



FACE

TO

FACE

Connecting Policymakers to People
Involved with the Correctional System

APRIL 2019



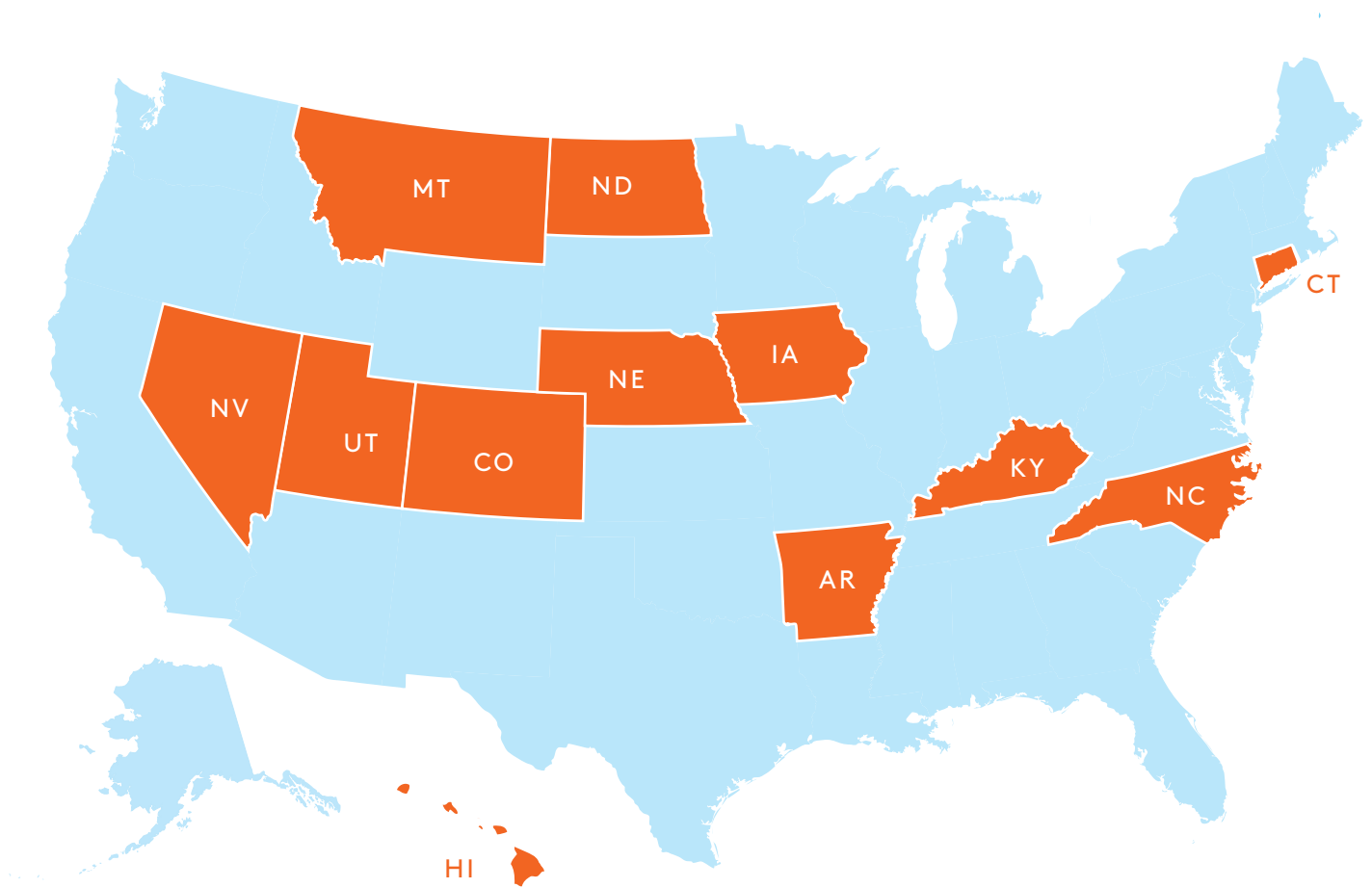
As of 2019, 15 governors from both major political parties have participated in Face to Face.

