



# POLICY & PRACTICE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
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DECEMBER 2016

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## Designing Ecosystems Together



This issue is dedicated to partnerships, including those across the public and private social-serving sectors. On the heels of our annual Harvard Health and Human Services Summit, this topic is very much at the top of my mind. For those of you unfamiliar with this annual event, for seven years health and human service leaders from all levels of government and from the social-serving sector, in partnership with Harvard's Leadership for a Networked World and Accenture, have been gathering in Cambridge about issues surrounding the Human Services Value Curve. Each year, our members and partners have the opportunity to step away from their daily demands and spend a weekend together “getting on the balcony” to see patterns and the bigger picture of what is happening in our communities and in our nation. The summit also provides an opportunity to zoom in on the enablers and barriers to achieving better outcomes for children and families.

After this year's summit, I am convinced, more than ever, of the value

that cross-sector collaboration means to our collective work and believe that finding the keys to “generative partnerships” is at the heart of the system transformation we all seek.

While in this short column I cannot possibly capture the richness of the discussion at the summit or illuminate the many ideas sparked by the case studies, I can share the following four insights on how *together* we can reimagine our current systems and create a new, modern ecosystem that supports all children and families to reach their full potential.

### Well-Being Is at the Heart of Our Collective Efforts

Those of us working in the human-serving sector, as leaders in health, social services, education, law enforcement, or criminal justice—from public systems, social-serving organizations, or social enterprise—we all share a core belief that everyone should have the opportunity to live healthy lives and be well. We must frame the work

of the human-serving system to be consistent with the recognition that we all need support at times along the way—throughout our lifecycle—if we are to achieve wellness and reach our full potential. This is a shared narrative we need to embrace across sectors.

### We Can Create More Permeable Boundaries Across Sectors

To do so, we need a more systematic understanding of enablers and barriers of the current ecosystems—recognizing the complexities within them and how deeply the cultural roots are embedded. We need to get at the right questions—some of which we now know (e.g., the social determinants of health), and others we have yet to discover. As Susan Dreyfus, president and CEO of the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, noted: “This is our moment. We must get at the art and science of shared

See *Director's Memo* on page 27





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*Policy & Practice*™ (ISSN 1942-6828) is published six times a year by the American Public Human Services Association, 1133 Nineteenth Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036. For subscription information, contact APHSA at (202) 682-0100 or visit the web site at www.aphsa.org.

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## Reducing Recidivism Through Combined Community Effort: The Allegheny County Jail Collaborative

### It Was the Best Thing I Could Have Done

**W**hen Darryl Coaston walked out of the county jail in October 2011, it was the start of a very different life. No more selling drugs or “doing whatever it takes.” He was starting a training program and work, and he had an ally in a community caseworker who would stand by him in the months ahead, all as part of an Allegheny County Jail Collaborative program.

“When they presented the opportunity to join the program,” said Coaston, “I was very skeptical. I wanted nothing the jail had to offer me but the key to the front door. I had a more criminal-minded way of thinking.”

He did say yes, though, because he thought it would be a better way to kill some time. He would spend more than a year in the Jail Collaborative’s Reentry Program.

The program begins in the jail and continues after release, working specifically with people at higher risk of recidivism and who are serving a county sentence. It starts with giving each person an assessment of their strengths and needs, which case managers and participants use to shape a service plan. The program then provides human services and treatment, including service coordination in the jail, which continues for several months after release.

While each service plan is unique, every person in the program receives cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). For Coaston, CBT opened his eyes and helped him change his ways of thinking. “It was the best thing I could have ever done in my life at that point.



(left to right) Chef Darryl Coaston, Chef Travis, and graduate Ray prep vegetables for local meals. (Photo Credit: Community Kitchen Pittsburgh)

We acted out scenarios of our own life situations to help us change our pattern of thinking. Seemed silly at the time but it really worked. I actually still use some of the methods we were taught.” A class in family support he also attended while in jail challenged him to think about what being a great father really means. He learned more about what children need from their parents, he was able to talk with his children every week, and the family support staff helped arrange special family visits.

When Coaston was getting close to the time of his release, his case manager met with him and enrolled him in the culinary arts training program he had selected. This case

manager proved to be the “greatest, biggest fan and supporter, always fighting for me and wanting nothing but the best for me.” She helped him get the transportation, clothing, and groceries he needed, and linked him with a housing program where he could live while in training. While the training program was demanding, it also included the chance to work in his new profession during the evenings, so Coaston stuck with it.

Coaston is one of hundreds of people who put in the effort to change the course of their lives. The Jail Collaborative was there to support

*See Allegheny on page 26*



By Louise Wasilewski



## Case Management Coordination for High Utilizers

Each year, 11,000 people cycle through our jails. About half of them have substance use challenges, and 2,000 suffer from serious mental illness. It costs our counties about \$20 billion a year on jails, our courts \$22 billion, with the cost to human services, workforce, and housing agencies added to that. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP)<sup>1</sup> has analyzed hundreds of programs to identify those that are both cost effective and likely to produce the desired outcomes. We know that case management of supportive services, combined with swift and certain sanctions, produces lower recidivism and improved public safety. We know how to make a dent in this problem, but it is still harder than it looks.

When a person is released from jail, he or she often needs help finding housing and work, but if the counselors do not coordinate their efforts, we know what happens. Housing finds a place to live on one side of town, workforce finds a job on the other side, and then everyone wonders why that person is late for work. Most seriously, if an individual on psychiatric medications is released from jail but cannot get continuity of care in the community, decompensation can occur, resulting in renewed engagement with law enforcement—so the cycle continues.

There are many barriers to coordination in addition to organizational silos. Informed consent and other privacy concerns prevent a caseworker in one organization from sharing information with a caseworker in another. HIPAA, 42 CFR Part 2, and state statutes form a tangled mess of regulations, so staff simply do not share even what they could, to avoid the risk of dismissal. Isn't it crazy that privacy, something that is

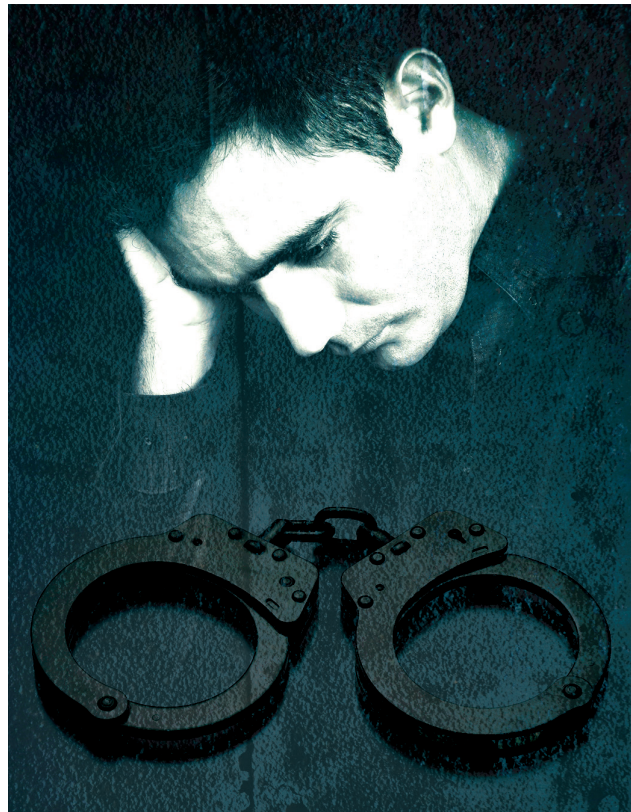
supposed to protect us, is getting in the way of recovery?

Of course, our criminal justice information systems (CJIS) are designed to safeguard data and CJIS requirements are stringent for staff, processes, and systems. Workforce, housing, education, and social services all have their own IT systems that usually don't communicate to each other either, and have their own privacy rules.

The question is, how do we get criminal justice agencies, whose first mission is to protect the public, and health and human service agencies, whose first mission is to help the individual, to work together and share information? There are resources that counties and states can use to build trust and systems to create the change we all need to see.

The National Association of Counties, the American Psychiatric Association Foundation, and the Justice Center for the Council of State Governments teamed up last year to launch the Stepping Up Initiative. This provides a toolkit to help communities come together to address this pressing challenge. The toolkit focuses on people and processes.<sup>2</sup>

The Criminal Justice and Health Collaboration Project produced an extensive report, "Opportunities



for Information Sharing to Enhance Health and Public Safety Outcomes," that provides a use case guide for communities wishing to improve reentry and care in the community.<sup>3</sup> This report identifies the challenges that must be overcome, including regulatory and technology burdens.

APHSA's affiliate, IT Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM), is now in a dialogue with its peer organization in criminal justice, the Integrated Justice Information Solutions (IJIS) Institute, to establish a working relationship. IJIS members have been key contributors to the NIEM standards now being adopted

See Case Management on page 25



## HSITAG's HHS State of the States Survey

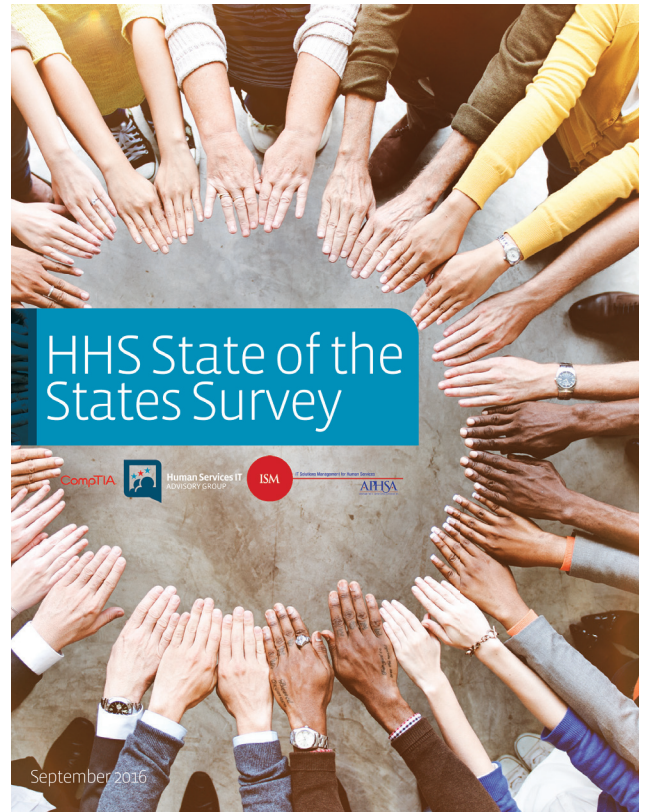
**G**overnment Technology magazine is predicting an investment of nearly \$100 billion in government technology during 2016. The single largest portion of that investment, estimated at more than \$25 billion, will be in health and human services (HHS). With such massive investments in the HHS vertical of government and projections of continued growth in the near future, government partnerships with the technology industry play an important role in shaping how technology is applied to the challenges of HHS service delivery in times of a contracting workforce and expanding caseloads.

