrison, Christine Adams, Kevin L. Ford, Germaine Miera, and Diane Pasini-Hill. This publication provides a comprehensive look at the criminal and juvenile justice systems in Colorado, relying heavily on graphics and a non-technical format to bring together a wide variety of data from multiple sources, including the Division of Criminal Justice's databases, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, the Colorado Judicial Branch, the Department of Corrections, and the Division of Youth Corrections. This edition builds upon and updates previous volumes. One judge commented that, "Colorado's report should be considered the benchmark for how information on crime and justice can be described, interpreted, and presented. The comprehensive scope of this report is impressive, providing data from the criminal event to recidivism. The special features section addresses numerous issues important to the criminal justice community. The overall format and presentation of data are outstanding, and the variety of graphics keeps the reader engaged. This



Janeena Wing and Misty Kifer display the Hoke Award they won for their publication, *2008 Idaho Crime Victimization Survey*.

is a report any state would be proud to publish." The report is available at <http://dcj.state.co.us/ors/pdf/docs/CJ08-10.pdf>.

The Idaho SAC won in the small SAC division for *2008 Idaho Crime Victimization Survey* by Janeena Wing and Misty Kifer. This report summarized the findings of the 2008 Idaho Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS), which was conducted to enhance knowledge about crime and victimization in Idaho and assist in evaluating satisfaction with and effectiveness of criminal justice and health service programs. A total of 2,664 landline and 565 cell-phone households participated in the survey. Participants were asked about any instances of property crime, violent crime, stalking, sexual assault, and domestic violence occurring in 2008. In addition, respondents were questioned regarding personal perceptions of neighborhood safety and satisfaction with police services. One of the judges wrote, "Idaho should be commended for the primary data collection and analysis that informs this report. The document provides an excellent overview of the methodology, and it provides findings in a logical and structured manner that is easy to understand and use. The report benefits from using incident-based reporting data as a method of comparison to the self-report victimization data. The tables are clear and con-



Illinois SAC Hoke Award winners: (l. to r.) Rebecca Campbell, Mark Myrent, Sharyn Adams, and Lindsay Bostwick.

cise." Idaho's report is available at http://www.isp.idaho.gov/pgr/Research/documents/2008Reportrd_001.pdf.

The winner in the Research/Policy Analysis category, large SAC division, was Illinois for *Examining Illinois Probationer Characteristics and Outcomes* by Sharyn Adams, Lindsay Bostwick, and Rebecca Campbell (http://www.icjia.state.il.us/public/pdf/ResearchReports/Examining_IL_probationer_characteristics_and_outcomes_092011.pdf). While most adults convicted of crimes in Illinois are sentenced to probation, little is known about the characteristics of these offenders, the conditions imposed as part of their probation terms, or their recidivism rates. In this study researchers examined characteristics of adults sentenced to probation in 2006. To date, this study has the largest sample size of Illinois probationers and this report provides a detailed snapshot that can help guide probation departments' policy and programming decisions. The judges acknowledged the need for this type of study and were impressed with the data collection instrument. One judge remarked, "A very challenging study given the lack of standardized data across the locations. The report presents a lot of numbers but helps non-statisticians understand them with the 'Notable Findings' sections after the tables."

Iowa, West Virginia, and Wyoming Recognized for Innovative Information Systems

Each year, JRSA's Training, Technical Assistance, and Technology Committee (TTATC) recognizes SAC projects that contributed to improvements in the analytic or operational capabilities of the criminal justice system. This year for the first time, the committee recognized projects in three states—Iowa, West Virginia, and Wyoming.



Paul Stageberg holds the Technical Innovation Recognition Award received by the Iowa SAC for the State of Iowa Criminal Justice Information Sharing (CJIS) Initiative.

State of Iowa Criminal Justice Information Sharing (CJIS) Initiative was selected by the Committee for its incorporation of advanced technologies and justice system-wide impacts. The Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP), which serves as the state's SAC, provided strong project management and oversight for CJIS during the planning and "rollout" phases of the project. Once CJIS was established, the SAC was also able to evaluate and analyze its impact on the justice community and make recommendations to further refine the needs and scope of the project. Additionally, the SAC was responsible for contract management and overseeing the work of the various contractors working on CJIS.

The CJIS initiative is a pure application of service-oriented architecture based on: Global Reference Architecture, Web services standards, eXtensible markup language (XML) standards, including the Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM), which has evolved to the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM).