Policymakers are using research and data to analyze trends and design bipartisan criminal justice policy more than ever. This remarkable development over the past decade has bolstered public safety and saved taxpayer dollars.

But those efforts sometimes obscure the individual realities of the people who are closest to the system: the person whose untreated mental illness is worsened by time in prison, the child of an incarcerated parent, the corrections officer battling the stresses of each workday, the father denied job after job because of his criminal record.

The Face to Face initiative challenges all policymakers to publicly engage with people in these situations by participating in a series of public activities through which they can interact with people who are in prison or jail, corrections officers, victims of crime, and others who have firsthand experience with the criminal justice system. The initiative was launched in August 2017 by the National Reentry Resource Center and The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center in partnership with the Association of State Correctional Administrators, JustLeadershipUSA, and the National Center for Victims of Crime.

Policymakers on both sides of the aisle have participated in Face to Face to gain a deeper appreciation of the challenges people involved with the system encounter, raise the visibility of these issues for the general public, and become more effective champions of data-driven policies to address those challenges. This collection of stories highlights participation in Face to Face by a number of governors and features the voices of those who stand to benefit from criminal justice policy that is developed with personal experiences in mind.



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*As of 2019, these governors are no longer in office.

“This program led me in the right direction, it gave me a lot of hope—people in prison don’t have a lot of hope—and I have that now.”

Craig Burnett, welding apprentice, Anamosa State Penitentiary

KIM REYNOLDS

GOVERNOR OF IOWA (R)



Kim Reynolds is no stranger to second chances. Having previously overcome an alcohol addiction that led to two DUIs and a night in jail, Reynolds went on to raise three children, earn her bachelor’s degree at age 57, and serve as Iowa’s first female governor.

In October 2017, Governor Reynolds stepped into the Anamosa State Penitentiary (ASP), a maximum-security prison, where she met with men who are now working toward their own second chances.

In collaboration with Iowa Prison Industries, ASP offers eight vocational workshops: custom wood furniture construction, metal furniture construction, filter production, housekeeping and laundry services, sign production, graphic arts and printing, license plate production, and braille transcription.¹

The governor donned plastic safety goggles to visit the sign-making shop. There, she interrupted her tour to speak with a man who had been working in the apprenticeship program for seven years. He showed her how to make street signs by using a silk screen to print red no-entry symbols onto parking signs and spoke with the governor about his day-to-day work in the shop.

“It is not about just housing guys here, it’s not about punishing them,” said William Sperflage, ASP’s warden. “They’re here, we’ve got some time together, so let’s use it productively and get some skills, get that education in place, so that when they are ready to go back out, we have given them a reasonable chance of succeeding.”

The governor continued on to visit the license plate stamping workshop, where an apprentice paused his work, opened the printing machine, and explained to Reynolds how the various

components of the machine function to complete the thermo-imaging process used to make Iowa license plates.

Following their tour, Reynolds, Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg, and Iowa Department of Corrections Director Jerry Bartruff led a roundtable discussion with state legislators, state agency leaders, local business leaders, and current and graduate apprentices.

Roundtable attendees focused on obstacles to obtaining and maintaining employment among people leaving prison, such as securing reliable transportation to and from employment opportunities.

“If we can begin to address the barriers and break those down ... [we can release] the kind of citizens and neighbors that we all would like to have,” Bartruff said.



“There are so many opportunities out there for jobs,” Governor Reynolds told one man in the prison. “There is such a need ... I promise you.”

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

GOVERNOR OF COLORADO (D)



Editor's note: Since the writing of this story, John Hickenlooper's term as governor has ended.

"A lot of us feel forgotten in here, so the fact that you're here shows that we're not, and we do have a voice, and we are people."

A woman expressed her gratitude to Governor John Hickenlooper as he met with a group of residents at the Denver Women's Correctional Facility (DWCF). During his visit to DWCF in August 2017, the governor gained insight into daily life in prison—through the eyes of both incarcerated women and correctional staff.