CompTIA's Human Services IT Advisory Group (HSITAG) represents technology industry companies working with governments in the human service market and partners closely with the AHPHA on many initiatives in order to give a complete picture of both government and industry perspectives on the HHS sector.

This summer, HSITAG partnered with AHPHA to execute a survey of state HHS thought leaders in order to gain insights into technology and business plans in the making for the coming year. The survey results also serve as a tool for these HHS executives to gauge their state's standing among peer states. Modeled after the State CIO Survey that CompTIA conducts in partnership with the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and Grant Thornton, the idea is to have each state represented by one individual in order to avoid bias toward larger or more active states.

What were some insights from this year's survey?

- 65 percent of states report having only a few or some of their service delivery modernizations in place. While all responding states are at least somewhat active in legacy system replacement, not all are taking advantage of the A-87 cost allocation waiver and one in five states is not using the waiver at all. Even more significant, 75 percent of responding states do not believe they will be able to implement new systems before the waiver expires at the end of 2018. If these predictions are realized, hundreds of millions of enhanced funding to states will be jeopardized.
- IT project governance was controlled by a split between agency business owners, agency IT management, project management offices, and the state CIO agency. Responses also indicated that regardless of who owns the project, having a single point of governance was important.
- Modular procurement systems are having a significant impact on state procurement processes across the nation and states are generally on board with the idea of modular systems. While the majority of respondents strongly favor modular procurement, there



were cautionary responses like this one: *“Unfortunately, the concept of modular/reusable brings its own set of risks in that modules must work together seamlessly. This type of design requires a strong vision and architectural plan that can easily be thrown off course.”*

- States rank their collaboration with the federal government as strong while there appears to be considerably less focus on collaboration among peer states. This could cause issues as the federal government pushes for reuse and shared solutions among states.

See HSITAG on page 30



The reality of ongoing turnover and recruiting costs to businesses and organizations affects the bottom line on a daily basis. It is something that human resource departments and organizations as a whole must address if they are to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Ruth Weirich sites in her book, *Workplace Stability*, that research in 2004 predicted “the value of hourly and lower-wage employees to many organizations is only expected to increase in the future... In order to stay competitive in an increasingly global economy, employers will need to hire, train, and retain entry-level personnel.”<sup>1</sup> The results of this environment not only affect the bottom line due to the costs of turnover, but also the degradation of morale and corporate culture, which is negatively affecting the workplace.

Companies that are able to retain the best employees in this market set themselves apart as “the best places to work,” improving productivity among employees, and significantly improving their bottom line. In addition, human resource departments that are able to retain employees are then able to direct their attention to training, development, and continuous improvement efforts among the companies’ most important asset: *people*.

# Employer Resource Networks

Improving Job Retention Through  
Private–Public Partnerships

*By Nathan Mandsager and John Saccocio*



I ♥ my  
job



Understanding the realities of the targeted workforce, which primarily affect the entry-level positions within a company, results in Employer Resource Network (ERN) members significantly improving the retention of employees. When an employee is living in daily instability outside of the workplace, their work may not be their primary focus. Instability is caused by a number of things, depending on the individual, but the most common issues are related to child care, reliable transportation, stable housing, family crises, and food scarcity. “Studies show that stress and dissatisfaction at work negatively impact relationships and parenting style. At the same time, stress and concerns at home can negatively impact work performance. Both need to be addressed by attaching families to necessary work supports including transportation, child care, and ongoing job counseling and case management.”<sup>2</sup> Employers need their workforce to be focused, engaged, and “present” in order to maintain productivity, excellent customer care, and workplace safety. Additionally, employees that are distracted by extra-work issues are less likely to develop into long-term assets to the company because their focus is not workplace success but daily survival.

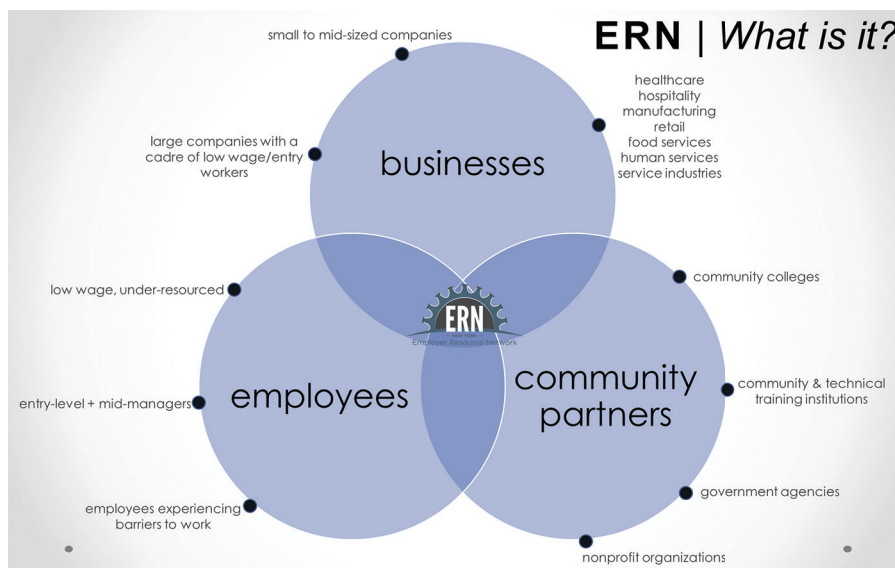
For any individual in the community, a host of resources needs to work



**Nathan Mandsager** is the director of Schenectady Works at the City Mission of Schenectady.



**John Saccocio** is a success coach with the Employer Resource Network of New York.



together for positive results and impact to happen. Often, for those who come from under-resourced communities and live in daily instability, just having a job and showing up to work is a major victory. Employers, on the other hand, cannot grow their company on “presenteeism”; they need fully engaged, loyal, and developing employees to grow their business in this competitive marketplace. Adding to this dilemma is the reality that individuals coming from this environment are entering into a workplace that functions on different social norms (hidden rules) and expectations. Where survival in a particular neighborhood leans more on relationships and “who I can respect,” the workplace is built on systems, procedures, formal language, and policies that are designed to build the company as a whole. These differing paradigms about how the world works result in “collisions” that inevitably leave under-resourced, unstable employees terminated or on the verge of losing their job. No one wins when this happens—not the employee, the manager or supervisor; the company, the neighborhood; nor the public human service system.

## What is an Employer Resource Network?

### Consortium of Businesses

Employer Resource Networks (ERNs, see chart above) are a solution to the ongoing problem of workforce retention and productivity. The ERN concept originated in Michigan as an innovative,

employer-based program that establishes consortiums of small to mid-sized businesses or employers (often diverse in both size and industries) to provide job retention services, help with barrier removal, and offer work supports and other opportunities for employees to help them succeed at work and at home. The primary stakeholders of the ERN—the member companies—pay a shared, low fee to secure a Success Coach on-site at their company to provide fast-track, confidential barrier-removal for their employees. This workplace-based employee success coaching—targeting the employees who are most under-resourced, unstable, and highly stressed—results in real-time connections to community resources, allowing these employees to overcome the weighty problems outside of work that affect their productivity in the workplace.

In addition to sharing the services of a Success Coach, these businesses/members meet regularly to discuss how to improve employee performance, common workforce challenges, benefit programs, and the best ways to utilize the ERN to enhance their respective businesses, employee retention, and employee satisfaction. As an example of ERN-organized activities, the members of one Schenectady Works ERN were hearing monthly reports from Success Coaches that there was significant employee stress around the holiday season due to lack of time and resources

*See Employer on page 28*



# Are your Health and Human Services agencies data-rich but insight-poor?

## Ask yourself — can you:

- |  |                              |                             |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| See data through multiple lenses?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Find opportunities for improving program outcomes?         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Follow an analytic approach to decision-making and action? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Measure program outcomes?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Use insights to continuously improve?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

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# GRADUATION COLLEGE CAREER

Using Education and Statistical Analysis to Battle Poverty and Define Success

By Dennis M. Richardson



**H**illside Work-Scholarship Connection (HW-SC), an affiliate of the Hillside Family of Agencies, provides services and support for students whose combined academic, social, and economic circumstances endanger their prospects for success. Founded in 1987, HW-SC serves approximately 4,000 students annually in urban, suburban, and rural districts in and around Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester, NY; in Prince George's County, MD, and Washington, DC.

### Reversing the Cycle of Entrenched Poverty

The need for programs like HW-SC has never been greater, as multigenerational poverty has become entrenched in urban and rural areas throughout America. In Hillside's flagship regions of Western and Central New York, for example, the metropolitan areas of Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse are all prominently ranked among U.S.

cities with the highest rates of extreme poverty concentrated among Black and Hispanic people.<sup>1</sup> Syracuse tops that national list, showing a dramatic recent increase in the number of neighborhoods where more than 40 percent of residents live in poverty—from 9 neighborhoods in 2000 to 19 neighborhoods a decade later.

Amid the many theories related to the causes and potential solutions for this concentrated poverty, educational achievement is widely acknowledged as a gateway to a variety of socioeconomic benefits. Graduation rates in the Rochester City School District, for example, have been found to directly correlate to levels of regional spending, home sales, and job creation.<sup>2</sup> Students who earn a diploma do not only improve their lives—they contribute to a cycle of prosperity for the entire community.

For the benefit of youth, families, and the communities in which they

live, HW-SC helps students achieve their goals of graduation, college, and career. The program provides supportive services to students in grades 7 through 12 who have been identified as being at risk of not graduating from high school. Eligibility is calculated using predictive analytics that focus on six key criteria—including academic performance, history of attendance and suspensions, and family economic status—all statistically associated with a student's long-term difficulty in earning a high school diploma. Sadly, many students in each district served by HW-SC qualify for enrollment; among participating districts, the program's reach is limited not by interest, but by levels of available funding.

### Coordinated Processes, Extraordinary Results

HW-SC is built on a foundation of collaboration between student participants and their families, teachers, guidance



counselors, and other school resources. Facilitating and guiding this complex relationship is the responsibility of the Hillside Youth Advocate, who develops a strong bond with the student and becomes a trusted ally in the youth's academic and personal journey. With their Youth Advocate's assistance, students develop targeted steps toward graduation, job placement, career planning, college advancement, and other personal goals.