The Iowa CJIS project utilized cross-boundary collaboration, created a more

transparent justice enterprise, and achieved measurable efficiencies and results, including:

- CJIS uses technology to connect, integrate, and automate existing criminal justice information systems, including the critical public safety and justice workflow they support.
- The CJIS system incorporates business processes and multiple exchanges from 11 state agencies and the judicial branch, 99 county attorneys and sheriffs, and more than 200 municipal law enforcement agencies.
- Prior to the CJIS project, protective orders and arrest warrants took at least two days to enter manually into the system; currently, more than 105 automated messages and notifications are being transferred in real-time each day.
- eCitations issued by officers on the street now go directly between law enforcement and court Case Management Systems (CMS), eliminating the need for manual entry into the system for more than 350,000 eCitations processed every year.
- The automated exchange of information between the Iowa Department of Corrections and the county attorneys now permits victims to be notified of offender transfers/releases days sooner.
- Prior to the Iowa CJIS project, ordering and receiving presentence investigations was a paper-intensive process that could take days to complete. Today, once a report is released, it is available instantly online.
- The criminal filing process with the judicial branch has been made much easier with various motions being filed electronically and orders and notices being returned to criminal justice partners.

The CJIS was also the recipient of the 2011 Best of NIEM Award, which is

given to individuals or teams that have advanced and substantially improved the way NIEM is used for government agencies.



West Virginia's winners of the Technical Innovation Recognition Award : (back row, l. to r.) Simon Bauer-Leffler, Natalie Mills, and Monika Sterling; (front row, l. to r.) Jessica Napier, Stephen M. Haas, and Erica Turley.

The West Virginia SAC was recognized for **Toward Enhanced Information and Data Sharing in West Virginia: Implementation of the LS/CMI Offender Assessment System**. This project was selected by the Committee for the SAC's leadership in the state's adoption of a uniform and systemwide approach to offender risk assessment by the courts, Department of Correction (DOC), probation, and parole. The SAC was charged with the implementation, training, and quality assurance of the LS/CMI—including the establishment and maintenance of the Web-based system. The online LS/CMI system addresses a number of needs in the state and represents an innovative effort to move away from "paper files" toward the electronic collection and dissemination of data and information. In terms of information and other needs it addressed, the LS/CMI online system:

- Provides much-needed information on offender risk levels and criminogenic needs on a statewide basis via a Web connection, thereby, allowing system actors across agencies to access and review offender risk scores and needs;
- Offers valid data to accurately assess risk levels to protect the public and

Illinois SAC Wins the 2011 SAC Web Site Award

Since 1997, JRSA has honored a SAC Web site for exemplary design, functionality, and content. Because information dissemination is such an important function of the SACs, establishing a Web site that provides an effective presence is a vital activity. The winner of the 2011 SAC Web Site Award is the Illinois Statistical Analysis Center.

A unique feature of the Illinois SAC Web site is the availability of criminal justice and associated risk factor data in many formats: downloadable spreadsheets, tabular formats by county, as well as through several data tools that utilize InstantAlas™ templates. These tools enable comparisons of counties on a variety of crime and justice indicators, and correlations of factors within counties. Trends over the last 10 years can also be tracked using these data tools.

Each year the JRSA Training, Technical Assistance, and Technology Committee

reviews all of the SAC Web sites using criteria that include aesthetics, content, and technical considerations. Each Committee member is randomly assigned a list of Web sites to review and asked to choose the best one. The entire Committee then reviews the finalist sites to select the winner.

One reviewer noted that, “The Illinois SAC is truly first-rate. They’ve combined a beautiful layout with technical innovations that provide easy access to their reports and data. The data tools are fabulous.” Another review commented on the utility of the Single Map Analysis and Scatter Plot Analysis tools used on the site, and also liked the “criminal jus-



Illinois Web Site Award winners: (l. to r.) Ernst Mechior, Mark Myrent, Mark Powers, Christine Devitt Westley, Cristin Evans, and Christopher Schweda.

stice and risk factor datasets...it is a good one stop shop for many data sets.”

The Web Site Award was announced at the Annual Business Meeting of the Statistical Analysis Centers held on October 19. 🏆

Innovative Information Systems, cont.

assess offender needs to fill gaps in service delivery and provide for the effective case management of offenders in the community;

- Allows for the more accurate classification of inmates within correctional facilities, and better targeting of interventions in the institutions and on parole; and
- Fills “data gaps” that have been ever-present in the state and had limited the capacity for research and data to guide criminal justice decision-making.