Women at the facility openly shared their personal experiences with the governor and offered suggestions for how the correctional system could be improved. One woman told of disparities between men's and women's facilities, in terms of the educational and vocational programming offered. Another noted that more and more young people were entering the facility—many of whom had experienced abuse, mental health issues, and drug addiction—and that the facility should provide far more treatment programs than were currently offered.

Aware of the widespread crisis of mental illness and substance addiction in the criminal justice system, Hickenlooper allocated \$7.1 million of Colorado's fiscal year 2017–2018 budget to implement programs that divert people with immediate mental health or substance use needs from the justice system to alternative

services.² He also signed a 2017 bill—passed with bipartisan support—that allows juveniles who commit certain low-level offenses to expunge their records.³

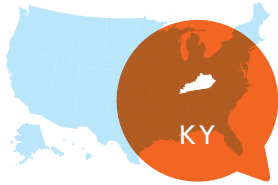
"I am a great optimist, so I am the person that assumes that whatever mistake any of you might have made, that at some point, you're recognizing that it was a mistake and you want to get on with your life and go out and not come back," Hickenlooper told the women at DWCF. "And I think part of our job is to make sure we do everything we can to give you the tools [to do that]."

"I encourage others to join this conversation on how we can best equip formerly incarcerated people with the tools to stay away from a life of crime by leading meaningful lives."

Governor John Hickenlooper



Governor Hickenlooper met with a group of women at the Denver Women's Correctional Facility.



MATT BEVIN

GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY (R)

The White House, joined by a bipartisan pair of governors, led a February 2018 discussion with executives from large and small businesses on the challenges and benefits of hiring people who have criminal records at a time when workers are in high demand and the labor pool is shrinking. Putting People with Criminal Records to Work: A National Business Roundtable was organized by the CSG Justice Center with support from the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge. At the roundtable, Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin met face to face with Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper and executives from a variety of employers—including Uber, The Home Depot, Papa Johns, Koch Industries, Brown-Forman, and the Johns Hopkins Health System—that are committed to hiring people who have criminal records.

"It is important for states to partner with businesses in order to eliminate barriers to employment and implement policies that provide a second chance. We have a moral and societal obligation to help our fellow citizens reenter our communities as productive, law-abiding citizens."

Governor Matt Bevin

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

MARILYNN WINN

More than a decade ago, Georgia resident Marilynn Winn struggled to maintain employment. She had an extensive criminal record; employers rejected her from dozens of jobs and fired her from others because they found out she had lied about having a record. It wasn't until she was in her 50s—after she built up experience volunteering for a national nonprofit focused on improving economic outcomes for working women—that Winn landed her first salaried job with benefits. Now, she is the founder and director of Women on the Rise, a membership-based advocacy organization led by women of color who were formerly incarcerated.

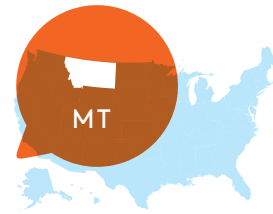
"It's not being in prison that's the hardest. It's the minute you walk out those doors and find out there's nothing there for you. What do you do? Where do you go?"



Photo by
Larry Bercow
at Bercow Studio,
NYC 2016.

STEVE BULLOCK

GOVERNOR OF MONTANA (D)



Under the leadership of Montana's Democratic Governor Steve Bullock and a majority Republican legislature, the state has seen a range of encouraging trends, including having one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and steady economic growth.⁴ But the state's correctional system has seen some less promising trends, with prison and jail populations rising, and costs rising along with them. In response to these challenges, Montana leaders requested support from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance and The Pew Charitable Trusts to use a Justice Reinvestment approach. This initiative resulted in legislation that Bullock signed into law in 2017.

To see firsthand the results of these efforts—particularly the state's enhanced support for local reentry efforts and community-based behavioral health care—Bullock joined Montana Director of Corrections Reginald D. Michael to visit the Riverside Correctional Facility in Boulder, Montana. At the facility, Bullock and Michael met with current and former participants of the facility's Recovery and Reentry program, a behavioral health program

that uses vocational training and counseling to prepare women for successful reentry.