With those benchmarks established, the student is connected to a flexible matrix of services, including subject-specific tutoring, after-school and summer enrichment activities, time management mentoring, and soft-skills training for employment and workplace excellence. These services—customized for each participant's needs—are coordinated through the Youth Advocates, who carefully track their students' progress and challenges according to strictly defined criteria. High-performing students may also join Hillside's Youth Employment Training Academy (YETA), which augments HW-SC core services by providing additional training to help them secure, keep, and excel in a part-time job with a local business identified as a HW-SC employment partner.

These services complement school-based efforts and drive measurable results, most notably in the form of significantly improved graduation rates for participating students relative to the overall rates seen in the school districts where HW-SC is offered. In the 2014–2015 academic year, HW-SC

With the program's ability to help youth achieve academic success having been proven, and the value of that success having been quantified, Hillside is now exploring ways to extend the influence of HW-SC beyond graduation.

students who remained in the program throughout high school graduated at a rate of 89 percent across all districts. Even more remarkable outcomes are evident among students who are YETA-certified and employed by an employment partner, 93 percent of whom graduated on time in 2015—all while working part-time and maintaining good school attendance records.<sup>3</sup>

### Determining True Community Value

Although these results are inarguably positive, they do not indicate the program's quantifiable value relative to its associated costs. To better understand that metric, Hillside engaged the Warner School of Education of the University of Rochester to conduct an independent analysis of the benefits of HW-SC's community impact, relative to cost.<sup>4</sup>

The study compared HW-SC participants to full school district results in Rochester, Syracuse, and Buffalo, using data from the 2010 cohorts (the classes of 2014). Benefits considered in the study included those associated with the minimum academic success of a high school diploma, both for the individual (e.g., attainment of higher education, increased lifetime earnings, lower need for social services) and for the community in which they reside (e.g., improved workforce participation, increased tax revenue, and cost savings due to reduced engagement in public assistance programs and the criminal justice system).

Costs weighed in the study included those associated with delivering the

program itself, with providing additional years of education (i.e., when students remain in school instead of dropping out), and with increased community investment in post-secondary education (e.g., tuition and taxpayer subsidies).

With any ratio greater than 1.0 indicating a positive return on investment, the study determined that HW-SC yields an overall benefit-cost ratio of 4.75 for all students who receive any exposure to the program. That baseline figure climbed swiftly in correlation with participation: For students who stayed in HW-SC from ninth grade through on-time graduation, the benefit-cost ratio was found to be 7.52; among students who achieved YETA certification and maintained a part-time job with an employment partner, the ratio rose to 8.52.

Among distinct demographic groups, HW-SC was found to deliver the greatest benefits relative to cost for African American men, with an overall ratio of 6.79; a 9.55 ratio for those students retained in the program throughout high school; and a top ratio of 10.29 when those students become YETA-certified and are employed with an employment partner.

In all cases, on-time graduation was determined to be the most critical program outcome and the primary influencing factor on benefit relative to cost. Furthermore, the study's benefit findings are likely underestimated, given the deliberate exclusion of non-quantifiable benefits, including personal health, life expectancy, parenting skills, and civic involvement.

The Hillside model is a mirror of what is known as the “generative state” of the Human Services Value Curve<sup>5</sup> where both family generations (parent and child), along with multiple school and community partners, define what is needed and work together toward a clearly defined goal that benefits all those involved.

### Next Steps: Success After High School

With the program's ability to help youth achieve academic success having been proven, and the value of that success having been quantified, Hillside is now exploring ways to extend the



**Dennis M. Richardson** is the president and chief executive officer of the Hillside Family of Agencies, one of New York State's largest family and children's services organizations. He is

the chair of the national Alliance for Strong Families and Communities and the Greater Rochester (NY) Health Foundation, and a frequent speaker at community and professional forums.

# For a Student in Need, a Helping Hand

**Eddie Casado**, 18, remembers the day he decided he wanted to be a fire fighter. He was a sixth grader, just a year after he and his family emigrated from Puerto Rico to Rochester, NY.

"We had a fire drill, and the moment I saw that big red truck, I knew that's what I wanted to do," he recalls. "Seven years later, I'm a fire fighter trainee."

That early certainty didn't diminish the obstacles Casado would need to overcome. As the oldest of five children, he felt an obligation to help his mother pay the household bills; and he knew he could benefit from academic assistance, especially in mathematics.



He joined the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection (HW-SC) as a freshman at Rochester's East High School, and found the support he needed. Casado's Youth Advocate connected him with academic enrichment programs that helped him boost his grades. When he turned 15, he joined

HW-SC's Youth Employment Training Academy and began a 20-hour weekly commitment at Wegmans Food Markets, a longtime HW-SC supporter and the program's leading employment partner.

Since graduating in June 2016, Casado has increased his hours at Wegmans while studying full-time at Monroe Community College (MCC) and training

for another 20 hours weekly with the Rochester Fire Department.

With that schedule, time management is crucial. Casado has engaged with the HW-SC College Navigator at MCC to provide him with advice for juggling his multiple commitments.


He sees great potential in the ability of the College Navigator to make a difference in the lives of his fellow students. "It's only the second week of college and you can already see kids stressing out about how different things are," Casado says.

"A lot of these kids are like me—they don't have people in their families before them who have been to college. For some of them, there's nowhere that they think they can turn. For Hillside to come into the college will help a lot of kids find their way."

influence of HW-SC beyond graduation. Participating students who earn their high school diplomas often move on to college and still encounter academic, financial, and social challenges that can affect their likelihood of earning an associate or bachelor's degree. College preparation training is incorporated in the standard HW-SC model but the culture shock of entering a higher education environment can still be a significant stressor for these students—many of whom are the first members of their family to attend college.

Considering this, in 2011 Hillside initiated a pilot College Navigator program at Monroe Community College (MCC) in Rochester, a frequent destination for college-bound HW-SC students. Working in tandem with MCC staff, the College Navigator provides additional support for HW-SC alumni as they adjust to college life, including helping the students form connections with MCC's own academic and financial support systems. The program is also evolving in ways designed to help participants long before they leave high school: HW-SC

students are now exposed to a greater emphasis on college and career readiness as early as the seventh grade to help them refine their goals beyond the earned diploma.

Since its inception, the College Navigator program has expanded to three other community colleges serving HW-SC students in Western and Central New York. At the same time, a formalized alumni initiative is being launched to maintain stronger connections among former HW-SC participants and assist in the ongoing collection of relevant data that can help track long-term outcomes. Taken together, these efforts help to fulfill the promise of the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection—and further assist new generations of young people in responding to the threat of lifelong poverty with the power of their own potential. 

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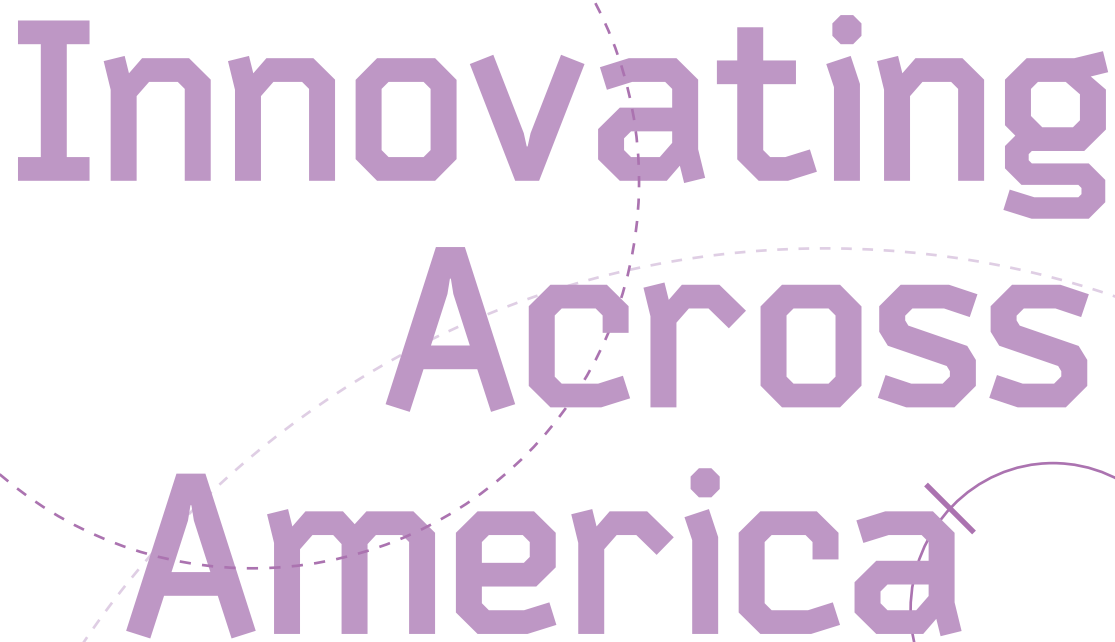
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Photo illustration by Chris Campbell



# Innovating Across America

## Stories from the Field

**T**he members and partners at APHSA are amazing—every day we hear stories of creative initiatives, innovative ideas, and exciting new programs that aim to improve the lives of people across this country. We are pleased to introduce the *Stories from the Field Interactive Map*,<sup>1</sup> a platform to promote and share these stories. This human service system multipurpose map seeks to:

- connect colleagues and enable them to build upon each other's work
- help make the case for effective legislation, rules, policy, and investment in health and human services
- reframe public perception of human services

**By Bertha Caton Levin  
and Abbey Myers**

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The scope includes all aspects of the human service system—health, education, nutrition, employment, and economic and social services. It brings a visual understanding of the partnerships—public, private, for profit, nonprofit, and all levels of government—needed to leverage existing resources differently and bring new resources to the field for continuous improvement.



## Follow New Pathways

The public human service system has made an enormous positive difference in the lives of millions of Americans. From keeping children safe, assuring access to nutritious meals, and providing tools for becoming gainfully employed, this system is a constructive force. Like all systems, it must continually evolve and improve to respond to a changing environment, including factors such as demographics, economic volatility, new technology and business practices, new insights into brain science, and two-generation service models.

All sectors function amid the many shifts in the size and structure of government support and regulation, new forms of profit and nonprofit funding, new expectations for measured, evidence-based outcomes, and massive technological changes. In this context, partnerships and innovation are essential to leverage new resources and redesign efficient and effective delivery systems. Our interactive “Stories from the Field” map visualizes examples of agencies that have developed programs that embody these new pathways.

## Creating the Innovation Center

APHSAs established the Innovation Center in 2012 as a “launching pad”



**Bertha Caton Levin** is a practice innovation senior program associate at the American Public Human Services Association.