WyCST, the Wyoming Court Supervised Treatment Information Management System, is a custom-built online software application designed to help Wyoming’s drug court programs manage case data and workflow, and to generate accurate



The Wyoming SAC’s information technology team with their JRSA Technical Innovation Recognition Award. On the video display behind them is the dashboard from the WyCST system that the award recognizes. From left: Christian Beshkov, Bob Lefevre and Robert Leduc,

and comprehensive reports for consistent state-level oversight. It is a completely reconceptualized, redesigned, and reprogrammed update of the case management system that had been used by the state’s drug courts since 2005. WyCST makes use of the most current advances in SQL

database programming and .NET capabilities. It also incorporates a modern, intuitive user interface with a dashboard of key performance indicators. Whereas the previous system was case-based, WyCST is incident-based and provides policy analysts with correspondingly richer and more complete evidence to inform policy decisions. The Wyoming SAC (WYSAC) developed the technical specifications for the project, and designed and implemented the project management plan to create the product. WYSAC did all software design and programming, tested the product internally, oversaw the beta testing by selected end users, accomplished all necessary debugging and fine-tuning, prepared user documentation, uploaded data from the previous system, launched the final version statewide, and assisted with training the users. 🏆

SAC NEWS



Arizona

Improving Arizona's National Instant Criminal Background Check System

The state of Arizona continues to mourn the horrific act of violence committed in Tucson on January 8, 2011, which left six people dead and 14 injured, including Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. As details about the alleged shooter emerged, it was noted that he had become increasingly erratic in his behavior prior to the shooting, resulting in a suspension from the community college, where administrators would not allow him to return until he got a mental health evaluation. Although Arizona's criminal justice community has been working for years to address the issue of improving records submitted to the Arizona Computerized Criminal History (ACCH) record system and the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), this tragedy has been a catalyst for Arizona policymakers to dedicate additional attention to the improvement of criminal history and mental health information to NICS.

Through the Bureau of Justice Statistics' FY2011 NICS Act Record Improvement Program, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission is utilizing grant funds to convene and support a statewide NICS Task Force and provide grants dedicated to improving criminal history and mental health information available to NICS in targeted jurisdictions. A primary focus will be given to category five of the Attorney General's evaluation of estimates, targeting mental health adjudications or commitments reporting. Additionally, Arizona recognizes the need to address missing and/or backlogged dispositions for criminal records that would be considered prohibiting records used by NICS (felony convictions, misdemeanor drug convictions, misdemeanor domestic violence convictions, and mental health dispositions).

Co-Chaired by Ms. Pat Nelson, Program Manager for Systems Improvement with the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) and Dr. Phillip Stevenson, Director, Arizona Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), this effort will be jointly lead by ACJC staff, who will coordinate with the numerous state and federal agencies to guide the development and implementation of a long-range NICS records improvement plan.

The work of the Task Force will include:

- Examining statistics on the reporting of criminal history record information and guiding efforts to improve the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of records, with a focus on records containing a NICS offense or disposition;
- Establishing statewide NICS data content, reporting, and management standards;
- Examining current legislation and administrative procedures related to reporting, maintaining, sharing and use of records.
- Developing an Arizona NICS Records Improvement Plan

In addition to convening a NICS Task Force that will develop and implement a NICS Records Improvement Plan, Arizona is using a portion of the state's NICS/NARIP (NICS Act Record Improvement Program) funding to administer a grant program that uses the results of an analysis of criminal history record information conducted by staff of Arizona's SAC to identify the jurisdictions and agencies in greatest need of funding. This grant program will focus on clearing disposition backlogs and the resolution of rejected dispositions that would be considered prohibiting records used by NICS.

Community Data Project Creates Repository for Substance Abuse and Crime Data

Launched in the fall of 2010, the ACJC's Community Data Project (CDP) is a

cross-agency effort that provides a publicly available central repository for Arizona's substance abuse and crime data. The primary goal of the project is to enhance the data-for-decisionmaking process of Arizona's policymakers and practitioners by moving above and beyond the use of state aggregate data and towards the use of localized information that accurately reflects the characteristics and problems of various geographic regions across the state.

To increase the reach of the CDP, the Arizona SAC created a user-friendly website tool that functions as a one-stop portal where individuals can choose the type of data they need, the specific demographic characteristics, and the geographic level(s) of interest. To cover a variety of reporting and visualization needs, the CDP user can display the data in several forms, including easily exportable tables, graphs, and maps. The website also includes advanced search options, information and links to the original data sources and contact information to request data for any particular geographic region that is not currently on the website, a list of resources that includes tutorials and webinars on how to use the CDP, as well as data booklet examples that illustrate how to identify and interpret data patterns and build data-driven strategies that are tailored towards the needs of a specific geographic location.