Bullock conversed with several women who had sought rehabilitation through the program. At times visibly emotional, the women credited the program with teaching them how to healthily cope with the behavioral health struggles that they said led to their past offenses.

One woman, who completed the program and has since been released, shared that she was determined to return to the facility in order to convince the governor of how important—and potentially life altering—these types of programs can be.

"There's so much shame attached to addiction," she said. "And here, I just felt like I was valued for who I was as an individual."

"Governors all across the nation, as we have here in Montana, recognize that we need to make best use of our resources to address an overburdened system and to implement innovative and commonsense [reentry] solutions," Bullock said to the women at the meeting.⁵



Governor Bullock toured Riverside Correctional Facility.

"Behind the statistics are real people, and by meeting face to face, we can gain a greater understanding of how to turn every potential opportunity into a success story."⁶

Governor Steve Bullock



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

REGINALD D. MICHAEL⁷

Montana Department of Corrections Director Reginald D. Michael sat down with CSG Justice Center staff to talk about Governor Steve Bullock's participation in Face to Face.

What did Governor Bullock's Face to Face visit mean to you and your staff?

[The visit] shows his commitment to this overall sea change in the way we manage criminal justice and those who are involved in the criminal justice system. We are making an investment in people, and the hope is that will result in recidivism rates that are lowered, fewer people that are going to prison, and people returning to communities and having an opportunity to be productive citizens.

How did the reentry program participants feel about the governor's visit?

As I sat and listened to the interaction between him and the women, I could tell it was a big deal for them. People don't get that many opportunities to sit down with the governor of a state. They truly felt like what he was doing was listening to what they were going through and appreciating what they were hoping to get out of the program.

Why do you think it's important to get policymakers connected to the people closest to the criminal justice system?

It's an opportunity for us to share information with policymakers about what we feel is important, what we feel is impacting us, as they're making decisions about what we do every single day. If you know that the person at the very top is very critically engaged with what's going on, is concerned about what's going on and how it's impacting people, it makes a difference.

"[The visit] shows his commitment to this overall sea change in the way we manage criminal justice and those who are involved in the criminal justice system."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

MICHAEL VAN PATTEN

Sergeant Michael Van Patten has worked in the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) for more than three decades. In 2003, he nearly ended his life. Van Patten didn't know it at the time, but he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder after years of exposure to violent episodes in the facilities where he worked. He eventually sought and received counseling, and now he and his son—who also works for the DOC—are using their family's story to inspire change within the department as part of the DOC's effort to prioritize the health and wellness of staff.

Photo courtesy of Michael Van Patten.



“The hardest thing to break is this macho mentality. Sometimes it's hard for people to believe PTSD exists, or recognize that it's happening to them. But it's very real.”

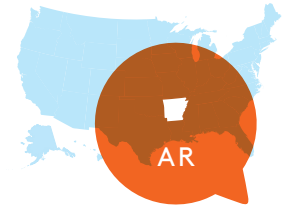


“When state leaders participated in Face to Face, it sent a clear message to corrections staff that policymakers value their work.”

**Director Anne Precythe
Missouri Department of Corrections**

ASA HUTCHINSON

GOVERNOR OF ARKANSAS (R)



When Richard King was arrested for an incident related to a mental health crisis, he didn't expect that the arrest would start him on a path to recovery. After the Sebastian County, Arkansas, Sheriff's Office realized that King was in need of treatment, he was sent to the state's first-ever crisis stabilization unit (CSU), a community-based facility that serves as an alternative to jail for people who have mental illnesses.

As part of the Face to Face initiative, Governor Asa Hutchinson sat down with King and his wife, Linda, at the same facility where King had received treatment for bipolar disorder.

"The [CSU staff] worked with me," King said to the governor. "They help you get on your medication and get back on your feet so you can get out there and back into civilization. ... They treat you like a human being."