**Abbey Myers** was a knowledge management specialist intern at the American Public Human Services Association.

to introduce and test “cutting edge” ideas, a place for leaders in the human service field to pursue solutions to the challenges they face every day, and a platform to create a new national narrative about the role and impact of the public human service system. The center was designed to support the integrated, outcome-focused model set forth in APHSA’s *Pathways*<sup>2</sup> initiative, which address four major areas for transformation: achieving gainful employment and independence; healthier families, adults, and communities; stronger families, adults, and communities; and sustained well-being of children and youth. To this end, the center serves as a proactive learning community to gather and promote solutions to common challenges. It contains four valuable sections:

**1. Information Hub**—an “easy access” repository organized by 10 key features—vision, governance, adaptive leadership and capabilities, access channels, common process functions, coordinated service delivery, defining success, measures, infrastructure, and finance—of a 21st Century Business Model, which was developed by the National Collaborative for Integration of Health and Human Services.<sup>3</sup> This model illustrates how attending to each key feature can strengthen an agency’s progression along the Human Services Value Curve (HSVC).<sup>4</sup> The HSVC framework helps human service leaders improve their organizations’ business model over time, progressively improving the capacity to deliver broader and more valued outcomes and impact. It was introduced by Antonio M. Oftelie with the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center and adapted by the APHSA Organizational Effectiveness<sup>5</sup> team to create a toolkit, *Moving through the Value Curve Stages*,<sup>6</sup> providing technical assistance to support innovation design and implementation.

**2. Stories from the Field Interactive Map**—connects the dots in ways that empower members, staff, law, and policymakers, partners, and other stakeholders to learn, improve, innovate, and make smart decisions by making timely connections to reliable people and information.

**3. Innovators Network**—promotes peer networking, mentoring, and collaboration across domains, and supports and expands programs that work.

**4. Feedback Loop**—a vehicle for users to help us continuously improve the site.

## Building Current Thinking and Examples of Innovation

In addition to highlighting program stories on the map, the center is a forum for sharing planning tools, funding models, and communication materials for proposing policy, rules, and legislative adjustments that lead to better outcomes. As we move forward, our goal is to create a sustainable model of asset accumulation that includes peer-to-peer conversations. These conversations will guide the flow of information, research, and experimentation across programs and sectors, and allow for better brokering and coordination of resources.

Besides enabling human service leaders in this arena to connect, leverage, and build on each other’s work, we hope the map will help reframe public perception of the work we do by sharing stories about how people across the nation are maximizing their potential as self-sustaining human beings.

We also expect the map’s presentation of successful cost-effective programs to promote cooperation among legislators and practitioners for improved human service programs and policies. The stories will provide leaders, legislators, and other stakeholders with specific examples of practices, their results, and lessons learned. This enables them to make evidence-based decisions and investments, resulting in sustainability and improved outcomes for the field as a whole.

## Partnerships Create Needed Synergy for Transformation

This is not only an APHSA initiative. While we may be a catalyst for continuous improvement across human services, we do not do this work alone. We coalesce around partners and a strategic plan to engage the experts

and disciplines required to achieve and sustain improvements. We recognize the expertise and ability to do this work is residing in many of the leaders who serve at the helm of public agencies and their partners. Our partnerships in this endeavor are no exception.


To kick off this project, the Kresge Foundation provided a two-year grant to gather experts from various fields to scope this work, gather the first group of stories, and provide assistance to agencies for testing new ideas. To create the interactive map, Esri provided the software platform and technical assistance throughout the process. These partners, along with contributions from our members and affiliates, provide critical assistance to the project's success.

### Do You Have a Story to Share?

We are excited about the momentum generated around this project. We anticipate this will be a strategic and focused effort to change how society views the field of health and human

services and how leaders in the field connect with one another.

We look forward to continuing to gather and update “Stories from the Field.” If you have an idea, initiative, or strategy for improving the health and human service system, we would like to hear about it. We can help identify if someone else is working along the same lines so that you can work together and expand your capacity. We can also pair mentors with mentees or, perhaps, your idea can be integrated with the work of one of our affiliates. Either way, tell us your story. We want to put **YOU** on the map!

Visit the APHSA Innovation Center page<sup>7</sup> and learn how to get your story online and in the hands of our policy colleagues and emerging foundation partners or contact us via email at [InnovationCenter@aphsa.org](mailto:InnovationCenter@aphsa.org). 

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## HOW DO YOU CREATE A CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR HIGH UTILIZERS?

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## A-Z Responses to a Class Action Lawsuit Against a Public Human Service Agency

**Y**ou just heard the news of a class action lawsuit being filed against your public human service agency. A collective shudder goes through you and your co-workers. What does it mean? What's going to happen?

A class action lawsuit is a legal action brought by a group of plaintiffs who claim to have suffered similar harm from similar actions or inactions of a particular defendant. This kind of lawsuit is brought by one or more “class representatives” who claim to represent the interests of the entire class. Such claims must arise from facts or law that are common to all of the members of the class. There are four legal requirements that must be met in order for a court to classify the claim as a class action suit. They are:

1. **Numerosity.** There are a significant number of people who are part of the claim.
2. **Commonality.** There is an issue of law or fact that is similar and common among all of the class members.
3. **Typicality.** The claims of the named plaintiffs who filed the class action must be typical of the interests of the class members.
4. **Adequacy.** The named plaintiffs must fairly and adequately represent the interests of the class members.

Whether you are the director of the agency being sued, a supervisor, line worker, or any other employee, here is a thumbnail list—A-Z—of what to expect:



**A** Class action lawsuits require a thorough **A**nalysis of numerous aspects of each claim.

**B** Stay **B**alanced. Neither too confrontational nor too timid will be key in securing a successful outcome.

**C** Don't underestimate how **C**omplex class action lawsuits are. You will undoubtedly stumble upon more important issues that need to be resolved along the way.

**D** Don't miss **D**eadlines, especially those that are court imposed.

**E** **E**lectronic records will be thoroughly searched, many times.

Do not tamper with them. This is dishonest and illegal.

**F** Encourage honest **F**eedback from leadership, employees, and consumers.

**G** It is critical to have the **G**uidance of firm-handed experienced attorneys.

**H** This will be take **H**ard work. Numerous documents will need to be drafted and filed. Input from scores of people throughout the agency will be necessary.

**I** Albert Einstein said: “The true sign of intelligence is not

See A to Z on page 31

# Foster Care Applicants with Criminal Background Histories

All states have legislated that a foster care applicant will not be approved for a license if the applicant or a household member has a criminal conviction for specified violations. Such violations usually include felony convictions for child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, crimes against children, or for crimes involving violence, sexual assault, or homicide. Special or extraordinary circumstances may allow a waiver to be granted if the waiver will not endanger a child's safety.

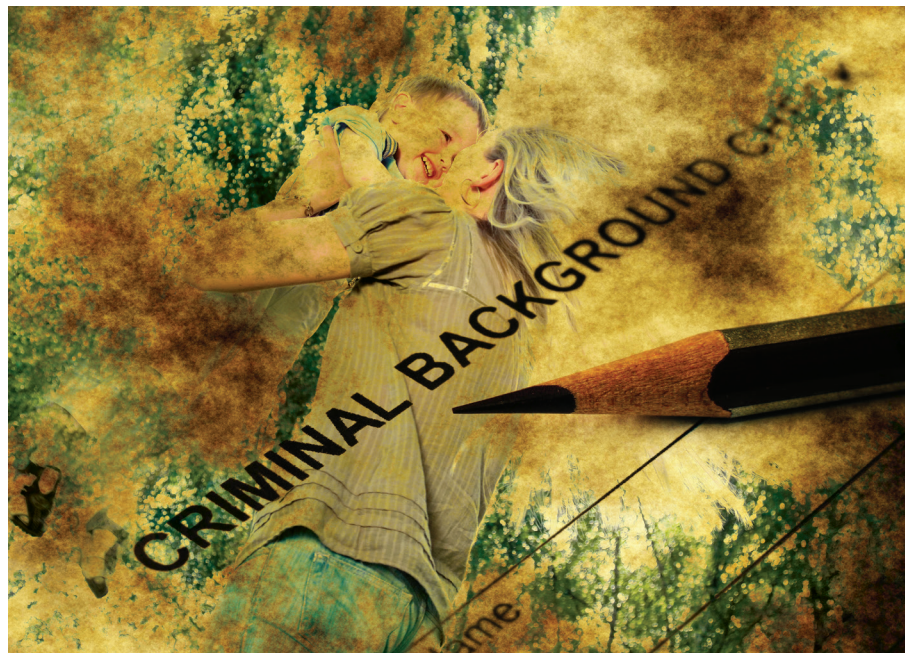
Exactly what specific factors and what process must agency staff consider in order to ensure that a waiver does not contravene the legislative intent or overall purpose of child safety? Specific guidelines are sparse in many states. There may be general language concerning the need to seek a waiver but little specificity about the nuts and bolts of the process. As West Virginia goes further than many states in articulating its waiver process, it is worthwhile to provide some substantive quotations from its policy manual.

Effective March 2015, the Bureau for Children and Families *Policy Manual*, Chapter 2000, *Crime Identification Bureau (CIB) Background Checks*<sup>1</sup> details what information must be included in a waiver request:

“8.2.1 Related to each conviction.

The waiver request must include the following information related to each conviction, indictment or charge:

- a. A copy of the signed and witnessed Statement of Criminal Record;
- b. The crime committed or alleged;
- c. The date(s) of the crime;



d. The date of conviction, indictment or charge.

## 8.2.2 Information for consideration and justification.

The waiver request must include information which will be used in considering potential risk to children and adults in care should the request be approved. The applicant must provide justification for the waiver and include the following supportive documentation:

A. The waiver request must include the waiver form with the following supporting documentation:

- 1) Description of the circumstances surrounding the crime;
- 2) If there was a victim of the crime and, if so, the age of the victim and the physical, emotional or financial harm

to the victim. The victim is not to be identified;

- 3) Dates of incarceration;
- 4) Statement or document from the probation or parole officer, or an officer of the court that the sentence has been successfully completed;
- 5) If the crime or alleged crime is driving or vehicular related, a driving record and copy of a current, valid driver's license must be submitted;
- 6) A statement regarding how circumstances have changed since the commission of the crime and the individual's motivation towards rehabilitation;
- 7) In the case of an individual seeking a waiver to remain during the time a charge or indictment is

See Foster Care on page 30



By Susie Gager



## The Best Route to Take

Colorado was one of the first states to have a federally certified child support system nearly 30 years ago. The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) implemented the Automated Child Support Enforcement System (ACSES) in April 1986. At the time it was a cutting edge Natural/ADABAS system operating on the mainframe. Because of its sustainability, along with the work of dedicated Natural developers, more than \$500,000,000 in child support payments was eventually distributed through the ACSES each year.