Although there are several potential uses of the CDP and the data it contains, the project has focused on four primary uses: prevention and intervention program planning, grant writing/needs assessment, evaluation, and policy and partner data-for-decision-making. To develop the utility of these applications and promote consistency in reporting and programmatic monitoring, the substance abuse data contained within the CDP was organized according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Outcome Measures (NOMs) system.

Constructing the CDP data in this manner allows users to build powerful, multilevel pathway models for developing corresponding multifaceted prevention efforts; for identifying emergent patterns to justify grant funding; for establishing outcome evaluation efficacy; and for demonstrating a cost-benefit “ask” from policymakers. As the CDP evolves to include more advanced crime and criminal justice data, similar methods will be used to ensure that the new data allow users to build comprehensive models across multiple domains of Arizona’s criminal justice system.



District of Columbia

Juvenile Justice Summit 2011

On September 9, 2011, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) convened the 2nd Annual Juvenile Justice Summit, “Solutions-Focused Interventions.” The summit served as an interactive forum to highlight innovations, data-driven approaches, and interagency collaborations underway within the District of Columbia’s juvenile justice system. One hundred eighty juvenile justice stakeholders attended the meeting, which opened with an interagency overview of the city’s juvenile justice system, fol-

lowed by sessions focusing on the City-wide Truancy Prevention strategies, Juvenile Behavioral Health Court, Juvenile Reentry, and District Youth Voices as Part of the Solution.

Representatives from the Metropolitan Police Department, Court Social Services, Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, DC Superior Court’s Family Court, Office of the Attorney General, and the Public Defender Service served as panelists for the first session. They provided an overview of the juvenile justice system in DC, discussed agency-specific processes as well as

See SAC News page 12

JRSA Welcomes New Directors to the DC and Kansas SACs

Mannone A. Butler was appointed Executive Director of the District of Columbia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) in May 2011, and as such serves as the District’s Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) Director. CJCC, an independent District agency, serves as the forum to facilitate and support systemic planning, analysis, information sharing, problem solving, and cooperation among local, federal, legislative, executive, and judicial partners to address criminal and juvenile justice issues facing the District of Columbia.

Ms. Butler began her career with the CJCC in 2006 as a Legal Advisor/Program Analyst. In that capacity, she provided general legal and policy analyses on interagency criminal and juvenile justice issues. She also served as Deputy Executive Director, where she was responsible for managing the implementation of the agency’s strategic priorities and day to day operations. She was the Interim Executive Director prior to her appointment.

Before joining the CJCC, Ms. Butler was a Senior Associate in the Washington, DC law firm of Curtis White,

Esq. specializing in telecommunications and information technology. She also served as the Senior Associate for ALTA Consulting Group, a Washington DC consulting firm specializing in public policy development, project management, and organizational development. In addition, she served as the Director of Program Operations for the Urban Family Institute, a nonprofit organization that serves youth and families nationally. While at the Urban Family Institute, she developed the Bridge, a program, supported by Maryland’s Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services in partnership with the Eastern Correctional Institution, for incarcerated fathers to engage with and stay connected to their children.

Ms. Butler is a native Washingtonian. She earned her B.S. in finance from Georgetown University and J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center. After graduating from law school, Ms. Butler served as a Law Fellow for Georgetown University Law Center’s Street Law Clinic.

On October 24, longtime Kansas SAC director **Jan Brasher** retired, and Senior Research Analyst **Fengfang Lu** was

appointed to the director position. Ms. Lu has been with the Kansas Sentencing Commission, where the SAC is housed, since 1998, when she was hired as a Research Analyst II. She was promoted to the Senior Research Analyst in 2003. For the past thirteen years, Ms. Lu has conducted extensive criminal justice research for the SAC, including adult prison population projections and custody classification projections, as well as legislative impact assessments on incarcerated adult and juvenile populations. She is the primary author since 1998 of the *Kansas Sentencing Commission Annual Report*, and a coauthor on the annual *Adult Inmate Prison Population Projections*. She also manages and maintains the Commission’s sentencing databases including designing and developing databases, reprogramming codes, and performing data quality assurance. She has a Master of Arts in Education from University of Missouri-Kansas City, a Specialist in Education degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and is a Master of Science candidate in Accounting at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. ♣

SAC News from page 11

interagency protocols, and discussed ways to track youth as they move through the District's juvenile justice system. Of particular interest during this session was the presentation of procedural flowcharts, which depicted some of the questions frequently asked about the system.