King's diversion from jail to Sebastian County's regional CSU was the direct result of Arkansas leaders' recent efforts to improve outcomes for people in the state's criminal justice system who have mental illnesses. In 2017, with rising prison populations, increasing violent crime rates, and ballooning corrections costs, Hutchinson and a bipartisan group of state leaders came together to

create and pass Act 423, comprehensive Justice Reinvestment legislation designed to reduce corrections spending and invest savings toward sustainable practices shown to reduce recidivism and improve public safety.⁸

Based on the CSG Justice Center's recommendations, the legislation included measures to create the nation's first-ever network of CSUs and enhanced crisis intervention training for local law enforcement.⁹ Since the passage of Act 423, law enforcement officers in Arkansas have diverted hundreds of people who have mental illnesses from jails to treatment, and more than 425 officers have been trained in crisis intervention techniques.¹⁰

"I signed Justice Reinvestment legislation to better serve people struggling with mental illnesses," Hutchinson said. "Hearing Mr. King describe the confusion and frustration he felt at the jail, and the stigma of violence that's often associated with mental illnesses, opened my eyes to the realities that many people in our state face. His story illustrates that jail doesn't work as a treatment center but that proper care in a place like a CSU does, and it gives me great hope in the future success of these units."



Navy veteran Richard King sat face to face with Governor Asa Hutchinson.



Governor Hutchinson asked King about his experience at the CSU.



Governor Sandoval signed an executive order announcing the formation of a working group to oversee juvenile justice system improvements.

“We want to be fair to all youth, focus on early intervention, and develop curriculums that allow these men and women to be successful as they move on through their lives.”¹¹

Governor Brian Sandoval

BRIAN SANDOVAL

GOVERNOR OF NEVADA (R)



Editor’s note: Since the writing of this story, Brian Sandoval’s term as governor has ended.

For Governor Brian Sandoval, making Nevada’s juvenile justice system fairer and better equipped to improve the lives of people affected by it has been a top priority.

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention chose Nevada as one of two states to receive assistance to undertake a comprehensive review of its juvenile justice system, which was carried out under the guidance of the

CSG Justice Center as part of Improving Outcomes for Youth: A Statewide Juvenile Justice Initiative (IOYouth). With support from Sandoval, the state’s IOYouth efforts culminated in the 2017 Juvenile Justice System Reform Act.¹²

In keeping with his commitment to system improvement, in August 2017, Sandoval held an event at his residence to meet with formerly incarcerated people and their families and issued an official proclamation of “Face to Face Week,” which began on August 14, 2017.



Governor Cooper sat down with residents at a transitional house. Photo courtesy of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety.

ROY COOPER

GOVERNOR OF NORTH CAROLINA (D)



Years after serving a prison sentence for drug trafficking as a young adult, North Carolina resident Michael Shank was leading a program for other men with similar backgrounds.

“Most of the guys in our program just want somebody to believe in them,” Shank said in an interview with WRAL News.¹³

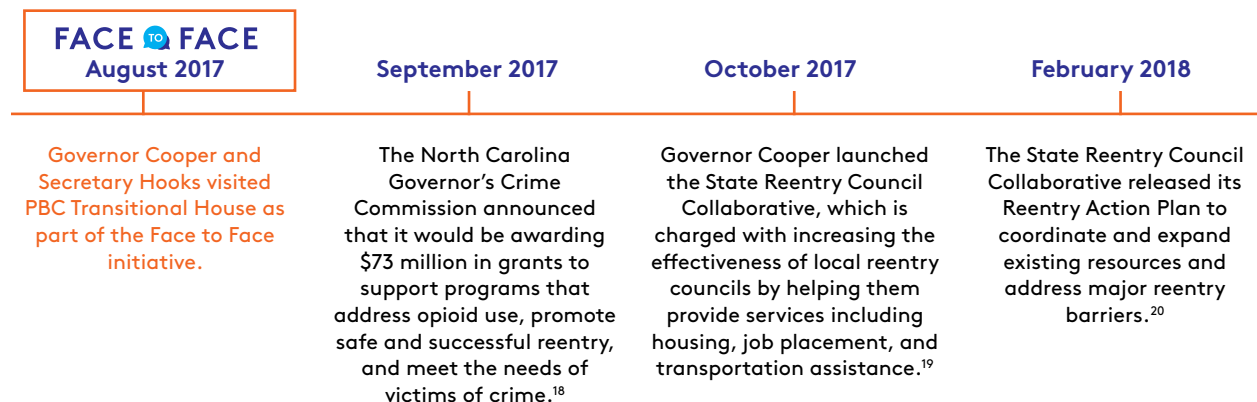
Shank founded the faith-based Pardoned by Christ (PBC) Transitional House in Raleigh, which offers housing to men returning to their communities after incarceration—many of whom have had contact with the justice system as a result of substance addictions.¹⁴ In August 2017, Governor Roy Cooper and Secretary of Public Safety Eric Hooks paid a visit to PBC, where they spoke directly with people who had gotten