Despite the reliability of ACSES, the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT) recognized that the infrastructure was hindering the organization's future strategic goals. Each year the problems and operating costs of the mainframe were growing, while the number of skilled Natural developers and compatible software services was shrinking. By 2008, it cost CDHS \$1.5 million per year to operate on a hardware platform that was headed toward extinction. CDHS and OIT decided it was time to move ACSES from the mainframe to a modern, state-of-the-art operating platform.

ACSES consisted of 1.5 million lines of non-comment Natural code and more than 500 million records of ADABAS data. Creating the requirements for a new system would have been a three-year endeavor



by itself. The state was determined not to spend that amount of time or taxpayer dollars on a high-risk, "rip and replace" solution. They had concerns because ACSES is a mission-critical system processing an average of 5,500 payments daily, supporting more than 200,000 families. They knew determining the right approach was paramount to the success of the project, so they assembled a top-notch team to design a request for proposal for a low-risk solution.

The team knew that ACSES contained 30 years of dependable business logic, so any solution that could not prove to be 100 percent functionally equivalent would not be considered. This led them to the conclusion that system migration was the best course of action. The question

that remained: Who could help them transform ACSES from Natural to Java and ADABAS to a relational database management system?

The team agreed they needed to find an experienced partner, and not a vendor selling a "big bang" solution. They agreed that in technical projects of this size, if a vendor falls short of promises, the existing staff absorbs the work. In addition, the team and the state recognized that the value of ACSES came from the developers who built, grew, and maintained it. The migrated system had to be maintainable by the existing team of developers.

The team formed a selection committee that narrowed down 17 vendors

*See Route on page 31*

## Cultivating Excellence, Growing Innovation, Harvesting Results: NSDTA Annual Professional Development Conference

APHSA's affiliate, the National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) held its annual conference October 15–18, 2016 in New Brunswick, NJ. This year's theme of *Cultivating Excellence, Growing Innovation, and Harvesting Results* yielded bountiful workshops and networking opportunities for representatives of human service agencies to develop their training and organizational effectiveness programs. Innovations were especially plentiful and covered the themes of redefining approaches to training and organizational effectiveness and increasing the use of technology to strengthen programs and make them more accessible. The New Jersey Department of Children and Families opened its simulation laboratory for a field trip for attendees to see how “real” experiences can transform learning.

Another highlight of this year's conference was the presentation of the following recognition awards:

**Career Achievement Award:**  
*Martha Holden, Ph.D., Senior Extension Associate, Principal Investigator, and Project Director of*

**“The conference provided lots of opportunities to network with professionals in similar positions and to grow and strengthen my ability to deliver training, engage in continuous quality improvement, and evaluation to develop outcome based training programs.”**

— LARA BRUCE, BUTLER INSTITUTE FOR FAMILIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

*the Residential Child Care Project (RCCP), Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research, Cornell*

Dr. Holden's career spans a wide range of activities and leadership to lift human service training and development. Some of her accomplishments include founding steering committee member of the Ohio Committee for Child Care Worker Training; evaluation and research activities providing evidence of the effectiveness of the RCCP curriculum and organizational interventions; and a wide range of publications and conference presentations of research with program, curriculum, and policy implications.

**President's Award for Pioneering Impact on the Field of Human Service Training and Development:**  
*The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (a collaborative effort among the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Public Children Services Association of Ohio, the Institute for Human Services, and the eight regional training centers)*

This program was the first systemic, competency-based approach to child welfare training nationally and has been a pioneer in establishing competency-driven training along with the use of transfer of learning techniques. Their public–private partnership, state–county–local management structure was unique in 1985 and remains an exemplary model of collaborative effectiveness.

**Distinguished Service in Training:**  
*Jason Theilengerdes, Office of Social Services, Texas Health and Human Services Commission*

Under Jason's leadership, his department has served as a key player in the agency, advancing training as a method of bringing changes to the field of public human services. He led the effort to establish a new and consistent approach to training analysis, design, and development processes.

**Quality Training Program Award:**  
*Care Coordinator Certification Training Program, Wraparound Milwaukee*

Wraparound Milwaukee received this award for their innovative approach, including the use of families as co-facilitators, an emphasis on transfer of learning, and attention to accountability through quality assessments. Strong evaluation results and improved program outcomes validate their efforts.

**Quality Training Program Award:**  
*Medicaid ABD/LTC Training Program, Ohio Benefits Program, Ohio Department of Administration Services*

The Ohio Benefits Program received this award for their efforts to implement the new Ohio Benefits integrated eligibility system to replace a 25+ year-old legacy system. An integrated training team comprised of state agency staff, local vendors, and county office staff partnered to successfully develop and deliver a comprehensive training program with a focus on reinventing how training is completed in Ohio.

## Connect, Collaborate, Lead: AASD/NASTA Annual Education Conference

APHSA's affiliates, the American Association of SNAP Directors (AASD) and the National Association of State TANF Administrators (NASTA), held their annual conference October 23–26, 2016 in Orlando, FL. This year's theme of *Connect, Collaborate, and Lead* provided valuable insight on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), with the opportunity to influence the future of these programs; discussions focused around policy and practice approaches that are working and helping human service agencies create positive outcomes for SNAP and TANF recipients; and numerous networking opportunities with researchers, policy experts, and representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Administration for Children and Families.

This year's conference featured a special reception to recognize



outstanding performances in the design, delivery, management, and administration of the SNAP and TANF programs by human service employees and programs. Awards were presented in the following categories:

**AASD Distinguished Service**

**Award—Individual:** *Lauren Arms-Ledwith, SNAP Director, Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)*

During her tenure, Ms. Arms-Ledwith has made major improvements to Massachusetts's ability to deliver human services to its citizens. She has pursued SNAP policy changes to expand simplified reporting, made improvements in broad-based categorical eligibility, encouraged the DTA to minimize unnecessary excess verifications, and pursued federal waivers in a quest to improve access to seniors and persons with disabilities, including the state's re-implementation of the three-month time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents. She has also helped the DTA improve data sharing to increase the Direct Certification of low-income children for free National School Lunch Program meals. As a result of her policy expertise, Ms. Arms-Ledwith was instrumental in securing USDA approval of a "SNAP to Skills" technical assistance grant in 2016 that will help expand employment and training opportunities for thousands of low-income SNAP recipients. Ms. Arms-Ledwith has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to reduce food insecurity and improving the lives of thousands of families, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

**AASD Distinguished Service**

**Award—State:** *Idaho Department of Health and Welfare*

Idaho's Department of Health and Welfare has created an extraordinary SNAP program through the utilization of innovative business strategies, continuously improved business processes, and successful implementations of the right technology at the right time with a focus on customer interactions and outcomes. Idaho's goal is to decrease the burden of SNAP administration, decrease the burden on the customer to apply for and retain SNAP, and improve customer outcomes.

***"Of all the conferences I attend throughout the course of the year, I find the AASD/NASTA conference to be the most beneficial. It offers a wide variety of information and learning that far exceeds expectations."***

**—DAVID LOCKLEAR, SECTION CHIEF, DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES, ECONOMIC, AND FAMILY SERVICES, NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

With a focus on the family, Idaho's SNAP program is realizing excellent outcomes for its citizens. Idaho has been number one in FNS timeliness for five years in a row (2010–2015); been consistently in the top one-third in quality control payment accuracy and top five in case and procedural error rates; has one of the lowest SNAP cost per case in the country; and for six years has completed more than 70 percent of applications on the day of application.

**AASD Distinguished Service**

**Award—Organization:** *The National Accuracy Clearinghouse (NAC)*

The NAC was designed to identify and prevent dual participation in public assistance programs, starting with SNAP, as well as D-SNAP beneficiaries, who need food assistance following a disaster or lost income. A consortium of five states worked with LexisNexis Risk Solutions to build a system that shares information about SNAP recipients from Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana. The NAC combines state SNAP data with advanced data linking technology and identity analytics to detect whether SNAP applicants are receiving multiple benefits within and across state lines. The information shared allows state agencies to identify dual or multistate participation in SNAP and to detect fraud in real time. For example, Alabama and Mississippi saw 74 percent and 71 percent decreases, respectively, in the average number

of dual participants per month when compared to pre-implementation statistics. Since the pilot period ended in June 2015, the NAC has been saving the five aforementioned states an estimated \$5.6 million per year and LexisNexis is in the process of expanding the number of participating states.

**NASTA Distinguished Service Award—Individual:** *Kären Dickerson, Chief, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch*

Ms. Dickerson oversees the day-to-day operation of CalWORKs, the state of California's TANF program. Ms. Dickerson's leadership has led to major improvements in California's TANF program, including implementation of major reforms pertaining to client re-engagement with a focus on movement toward self-sufficiency within two years; creation of the Family Stabilization Program, California's two-generation approach to stabilizing families so that they can maximize their opportunity to succeed in the welfare-to-work phase of CalWORKs; and the launch of the Housing Support Program, which has provided permanent housing to more than 2,000 formerly homeless families. Ms. Dickerson has been at the forefront in policy development and implementation of several major initiatives that have led to improving the lives of children, families, and individuals throughout California.

**NASTA Distinguished Service**

**Award—State:** *Colorado*

Colorado has consistently been a national leader in poverty mitigation and prevention efforts. Its leadership in the national conversation related to two-generational approaches to TANF work has been an example that many states are using as a framework for improving their own programs. Colorado's work to create closer ties for custodial and noncustodial parents, in passing through 100 percent of child support collected, and their innovative work in aligning systems and processes has resulted in significantly improved outcomes for its citizens.

**NASTA Distinguished Service**

**Award—Organization:** *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)*

The CBPP has consistently provided technical assistance, expertise, and

leadership around the TANF program and the national conversation related to poverty. Its nationally recognized and sought-after expertise has helped many states develop innovative ideas and programs that are designed to assist TANF families lift out of poverty. Its reputation makes it a sought after source of information at a national level where it has historically been called upon to provide that information to Congress. The CBPP continues to help shape TANF policies and practices and has assisted numerous states in improving the lives of their citizens.