The second session provided a comprehensive look at the citywide strategic framework and collaborative efforts involving truancy prevention in the District of Columbia. Public and charter school panelists shared data on their respective populations, graduation rates, attendance, and chronic truancy rates. Following their presentations, De'Shawn Wright, Deputy Mayor for Education, and Honorable Zoe Bush, Presiding Judge of the Family Court, co-chairs of the District of Columbia's Truancy Taskforce, led an informative discussion on school system governance and its components, school attendance, disciplinary policies, and school-based truancy reduction initiatives. This presentation concluded with a briefing on the citywide school attendance/ truancy prevention media campaign.

The summit also featured the Juvenile Behavioral Diversion Program, the District's mental health problem-solving court, which is "an intensive non-sanction based program designed to link juveniles and status offenders to, and engage them in, appropriate mental health support in the community in order to reduce behavioral symptoms that result in contact with the court and to improve the juvenile's functioning in the home, school, and community." This problem-solving court requires extensive collaboration among judges, prosecutors, probation officers, public defenders, social workers, mental health professionals and clinicians to improve outcomes for juveniles and reduce juvenile recidivism in the District. Finally, juvenile reentry projects in the District of Columbia were highlighted. In 2011, CJCC's Reentry Steering Committee convened a juvenile reentry

workgroup to address the distinct issues facing juveniles who return to their communities. This workgroup focused on the various ways similar jurisdictions define and identify reentry services and programs, a breakdown of the number of reentry services and programs in the District, and the existing gaps and recommendations for reentry services and programs to be implemented in the District. During the summit presentation, panelists provided a briefing on several findings and proposed recommendations to improve the District's juvenile reentry services.

For more information on CJCC's mission and interagency strategic priorities, visit <http://cjcc.dc.gov>.



Illinois

Report on Crime Trends at Illinois Four-Year Colleges, 2005-2008

Using Clery Act data reported by college administrators to the U.S. Department of Education, this project analyzed trends in violent and property crimes reported at four-year colleges in Illinois. Two other sources of campus crime data were used for comparison: security reports compiled by each institution and Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting data. Data on prevalent offense types, location of crime occurrence, and institution type (commuter vs. residential) were analyzed. The purpose is to inform school administrators, policymakers and the public on college campus crime trends and illustrate how different sources of crime data can affect conclusions drawn about those trends. The final report can be accessed on the Authority's website: http://www.icjia.org/publ ic/pdf/ResearchReports/Campus_Crime_Report_082011.pdf.



Maine

Though crime such as identity theft has risen sharply among Maine's residents, far fewer

crimes overall are being reported to law enforcement agencies, according to a new report released this fall by the Maine Statistical Analysis Center at the Muskie School of Public Service. The *2011 Maine Crime Victimization Survey Report* (MCVS) includes data on stalking and property crime, public perception of safety and law enforcement, and crime victimization trends.

Among key findings, nearly 94% of those surveyed report feeling safe in the community where they live. Additionally, about 40% of those surveyed who were victimized by a crime say they reported the incident to local law enforcement agencies, a rate significantly lower than the 53% rate in 2006. Stalking crimes and identity theft reporting rates also fell significantly between 2006 and 2011, even though the incidence rate increased. "This data provides a fuller picture of victimization in the state," says report author Mark Rubin of the Muskie School's Justice Policy program. "Many of these types of crimes aren't reported in the media and go unnoted by policymakers."

Community forums were held in both Portland and Bangor in October to discuss additional findings of MCVS. Unlike standard reported data at a state or local level, the MCVS report includes comprehensive victimization totals that reflect unreported crimes and characteristics of victims and offenders. Forum respondents included such public officials as Maine House Rep. Anne M. Haskell; Jane Carpenter, assistant complaint examiner, Maine Attorney General's Office; and Glen Ross, sheriff, Penobscot County. Each discussed the report data as it pertains to their own constituents and organizational goals to both increase awareness and prevent future crime and victimization. The survey and report were funded by the Bureau of Justice Statistics State Justice Statistics Program and six state and local sponsors. The study is available at: http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/justiceresearch/Publications/Adult/ME_Crime_Victimization_Survey_2011.pdf.



New York

New York SAC and State Courts Release Drug Law Reform Report

New York's Rockefeller Drug Laws, enacted in 1973, mandated long prison sentences for many drug offenders. In April 2009, the State Legislature instituted significant changes that eliminated certain mandatory prison sentences for some drug offenses and reduced the minimum sentence lengths for others. A key element of these changes, Article 216 of New York's Criminal Procedure Law (CPL), became effective in October 2009. It expands opportunities for judges to offer treatment diversion to addicted offenders without the approval by the district attorney. The Article also established a mechanism for prosecutors or defendants to request a judicial hearing regarding diversion to drug court.