back on their feet at PBC, like Mark Jones.

“If it wasn’t for that program, I wouldn’t be standing here right now,” said Jones, a former PBC resident.¹⁵

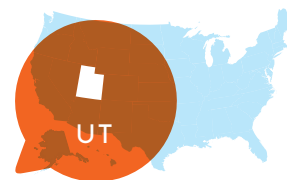
At the end of his visit, Cooper paused to pray with PBC residents and staff.¹⁶

“North Carolina should help individuals transitioning out of the correctional system so that we can minimize the revolving door of incarceration that costs our state money, tears families apart, and often deprives society of the positive contributions that these individuals can make,” Cooper said.¹⁷ Since the governor’s Face to Face visit, North Carolina has initiated a number of statewide reentry efforts.



GARY HERBERT

GOVERNOR OF UTAH (R)



In December 2017, Governor Gary Herbert sought perspective on Utah's approach to drug offenses from people not often included in state policy discussions—those serving time for substance possession.

After arriving at Utah State Prison's Promontory facility, the governor pulled up a plastic chair and openly conversed with two men about their experiences at the facility and in its substance addiction treatment program. The visit—which marked Herbert's first-ever meeting with incarcerated people at a correctional facility—was an opportunity for former Department of Corrections Executive Director Rollin Cook and his staff to show the governor their everyday work environment and highlight some of their innovative programs.

Herbert also met with participants of a hands-on vocational program, who can work part-time throughout their incarceration and are guaranteed employment upon release if they graduate from the program. He visited a classroom-based high school literacy program where he congratulated one participant on his recent graduation.²¹

Lastly, Herbert joined residents in a substance addiction treatment group and reiterated his commitment to improving outcomes for people who struggle with behavioral health conditions.

"If you have a substance abuse or mental health problem, we don't want to just put you in jail or prison," Herbert said to the group. "We want to rehabilitate you."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

CHARLENE BENCOMO



Charlene Bencomo survived a violent sexual assault in New Mexico at age 20 and struggled with the resulting physical and psychological injuries for years. Police referred her to her state's Victim Services Division, where she was connected to a counselor. Her sexual assault kit sat untested in an evidence room for years, but eventually the DNA evidence led to a trial of the person who assaulted her 13 years later.

After the trial in 2012, Bencomo began telling her story publicly, first to groups of other victims and then to nurses, doctors, members of law enforcement, and other first responders.

Beyond psychological anguish, victims also often face financial burdens that arise as a result of crimes committed against them. But states often struggle to identify and address crime victims' needs in a consistent, timely, and compassionate manner. States must methodically and regularly assess the policies and practices

that direct these three mechanisms: (1) managing restitution; (2) compensating victims for certain expenses; and (3) funding services through state and federal grants.

"I will carry physical and mental reminders of what happened to me for the rest of my life, so in some ways, the sentence didn't matter. It was speaking to the judge and sharing my story that was most important to me."

DANNEL MALLOY

GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT (D)



Editor's note: Since the writing of this story, Dannel Malloy's term as governor has ended.

After 24 visits to Connecticut prisons, Governor Dannel Malloy decided it was time others got to see what he'd seen. On May 30, 2018, his administration welcomed state legislators, judges, prosecutors, and others into Cheshire Correctional Institution for the first-ever full-scale criminal justice conference inside a prison.