### Affiliate Elections

The following volunteer leaders were elected to office during the annual business meetings of their respective affiliates:

#### AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ATTORNEYS (AAHSA)

**President:** Mark Gutchen, JD, General Counsel, MO Department of Social Services

**Vice President:** Sandra Barnes, Assistant Attorney General, MD Department of Human Resources

**Secretary:** Doris Leisch, Chief Counsel, PA Department of Human Services

**Treasurer:** Natalie Bacon, JD, Assistant Attorney General, NC Department of Justice

**Immediate Past President:** Lynn Rambo-Jones, Administrative Law Judge, OK Health Care Authority

#### IT SOLUTIONS MANAGEMENT FOR HUMAN SERVICES (ISM)

**President:** Kristen Duus, Chief Information Officer, OR Health Authority

**First Vice President:** Rob St. John, Director, Washington Technology Solutions

**Second Vice President:** Tricia Cox, IT Manager, UT Department of Technology Services

**Secretary:** Brady Birdsong, Chief Information Office/Acting Chief of Administrative Operations, DC Department of Behavioral Health


**Treasurer:** Sarjoo Shah, Cluster Chief Information Officer, OK Office of State Finance

#### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROGRAM INFORMATION AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (NAPIPM)

**President:** Jim McTague, Director, Eligibility and Quality Assurance, NY State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Audit and Quality Improvement

**Vice President and Conference Chair:** Leslie Henderson, Manager, Quality Control and Management Evaluation, UT Department of Workforce Services

**Second Vice President and Conference Co-Chair:** Sallie Kirsch, SNAP Quality Control Program Manager, PA Department of Human Services

**Secretary:** Kim Sanchez, Quality Compliance Administrator, AZ Health Care Cost Containment System 

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## CASE MANAGEMENT continued from page 6

by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, and Labor, upon which the justice information-sharing is based.


Another obstacle is how to justify investments in programs. A wave of justice reinvestment initiatives is sweeping across the country. The Vera Institute has developed a toolkit to support cost-benefit analysis that provides a methodology.<sup>4</sup> Use that methodology with your local cost data to determine the required investment and savings potential in your community. If you're missing information, you may be able to fill those gaps with WSIPP reference data.

A traditional approach to integration requires large capital expenses up front and larger counties or states may be able to support that model. If that is not in your budget, this may be a good opportunity to experiment with cloud-based and subscription services, an operating expense (opex) model. One option is to borrow the concept

of patient-mediated exchange from health care. In this model, the participant enables the release of information with and across providers.

External cloud services need not be "Shadow IT" if they support the necessary regulatory requirements, but they can still be low touch. Such an approach can enable a couple of departments to experiment, testing how staff react, leading to a results-based consensus in favor of a larger change effort. A cut-and-paste model may still produce results, if staff understands the value. A per-participant cost model also enables IT to be recognized as a direct cost or program expenses, enabling different budgets to be tapped.

Justice agencies have sponsored a number of different criminal justice specifications, including a privacy framework,<sup>5</sup> a method to normalize privilege and identity management,<sup>6</sup> and the global reference architecture,<sup>7</sup> to name just a few. If we can bridge

the gap between justice and human services to stop people falling through the cracks, we can reduce recidivism and improve public safety while cutting our jail and emergency room costs. 

#### Reference Notes

1. [www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost](http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost)
2. <https://stepuptogether.org/toolkit>
3. [www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/412788-Opportunities-for-Information-Sharing-to-Enhance-Health-and-Public-Safety-Outcomes.PDF](http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/412788-Opportunities-for-Information-Sharing-to-Enhance-Health-and-Public-Safety-Outcomes.PDF)
4. [www.vera.org/pubs/cost-benefit-analysis-and-justice-policy-toolkit](http://www.vera.org/pubs/cost-benefit-analysis-and-justice-policy-toolkit)
5. [www.it.ojp.gov/documents/ImplementingPrivacyPolicyATechnicalFramework.pdf](http://www.it.ojp.gov/documents/ImplementingPrivacyPolicyATechnicalFramework.pdf)
6. [www.gfipm.net/gfipm-overview](http://www.gfipm.net/gfipm-overview)
7. [www.it.ojp.gov/initiatives/gra](http://www.it.ojp.gov/initiatives/gra)

**Louise Wasilewski** is CEO of *Acivilate*, which provides *Pocket*, a software platform for justice-health information sharing.



them with concrete assistance that makes a difference.

### **The Jail Collaborative: Reducing Recidivism**

Back in 2000, Marc Cherna, the director of Allegheny County's Department of Human Services, the warden of the jail, and the director of the Department of Health met for dinner to talk about what they could do for men and women who kept returning to the county jail. "We all had the same concern about the same people. There were people going in and out of the jail because of mental health or drug and alcohol issues or because they needed job skills and employment. Too many were discharged without a plan for getting the basic help they needed," said Cherna. The recidivism rate exceeded 60 percent.

They decided to invite the Court of Common Pleas to join them in putting together a plan for reducing recidivism, all as part of a "Jail Collaborative."

From that informal start, the Jail Collaborative has grown to involve more than 150 government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community members, all focused on one aim: to reduce recidivism. By taking on large systems challenges and building programs, they have accomplished that goal. It was this collaborative that put in place a better process for discharge and release from the jail, including a discharge center that now coordinates releases; expanded substance use treatment and co-occurring treatment in the jail and post-release; expanded housing and career training programs; built additional diversion programs; expanded crisis intervention training to more officers; developed community resource centers for probationers; and designed and built the Reentry Program.

Two 2014 studies confirm that the Jail Collaborative is reducing recidivism: The Urban Institute found that the Reentry Program reduces re-arrests by a statistically significant amount (24 points compared with a matched group) and prolongs the time to arrest; and a cost-benefit analysis

***"Through the Jail Collaborative, the jail and the courts, health and human services, and the community accomplish things together that they could not have alone."***

—MOLLY MORRILL,  
JAIL COLLABORATIVE COORDINATOR

by Allegheny County, with support from the Vera Institute, found that the community resource centers operated by the Court of Common Pleas (Adult Probation and Parole) had lower rates of re-arrest, compared with people of similar risk levels who had received typical probation instead.

### **What No One Group Can Do Alone**

It is not unique for leaders to tackle the problem of recidivism at a county jail since the human and financial toll of re-incarceration concerns every part of this country. What may be unusual in the case of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative is how its leaders make decisions at the intersection of criminal justice, human services, and health; and that the Jail Collaborative is not an established nonprofit or unit of government but a partnership that agrees to implement reforms and programs.

The structure of the Jail Collaborative is simple. Its leaders form a Cabinet that includes the President Judge and Administrative Judge for the Criminal Division, Fifth Judicial District of the Court of Common Pleas, the Warden of the Allegheny County Jail (a facility that houses 2,500 men and women), the Directors of Allegheny County Department of Human Services and the Allegheny County Health Department, and the Chief of Staff for the Allegheny County Executive. It has


two committees: the Civic Advisory Committee, which is chaired by the president of a local foundation and includes other civic leaders, criminologists, and business people; and an Operations Committee, composed of the deputies of each of the organizations on the Cabinet, which is responsible for program planning and implementation. The general membership of the Jail Collaborative includes more than 150 individuals and providers who are working to reduce recidivism.

Molly Morrill coordinates the Jail Collaborative, reporting to the Cabinet. Working with all of the partners involved in the collaborative can be challenging but Morrill has seen what comes of this coordination. "Through the Jail Collaborative, the jail and the courts, health and human services, and the community accomplish things together that they could not have alone."

### **Lead Chef Trainer**

One of those accomplishments is a career training program for people in the jail and after release, which the Jail Collaborative made part of the Reentry Program through one of several federal grants. One of the options, and the one Darryl Coaston chose, is culinary arts. This is how he came to Community Kitchen Pittsburgh as a chef trainee.

Coaston completed his training and because of his culinary and leadership skills, Community Kitchen Pittsburgh hired him to be a trainer. Today he is the nonprofit's Lead Chef Trainer, responsible for teaching people who have been incarcerated and others who want to be chefs.

"I'm living proof that with hard work and support like I got from the program, anybody can make it out here." 

***Jennifer Flanagan** is the founder and executive director of Community Kitchen Pittsburgh and a member of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative.*

***Darryl Coaston**, lead chef trainer at Community Kitchen Pittsburgh, assisted with this article.*



**Name:** Maurine Jones

**Title:** Conference Meeting Planner

**Time at APhSA:** Nine months

**Life Before APhSA:** With more than six years in the meetings and trade show industry, I most recently worked at the Baltimore Convention Center as an account executive within the Sales and Marketing Department, managing event operations for conferences, tradeshow, and public events ranging from 100–30,000 attendees.

**Priorities at APhSA:** Building relationships with APhSA affiliates and supporting the Conference Team in creating successful events. I am the lead for the AAICPC, NAPIPM, and NSDTA meetings and conferences with

supporting roles for the ISM Conference and our National Summit, along with various other meetings.

**What I Can Do for Our Members:** Provide meeting and event planning skills to enhance their conference experience.

**Best Way to Reach Me:** I can best be reached by email at [mcjones@aphsa.org](mailto:mcjones@aphsa.org).

**When Not Working:** Spending time with my Olde English Bulldogge Zoe, family, and friends, traveling, practicing photography, and volunteering in several industry associations.

**Motto to Live By:** “If the plan doesn’t work, change the plan, never the goal.” 📌

## DIRECTOR’S MEMO continued from page 3

governance with our neighbors.” As leaders, we must be the stewards of this adaptive journey and keep ourselves true to whether we are actually doing it or simply continuing to admire the problem.

### Design Matters

Putting the family at the center of our work is more easily said than done. As leaders, we must recognize where our current constructs—law, policy, fiscal, and practice—limit our thinking, both about what a productive ecosystem can be and what is possible for people to do. Across sectors, we need to work together to create a modern, thriving ecosystem with a clear set of rules and norms that do not place artificial limits on our customers or workers. As one summit participant noted, it is about “Fidelity to our vision and not fidelity to our profession.” Another remarked that “We cannot just see the hope—we *have* to act to support health and wellness for everyone in our community.” To assist with the redesign, we need the

opportunity to “fail fast” in order to innovate more quickly. This means taking risks and having “chutzpah.”

### We Have to be Two Things at Once—Aspirational and Practical

As Professor David Agar helped us see with his compelling case study, “leadership is about *painting reality and giving hope*.” We have to be thinking in the short and long term at the same time. We have to constantly re-evaluate how we are doing. We have to understand when are we innovating whole cloth and when we are simply tweaking. We cannot hold back out of fear that the journey is too long or hard, nor can we ignore that there will be roadblocks along the way. In partnership with each other, we need to assess what it will take to get us there.

As I shared with participants at the closing summit session, the ecosystem metaphor is a powerful visual for our collective journey. Imagine hiking along a clear path from the bottom of

a high mountain to the top. During that journey you move seamlessly from one ecosystem to another. You might begin in the grasslands at the foot of the mountain, and then move into and through a forest, passing through an aspen grove, and then moving higher, to an area with reduced vegetation and, ultimately, to the volcanic ash where little grows. The path is the “constant,” guiding you seamlessly through different ecosystems. That is what we imagine for all people; that each of us has the opportunity to live well and that the ecosystem of health care/early learning/education/housing/employment/human services guides us seamlessly through our lives.