The 2009 statute requires studies that report the impact of these drug law reforms. The New York Statistical Analysis Center, located within the State Division of Criminal Justice Services, is coordinating this effort and working with other state agencies, as well as with local agencies, county district attorneys' offices, and diversion programs to obtain additional data not available at the state level.

In November 2011, the New York SAC and the NYS Office of Court Administration collaborated to release the first report on the impact of these changes. It focuses on the effect of statutory changes on drug court screenings and admissions among drug and property offenders now eligible for judicial diversion. NYS Penal Law defines felony B, C, D, or E drug offenses as eligible for treatment diversion, while certain property offenses eligible for diversion are specified in Article 216.

CPL Article 216-eligible Screenings and Admissions

Since October 2009 when CPL Article 216 was implemented, screenings increased 40% statewide, from 4,621 in 2008 to 6,478 in 2010. Admissions to drug court

more than doubled, from 1,039 in 2008 to 2,621 in 2010. Regionally:

- New York City screenings increased 5% from 2008 to 2010, and admissions doubled. In the rest of the state, both screenings and admissions almost tripled from 2008 to 2010.
- Screenings and admissions increased despite decreases in the number of felony drug arrests between 2008 and 2010.
- Statewide, 41% of those screened were admitted into drug court programs.
- The majority (81%) of those admitted into drug court programs were not facing a mandatory prison sentence at arraignment.

Article 216 Hearings

Under CPL Article 216, a defendant or prosecutor may request a judicial hearing on the defendant's eligibility and suitability for participation in a substance abuse treatment program. Between October 2009 and December 2010, 399 Article 216 judicial hearings were conducted statewide. Of the total number of hearings 268, or 67%, found defendants eligible for drug court.

To obtain a copy of the report, go to <http://www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us/drug-law-reform/documents/drug-court-activity-report.pdf>.



North Carolina

Report on Prescription Drug Abuse and Diversion

The North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission released a study on the use and abuse of prescription and over the counter drugs within the state. The report, *Prescription Drug Abuse and Diversion: The Hidden Crises*, was written by Doug Yearwood, the final report by the former SAC Director before his death earlier this year.

The manufacturing, trafficking, selling, possessing and using of illicit drugs has been a national concern for over a cen-

tury, but far less attention has been given to the misuse, abuse, and illegal diversion of licit or prescription medications, the study reports. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the number of teens abusing prescription and over the counter drugs is greater than the number abusing cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine combined.

The purpose of this study was to document the nature and extent of prescription drug abuse and diversion across North Carolina. A 19-item survey questionnaire was sent to police departments and sheriffs' offices across the state in an effort to collect information on the number of prescription drug abuse and diversion cases over the past year, as well as on short-term trends within the respondents' respective jurisdictions. Questions were also included to identify the basic case attributes, and to ascertain the divergence or convergence of illegal drugs and prescription medicines in the underground market. Results of the study, as well as administrative and system data, indicate that prescription drug abuse and diversion is a serious issue in North Carolina. Ninety percent of the law enforcement respondents reported an increase in abuse and diversion over the past five years. Respondents' indicated that one in three drug investigation cases centered on prescription medications alone; the typical law enforcement respondent rated prescription drug diversion as being more serious in their community than violent crime, firearm violations, and gangs. The report is available at <http://www.ncgccd.org/pdfs/pubs/drugdiversion.pdf>.



Oregon

Recommendations for Comprehensive Sentencing Reform

Earlier this year Governor Kitzhaber issued an executive order creating the Governor's Commission on Public

Veterans Courts from page 2

within the mental health court. Established in 2010, this court celebrated its first anniversary in June. The program length for this court is set at 12 to 18 months, and most participants receive a peer mentor, but not all. When needed, medication monitoring takes place at the PRISM (Providing Resources and Integrating Services to the Mentally Ill) center.

MISSOURI

According to the Treatment Court Coordinator at the Office of State Courts Administrator in Jefferson City, currently Missouri has four Veterans Treatment Courts, which are located in the City of St. Louis, Kansas City Municipal Court, Jackson County, and the SEMO Veterans Treatment Court (covers eight counties in Southeast Missouri). Legislation enabling veterans treatment courts is expected to be introduced in the coming legislative session.

MONTANA

Missoula launched Montana's first veterans court in June of this year. The court is modeled after the original in Buffalo, New York, but veterans can be referred by anyone: attorney, judge, family member, treatment provider. Veterans facing charges for violent felonies cannot participate. Plans are being developed for subsequent veterans courts in Billings and Great Falls.