"I think the setting was the appropriate one," Malloy said. "It's important that the institutions be understood for all of their strengths and all of their weaknesses. If you take anything from this conference, let it be that the human faces you saw here ... are taking steps to right their wrongs and leave this institution as better people."

The event had many elements of a standard criminal justice conference: speeches from a podium, panels, name badges, pastries. Discussion topics ranged from victims' advocacy to educational opportunities inside correctional facilities. And yet, this conference was far from typical. Corrections officers escorted groups of attendees through the institution's hallways, bars obstructed the windows of each breakout session room, and residents wearing their state-issued tan jumpsuits sat on panels alongside suited criminal justice professionals.

"As you walk these corridors, we want you to

look in and look out as we continue the process of reimagining justice," said Connecticut First Lady Cathy Malloy, who cohosted the Reimagining Justice Conference with the governor.

Of all the day's activities, attendees were most captivated by a tour of TRUE, one of the prison's pilot programs. TRUE targets young men between the ages of 16 and 24, whom research shows are the most likely to reoffend upon release from prison. TRUE pairs these young adults with people whom staff refer to as "lifers," older incarcerated men who are sentenced for life and eager to serve as mentors.

"Quite frankly, the TRUE Unit sells itself," Malloy said of the program, which was established in collaboration with the Vera Institute of Justice. "Anybody who participates in [observing] that unit will be permanently impacted in how they think a correctional institution should work."

Two TRUE Unit participants led the governor and other conference attendees through their residence, visiting its library, study, and barber shop. Other residents chatted with conference attendees as they passed through, when they weren't speaking with fellow program members or joking with corrections officers.

"The experience with the officers, it is like a family atmosphere," said Davon Eldemire, one of the unit's residents. "That's not a norm to be saying in prison."



The governor and first lady heard from men in the Cheshire Correctional Institution.



Governor Ricketts learned about day-to-day life in Tecumseh State Correctional Institution.



Domesti-PUPS program participants train dogs to become service animals for people in the general population who have disabilities.

PETE RICKETTS

GOVERNOR OF NEBRASKA (R)



A small group of corrections officers sat in their last class at Tecumseh State Correctional Institution, about to graduate from the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Staff Training Academy. Then, Governor Pete Ricketts walked into their classroom. He wanted to personally address the graduating class, an impromptu schedule change he made to the surprise of both the class and his own staff.

“As governor, I’m responsible for an organization that’s got over 12,500 people, and it’s important to know what they are all doing in their day-to-day jobs,” Ricketts said of NDCS. “You have to go see what the front-line people are doing to be able to help make those policy decisions about where we make changes.”

Direct, on-the-ground engagement with the state’s criminal justice system has been a trademark of Ricketts’s tenure—he’s visited every correctional facility in the state during his time in office.

NDCS Secretary Scott Frakes and Warden Brad Hansen led the governor on a four-hour

tour of the maximum-security Tecumseh facility, which featured a visit to the control tower, lunch with the staff, conversations with participants in various reentry and job training programs, and more.

The governor met with several people who are incarcerated at the facility as part of an effort to learn about the programs offered there, including a woodworking workshop designed to help people learn valuable skills for employment after release, and the Domesti-PUPS program, in which participants train dogs to become service animals for people in the community who have disabilities.

After he met the governor, Domesti-PUPS participant Monte Sidden expressed his appreciation for the personal tone of the governor’s visit.

“I think it’s great that [Ricketts] is taking an interest in the day-to-day [activities] that go on in the prisons and the programs that they’re trying to institute to make it a better atmosphere,” Sidden said.



Governor Ige toured a sustainable farming program.
Photos courtesy of the State of Hawaii Office of the Governor.



Governor Ige rode in a prison transport van.

DAVID IGE

GOVERNOR OF HAWAII (D)



It was an ordinary sight at the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC) in Kailua, Hawaii: a prison transport van pulled up to the entrance of the facility. But this time, it was Hawaii Governor David Ige sitting in the back of the van, peering through its caged windows.

This marked the beginning of the governor’s immersive visit to WCCC, during which he experienced a “day in the life” at the facility, where women participate in a range of job training programs.