A heartfelt thank you to our many members and partners who made the summit such a powerful reminder of why we do this work and what it means for all of our families and communities. 📌



to purchase toys for children. One of the strategic community partners at the table worked with ERN employers to mobilize an “added benefit” toy store for employees of ERN members. Coalescing donations of new toys, volunteer support, and the real-time work of Success Coaches, made it possible for more than 120 employees to “shop” for toys for their families as a benefit of working at their job. Other ERNs around the country also have performed such collaborative work as getting public transportation routes changed to better serve their collective workforce and leveraging the strength of the ERN members to create a third-shift child care option for ERN employees.

### Success Coach

The Success Coach assists employees in three ways: coaching, advocating, and connecting. As a **coach**, the Success Coach can assist employees with things such as: financial literacy (budgeting and choices), communication skills, conflict resolution, social and professional expectations, and understanding the policies of the employer (such as progressive discipline). As an **advocate**, the Success Coach can work alongside an employee to navigate a challenging or intimidating situation, such as those involving utilities, the IRS, or the Department of Education. Finally, as a **connection**, the Success Coach can connect the employee with community and government agencies that are positioned to assist with issues such as food resources, domestic violence, Medicaid, and other social services.

The Success Coach is available to work with employees and businesses to help employees with a vast array of difficulties—both work related and

*“Our employees are more productive because we are caring for them better.”*

—MANUFACTURING CEO

## Implementation in New York

**Schenectady Works**, a division of the City Mission of Schenectady, was established in 2013 with a mission to empower individuals and businesses through innovative partnerships designed to remove barriers and enhance workforce success. Schenectady Works has established a number of programs, including the Employer Resource Networks mentioned here. Under the umbrella of the City Mission, Schenectady Works serves as the fiscal and administrative agency that oversees the development and growth of ERNs in the capital region and manages the Success Coaches, while also serving as the primary development consultant for ERNs as they begin to scale across the state.

## Utilizing Other Employee Benefits

As Success Coaches build trust with employees in the workplace as a confidential resource, other employer benefits and programs become “tools in the tool belt” for the coaches. For example, some employers offer both Success Coach services as ERN members as well as **Employer Assistance Program** (EAP) services. Often EAP and other employee benefits are under-utilized because these are abstract benefits that do not meet the targeted employee’s needs in the concrete “now.” But as Success Coaches build trust with employee groups, they are able to direct employees to EAP services when necessary. For example, one employee came to his Success Coach due to time and attendance issues. As the Coach began to ask some questions it became clear that depression and suicidal thoughts were very real issues for this employee. After explaining to the employee what EAP services could offer (professional counseling, referrals to better care, etc.), the Success Coach was able to make the initial phone call alongside the employee to EAP, which began the employee’s counseling support. Since that time the employee has not missed a day of work.

Whether it be EAP services, policies and procedures within a business, wellness plans, retirement, time off, or other issues, the Success Coach utilizes all as viable resources to assist individual employees.

personal. The Success Coach seeks to meet with the employee (face-to-face, if possible) to define any problems and to find options for solving them. Optimally, the employee plays a major role in working through the problem at hand. When this occurs, the benefits are often shared by the employee, the employee’s family, the business (which gains a more focused employee), and society at large (which profits from the productive employment of its citizens). Additionally, the Success Coach must navigate, on any given day, face-to-face confidential interactions with employees, discussions with managers or supervisors, updates and strategies with human resources, and collaborations with any number of outside agencies and services.

The Success Coaches that are employed through the ERNs of

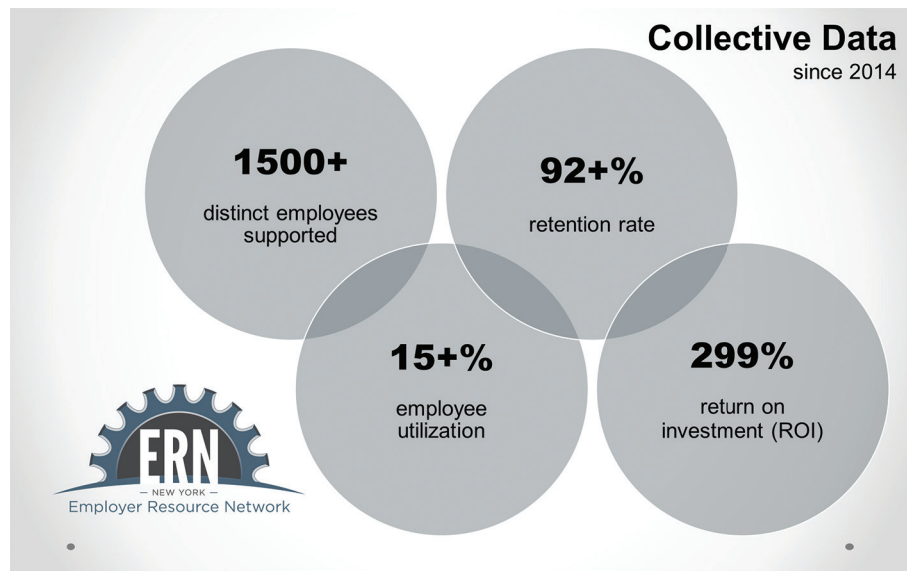
Schenectady Works (five currently) have been selected based on their experience in the corporate world, their capacity to function in a dynamic, ever-changing work environment, and their desire to work alongside employees and businesses for long-term success. Understanding this background, the City Mission invests time, training, and effort in mobilizing the Success Coaches to navigate the world of human services, community resources, and agency programs. Most of the Success Coaches have stepped into this job with a focus on the mission to serve employees and businesses, not primarily for the paycheck. This has allowed Schenectady Works to utilize well-seasoned individuals who are often in the second half of their careers and looking to make a direct impact on the lives of individuals.

## Results and Impact

The Schenectady Works ERNs have—since February 2014—grown from 5 businesses and 1 Success Coach to 3 networks, 30 businesses, and 5 Success Coaches. This growth is a direct result of providing a cost-effective employee benefit that generates tangible and meaningful results. To date, every business has retained its ERN membership while half have increased their share of a Success Coach. This innovative model for providing success coach services, documenting efforts and results, partnering with outstanding businesses, community organizations, and governmental agencies constitutes a framework of private–public sector partnership that has the potential to positively impact the local workforce. 📌

### Reference Notes

1. *Workplace Stability*, by Ruth Weirich, aha! Process 2016
2. “A Whole-Family Approach to Workforce Engagement,” by Kerry Desjardins, *Policy and Practice*, April 2016. American Public Human Services Association.



*“The Success Coach offers personalized supports to our employees ... Stronger employees means stronger teams, and stronger teams create a stronger business.”*

—HR REPRESENTATIVE

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## FOSTER CARE continued from page 21

being resolved, a statement from the employer or head of the household that there is a plan in place which will reasonably assure the safety of children or adults in care.

B. The waiver request may also include:

- 1) Letter of recommendation from a probation or parole officer, or an officer of the court;
- 2) Employment, training and education history;
- 3) Documentation of participation in therapy or counseling programs;
- 4) Character references or statements of family support;
- 5) Documentation of involvement in community, religious, or volunteer activities;
- 6) Any other information the applicant would like to have considered.”

The word “specific” connotes clarity and exactness. Toward this end, the West Virginia *Policy Manual* further articulates the exact process to be followed:

“8.3.1 Each Region within the Department will establish written operating procedures for a local or regional review of waiver requests which must be performed in a timely manner in accordance with specific program policies.

8.3.2 The State Office CIB Committee will review waiver requests made by Licensed Child Placing and Residential Child Care Agencies. The Child Care Center Licensing Unit will review waiver requests of applicants in a licensed Child Care Center.

8.3.3 The Waiver Committees review the waiver requests and accompanying documentation to make a determination as to whether a waiver can be provided for the charges/convictions.

8.3.4 A determination must be made on the requests within 30 working days.


8.3.5 Waiver approvals must be documented in FACTS [Families and Children Tracking System] according to each program’s policies and procedures.

8.3.6 The staff person responsible for the applicant’s or agency’s record must inform the applicant or the agency in writing of the decision within five working days.

8.3.7 It is critical that staff involved in the waiver process carefully review all evidence submitted by providers prior to making a determination to grant or deny a waiver...”

The role of a licenser is one of rigorous gatekeeper, not merely enthusiastic promoter. Just because, by law

or regulation, a prior conviction or charge may not be an absolute bar to receiving a license, it may very well be a factor in disapproving the applicant. The mere passage of time is not proof of rehabilitation, nor does it affect the requirement to always be focused on child safety.

It is easier to make a generalized assessment—“Waiver granted” or “Waiver denied”—than it is to document exactly why the waiver should or should not be granted. From a legal perspective the waiver assessment process does not demand of agency employees that they be able to see into the future—it just demands that the process be objective, thorough, and documented. The vast number of possible placement scenarios underscores the need for specific guidelines so that a child is not inadvertently placed in an unsafe setting. 

### Reference Note

1. <http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/bcf/Providers/Documents/CIB%20Policy.pdf>

**Daniel Pollack** is a professor at Yeshiva University’s School of Social Work in New York City. He may be reached at [dpollack@yu.edu](mailto:dpollack@yu.edu); (212) 960-0836.

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## HSITAG continued from page 7

- Nearly one in three responding states have little or no workforce modernization strategies in place. With high rates of eligible retirements and difficulties in recruiting millennials to government, this will undoubtedly present a serious challenge to HHS agencies in the coming years.
- Cloud computing is here, with more than half of state agencies reporting that they are using cloud applications; security, however, is still cited as a top concern.
- The Internet of Things (IoT) is a rarely discussed concept among HHS agencies at this time with only

one state responding that they have an IoT road map and only one other reporting that formal discussions on IoT have begun. The interesting contrast on IoT comes when we look at another report that CompTIA compiles, an annual survey of state CIOs focused on all aspects of the state enterprise (2016 State CIO Survey: The Adaptable CIO, [www.comptia.org/SLED](http://www.comptia.org/SLED)). At the state level, almost one third of states have begun formal IoT discussions.

The great benefit of this type of survey is the trend data that are

developed when the survey is conducted annually over the course of several years. HSITAG and APHSA look forward to asking similar and new questions in next year’s survey in order to establish longitudinal trend data that allow us to observe changes over time in HHS agencies across the United States.