NEVADA

Governor Jim Gibbons signed a law creating a statewide system of veterans courts in May 2009. Washoe and Churchill Counties have set up courts, but other counties, such as Clark County, are still waiting for government funding. Under the Nevada plan, the criminal records of the veterans are sealed upon completion of the program. The referral process to gain access to the program is not clear.

NEW YORK

Veterans courts originated in Buffalo, New York, as detailed at the beginning of this article. Since 2008, a few other

cities have launched small veterans courts programs, but no statewide system has been discussed.

OHIO

Ohio has three recognized veterans courts: Mansfield Municipal, Youngstown Municipal, and Hamilton County Common Pleas. The courts in Mansfield and Youngstown are misdemeanor courts, and Hamilton County is a felony court. All three courts accept violent cases on a case by case basis. All three court programs have mentorship components.

OKLAHOMA

There are two veterans treatment courts in Oklahoma: one in Tulsa and one in Oklahoma City. The goal of the veterans courts in Oklahoma is to provide counseling, supervision, and treatment paid for by veterans' benefits instead of by the state. The court in Tulsa uses multiple government and veterans groups to provide employment, housing, and treatment assistance to those who qualify. Qualification is determined by the Veterans Treatment Court, the judge for the case, and the prosecutor. According to the Oklahoma Bar Association, the program in Tulsa is a five-phase program lasting at least two years. Ten offenders have successfully completed their program, and there are about 40 participants at this time. The final eligibility approval is given by the District Attorney.

OREGON

Oregon's first veterans treatment court launched in November 2010 in Klamath County, according to the VA. The District Attorney's office screens cases to determine eligibility; the veteran must plead guilty to the offense. Participants must be at least 18 years of age, a resident of Klamath County, have his or her veteran status confirmed by the VA, have a diagnosed substance abuse or mental health problem, and have the capacity and willingness to participate in the court as evidenced by voluntary acceptance of the plea negotiation leading to entrance. Participants, along with their supportive mentors and treatment facilitators, appear before the court on a weekly basis. Veterans

not eligible for the court include those not meeting these conditions and/or those separated from military service because of a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge, those diagnosed with refractory personality disorders, those participating in a medical marijuana program, or those referred by jurisdictions outside Klamath County. Felony weapons offenses, sexual offenses, and commercial drug offenses also render a veteran ineligible.

PENNSYLVANIA

This year, veterans courts are being created all across Pennsylvania, with more planned to open in 2012. Courts are currently up and running in at least nine counties, the first of which was in Lackawanna County. In some of these courts, a wide range of charges can still allow a veteran to participate in the treatment program, including some assault or arson charges. However, many types of cases are not accepted, like cases involving sex offenses or homicide. Veterans are put on strict probation and required to meet with their probation officer frequently, in addition to appearances in court or meetings with mentors and treatment officers.

RHODE ISLAND

Kent County Court began its pilot veterans court program in late 2010 and early 2011. The court is funded through a grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), in partnership with the Rhode Island Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) and the Kent Center in Warwick. Clinicians assess the veteran for signs of PTSD or other mental health problems, and determine at least the first stages of qualification. Because the court is still in a pilot stage, the parameters and specifics are evolving. The Office of the Attorney General and the state court system are working closely to better define the treatment program.

TEXAS

In June of 2009, Texas passed legislation that specifically permits the establishment

Continued next page

of veterans treatment court programs. Courts are established by county, and many counties have already launched courts. In Dallas County, participants in the treatment court basically replace jail time with therapy and treatment and have the chance to have their case dismissed at the end of their program. The most likely candidates for the court are veterans who received an honorable discharge and are only charged with crimes that would likely receive probation. Three veterans have successfully completed the program in Dallas County.

According to the Texas Veterans Commission, other counties, such as Travis County, Harris County, and Tarrant County, run on an almost completely volunteer basis. Attorneys and law students represent the veterans *pro bono*, and many of the mental health specialists and mentors are volunteers. Veterans only qualify for these programs if they are diagnosed with a condition associated with their medical service and are charged with a nonviolent offense.

UTAH

The only two veterans courts in Utah are held in Salt Lake City: one at the state level, the other at the federal level. The federal veterans court, begun by Magistrate Judge Paul Warner, is believed to be the first of its kind. According to *Deseret News*, a local newspaper, the federal veterans court has never received official guidelines or special approval. Judge Warner asked permission of chief U.S. District Judge Tena Campbell to create

the court, and has asked other judges to refer candidates to him. There are now about 20 participants at any given time.