A number of barriers—including limited skills or minimal work experience due to time in prison and out of the workforce—can prevent people leaving incarceration from finding or maintaining a job, which can result in hardships for both the individual and their family.²²

To minimize these challenges, states like Hawaii are investing resources in reentry programs that provide incarcerated people with skills needed for stable employment upon release and thereby help reduce their likelihood of recidivating.²³

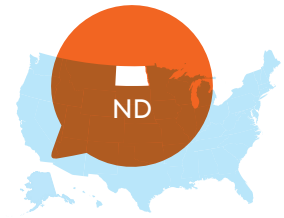
During his Face to Face visit, Ige spent hours interacting with staff and incarcerated women. Starting off with a ceremony for graduates of a construction program, the governor visited five WCCC programs that teach skills for a range of industries, such as the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle Hydroponics Program, in which participants learn entrepreneurial skills related to sustainable farming.²⁴

Following the tour, the governor also made sure to meet with the correctional staff at WCCC, who play a critical role in helping the women under their supervision prepare for reentry.

“The dedicated staff and instructors have done a tremendous job of training these women and giving them an opportunity to transition into jobs once they leave the facility,” Ige said at the conclusion of his visit. “I was truly impressed by the quality of work they produced through each of the programs and I appreciated the one-on-one time spent with the staff.”²⁵

DOUG BURGUM

GOVERNOR OF NORTH DAKOTA(R)



“That’s the biggest thing heroin takes away from you: time.”

For more than a decade, Jyssica Noble’s life was consumed by her substance addiction, which began at age 14 when she started using opioids with her mother.

In a Face to Face dialogue with North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum and First Lady Kathryn Halgaas Burgum, Noble recounted the pain she has endured: how attempts at recovery were quickly followed by relapse; how she stole to support her addiction, leading to several stints in jail; how she lost her son to foster care after police raided her hotel room for drug paraphernalia; how she experienced homelessness. With almost no support system around her, addiction was the only constant in her life.

Noble is one of hundreds of North Dakotans who have received support from Free Through Recovery, an innovative program launched in January 2018 that aims to reduce recidivism by increasing access to community-based behavioral health services for people under community supervision and those who are deemed to be at risk of reincarceration.²⁶

The program—which works in collaboration with probation and parole officers—connects participants with a care coordinator who ensures that their recovery needs are being met. Free Through Recovery is one of several reforms that resulted from North Dakota’s Justice Reinvestment process. Based on advice from the CSG Justice Center, the state focused much of its system improvement effort on reentry support for people who have mental illnesses and substance addictions.²⁷ Burgum signed the Justice Reinvestment legislation in 2017.

“We can’t solve a chronic health care problem with punishment—we’ve got to treat it like a disease and solve it that way,” Burgum said at a 2018 prison reform roundtable. “In the end, we’re trying to create better neighbors, not better prisoners. It’s education, it’s career skills, it’s treatment. Those are the things we have to focus on.”²⁸

When a recent relapse nearly took her life, Noble credited her Free Through Recovery

support system with getting her back on track.

“At that point, I started looking at my care coordination team differently,” Noble said. “The look on my probation officer’s face wasn’t anger.... He wasn’t trying to punish me. He didn’t bring me to jail. He wanted me safe. These people cared; I haven’t had that [in my life].”

Now 27 years old, Noble is optimistic. She has an apartment of her own for the first time and a full-time position at FedEx.

“I’m proud of who I am. I’m proud of where I’m going and what I’m doing. And that’s a good feeling.”



Governor and First Lady Burgum met with Fargo resident Jyssica Noble.



Noble told of her experience in the Free Through Recovery program.

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ENDNOTES

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the NATIONAL REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER

The National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC) was established in 2008 by the Second Chance Act (Public Law 110-199) and is administered by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance. The NRRC provides education, training, and technical assistance to state and local governments, tribal organizations, territories, community-based service providers, nonprofit organizations, and correctional institutions working to improve reentry. To learn more about the NRRC, visit www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org.



Justice Center

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The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, representing state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities. For more information about the CSG Justice Center, visit www.csjusticecenter.org.

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