You can access the complete survey report and more information on HSITAG at [www.comptia.org/HSITAG](http://www.comptia.org/HSITAG) 

**Jennifer Saha** is the director of Public Sector Councils at CompTIA.

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## A TO Z continued from page 20

- knowledge but imagination.” This is the time to use that **I**magination.
- J** Be prepared to thoroughly **J**ustify your legal and policy positions with a sound rationale and unbiased facts.
- K** Useful **K**nowledge is truly powerful. A class action lawsuit may reveal which employees have a treasure trove of knowledge.
- L** A class action lawsuit will demand the best **L**eadership qualities from key employees.
- M** **M**eeet often with your attorneys, be they government attorneys, contracted attorneys, or in-house counsel.
- N** Be open to sincere **N**egotiation.
- O** Without compromising the agency’s legal position, have **O**pen communication with all employees.
- P** Assuming the defendant agency makes a motion to dismiss, this may be an opening to clarify or **P**are down some of the plaintiff’s assertions.
- Q** This may be the perfect opportunity to **Q**uestion the status quo way of doing things.
- R** Numerous state public human service agencies have been the subject of class action lawsuits. The subject matter is wide-ranging: child support, foster care, protective services, right to counsel, immigration concerns, among others. All the defendant agencies will tell you: This is going to take lots of **R**esources—time, money, and effort.
- S** This is a **S**erious opportunity. Make the most of it.
- T** Be prepared for some innovative **T**rainning.
- U** **U**nderstand thoroughly the matters that are in dispute. What exactly is at issue and what is not at issue?
- V** **V**alue the case. Long-term, what is the cost-benefit relationship between settling the lawsuit versus taking the case to trial?
- W** When forming a litigation strategy, seek out the **W**isdom of experienced experts. Once you have decided upon a strategy, implement it decisively and without excessive caution.
- X** Be **X**enial (hospitable, especially to visiting strangers). You’re going to meet a lot of new people!
- Y** Be patient. Class action lawsuits frequently take **Y**ears to resolve.
- Z** **Z**ero in on easy-to-resolve issues first. 

**Daniel Pollack** is a professor at Yeshiva University’s School of Social Work in New York City. He can be reached at [dpollack@yu.edu](mailto:dpollack@yu.edu); (212) 960-0836.

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## ROUTE continued from page 22

to 6 finalists. The committee sat through two days of presentations. The last company to present was a migration specialist. The company’s name was familiar because it had appeared as part of several other finalists’ solutions.

In addition to the fact that this company’s migration approach met all requirements, both the selection committee and the existing development staff were convinced when they saw the vendor’s Java implementation of their Natural code. They knew they had found their partner because the software proved that this would be the standard for how system migration was to be done. It was unlike anything they had ever seen—code accessible to both Natural and Java programmers. The vendor provided the complete


toolset. The migration was done with 100 percent automation technology. This granted the developers access to the new development environment at the moment the project began, and it eliminated the potential of adding human error during the code transformation. The state believed this set the tone for the project allowing them to remain one month ahead of schedule for the majority of its duration.

Reflecting back on the project, the state did not encounter any negative surprises the two teams could not overcome. In fact, the smoothness of the project seemed to be the big surprise. Many times, if the state and on-site vendor staff had a problem they could not solve during the day, they would come in the next morning with

a solution already implemented by the off-site team.

In trusting the process of migrating before modernizing, the state is enjoying the benefits of the new system while shifting everyone’s attention to refactoring. Both teams are currently working on the modernization of ACSES using the power of Java and Eclipse.

The state of Colorado and the people who created ACSES in the 1980s can take pride in the fact they built something that is still providing value into the new millennium.

For information regarding the vendor, contact [Susie.Gager@state.co.us](mailto:Susie.Gager@state.co.us). 

**Susie Gager** is the service delivery manager for Colorado’s Division of Child Support Services.





## In Our Do'ers Profile, we highlight some of the hardworking and talented individuals in public human services. This issue features **Lisa Tatum, Director of the Self-Sufficiency Division for the Fairfax County (VA) Department of Family Services.**

**Name:** Lisa Tatum

**Title:** Director, Self-Sufficiency Division, Fairfax County (VA) Department of Family Services

**Years of Service:** 21 years—almost one year in my current role in Fairfax County

**Rewards of the Job:** My role is to lead a large division comprised of more than 300 employees tasked with delivering public assistance and employment and training programs in Virginia's Fairfax County. The median household income in Fairfax County is one of the highest in the nation and although the community as a whole is thriving, there are many vulnerable people dealing with difficult and complex problems. Many of the people we serve are working in jobs with paychecks that do not generate enough income to provide for basic necessities. What I find most rewarding is that our Self-Sufficiency Division provides both the support system to stabilize families in need and employment services to instill hope for a better future through education, training, and work. I am also fortunate to work with very talented and dedicated staff members who are committed to serving our community.

**Accomplishments Most Proud Of:** Being a new director for the Self-Sufficiency Division has given me the opportunity to evaluate our operations and processes with a fresh perspective. It has been wonderful

to build upon an already strong foundation and I was committed to finding a strategic way to leverage the energy and enthusiasm of our staff. A former graduate school classmate, Peter Stinson, is an Organizational Development consultant with the U.S. Coast Guard and has been a coach and mentor to me over the years. With his facilitation in a consultant role, the division went through a self-assessment process based on the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence framework. We call it our "Strategic Sprint" and developed four "cornerstones" to manage and direct performance in the division. It was important to me that we develop a plan that was brief, easily understandable, achievable, and outcome oriented. The resulting one-page plan encompasses four cornerstones: External Stakeholders, Customers, Processes, and Employee Learning and Growth; and provides a guiding and strategic direction for initiatives that will lead to measurable improvement in our performance. I am so proud and excited to see the division rally around our "Strategic Sprint" and we have already shown performance improvements in many areas. We have developed maps for our major processes, assessed our community partnerships, conducted focus groups with staff, and created division performance scorecards. Next steps include linking all standard operating procedures to our process maps, developing community engagement strategies, creating clear pathways for our employees to learn and grow, and providing workers with a scorecard of

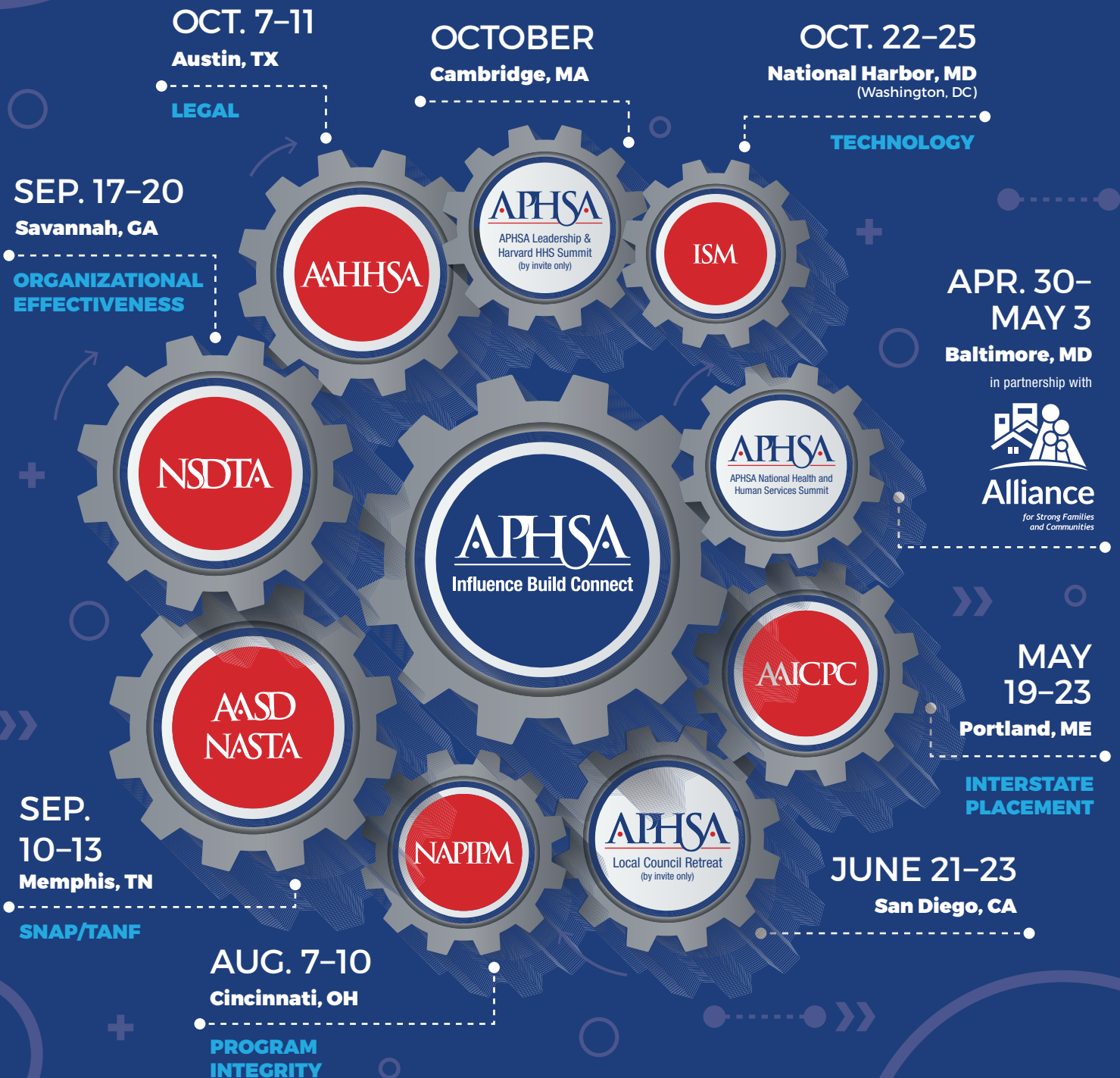
their individual performance on key indicators. All division initiatives are tied to measurable goals and metrics that we review on a regular schedule to ensure our efforts are having the desired impact. I'm looking forward to sustained high performance and measurable positive impacts for our community.

**Future Challenges for the Delivery of Public Human Services:** The increasingly important role of technology in the public human service delivery system is a challenge as well as an opportunity. Technology provides an opportunity to affect and reach more people in different ways. It is an important collaborative tool and provides efficiencies to meet the often very complex needs of our customers. Overcoming regulatory and fiscal barriers to fully leverage technology in order to serve people better is a challenge. As human services moves toward a more collaborative and integrative model, technology is critical to a holistic customer experience through information sharing and integration of service plans.

**Little Known Facts About Me:** I once appeared on the Emmy Award winning HBO series, "Veep," as an extra in an outdoor fall pig roast scene. It was great fun!

**Outside Interests:** I work a lot and enjoy being with family and friends. I like to read and spend way too much time on my iPad®. I am an avid fan of the Washington Nationals and baseball in general. 📺

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