WASHINGTON

Washington boasts five veterans courts in Thurston County, Clark County, Pierce County, Spokane County, and the Seattle Veteran Treatment Court, which launched this November. The courts are set up as an overlay on the court docket, and King County's mental health court is expected to add a veterans docket in February. The veterans court in Thurston County, the first in Washington State, has had two graduates. The graduates seem to be doing well in reentering society and the judge overseeing their treatment said their chances of being back in the criminal justice system are "greatly reduced," according to *The Olympian*, a local newspaper. The largest enrollment belongs to Spokane County with 12 program participants. Washington courts promote peer mentoring: other veterans serve as mentors for participants to help guide them through the court system and provide support.

WISCONSIN

The veterans court programs in Wisconsin are growing rapidly in number. The idea for a statewide initiative began with bringing Judge Robert Russell, the initiator of the first veterans court in Buffalo, New York, to speak in front of the Office of the State Public Defender and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. There are now five functioning county veterans courts, a County Veteran

Services Officer (CVSO) in every county in Wisconsin, and a Veterans Intervention Program (VI-VIP) to encourage and support veterans court programs. Two more courts are in the planning stages. Mentors helping in treatment are trained and sworn in, and although each county program is slightly different, the state as a whole is working to support the creation and continuation of veterans treatment courts. ☞

– Susannah Sanford

Arrest-Related Deaths from page 3

support and participation of state reporting coordinators, state and local law enforcement agencies, and medical offices. Under the Federal Paperwork Reduction Act, the authority to collect data must be reviewed every three years. BJS authority to collect ARD data ends December 31, 2012. For this reason, during 2012, BJS is required to explain to the U.S. Office of Management and Budget the operations of this program, the appropriateness of the questions asked, the data collection methods used, and the burden this data collection effort places on the American people.

In 2010 with the assistance of JRSA, BJS conducted an Arrest-Related Deaths Program Review meeting to discuss data collection issues. Based on comments received during the review and by state reporting coordinators, BJS is assessing all aspects of this program. In order to demonstrate the extent to which BJS has minimized the burden of its data collection efforts, in 2012 BJS will be documenting more completely how this program operates in each state and will assess the feasibility of alternative designs for measuring the nature and extent of future arrest-related deaths.

If you have questions about this program or want to provide information that would assist in the design of the future ARD program, contact Andrea Burch, the BJS ARD Program Manager, at Andrea.Burch@usdoj.gov. ☞

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Safety: "The Commission shall collect, review, and evaluate arrest, conviction, sentencing and recidivism data in order to develop recommendations for comprehensive sentencing reform for consideration by the state legislature and by the people of Oregon." The Oregon Statistical Analysis Center has played an important role in staffing this commission and providing data to the commission

and its subcommittees. The SAC helped present an overview of Oregon's criminal justice system, cost-benefit analysis and justice reinvestment, and risk at sentencing, and also helped write the final report, which was scheduled for release on December 15th. For more information on the Governor's Public Safety Commission, visit <http://www.ocjc.state.or.us/CJC/CommPubSaf.shtml>. ☞

The JRSA Forum is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. JRSA is a national nonprofit organization. For membership or other information, call (202) 842- 9330, e-mail cjinfor@jrso.org, or visit our Web site: <http://www.jrsa.org>.

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Publication Awards from page 7

The small SAC winner in the Research/Policy Analysis category was the Oregon SAC for *Longitudinal Study of the Application of Measure 11 and Mandatory Minimums in Oregon* by Michael Wilson, Craig Prins, and Kelly Officer. This report examines the effect of Measure 11 on case processing and outcomes in Oregon. Measure 11 went into effect in 1995, and requires mandatory minimum sentences exceeding guideline recommendations for certain violent or sexual offenses. The study found more than 70% of offenders indicted for Measure 11 offenses pleaded guilty to

lesser charges, but these offenders were still more likely to go to prison and the median length of stay was 81% longer. Variation in application was found by county, offender demographics, and criminal history. The report concludes that Measure 11 shifted much of the discretion in sentencing from judges to prosecutors via its role in charging decisions and the plea bargaining process. According to the report, very few studies in the nation have examined how mandatory minimum sentencing laws have been applied from indictment through conviction. Even fewer studies have looked specifically at how Oregon's

Measure 11 changed the disposition of cases. This report analyzes M11 and how it has been applied over the past 15 years. All of the judges commented on the strength of the methodology of the analyses presented in the report. One judge commented, "This report was very well done. It was a straightforward evaluation of the M11 policy and presented the information in a clear and understandable manner. I was very impressed by how the authors organized the report around the initial arguments in passing the law." The report is available at http://www.oregon.gov/CJC/docs/Measure_11_Analysis_Final.pdf?ga=t. 