

**Committee on County Criminal Justice System Best Practices for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century –  
Re-Entry Program Award 2019  
Honoring Those Individuals and Organizations That Interact With County  
Corrections or JDCAP Members**

**BACKGROUND**

The County Criminal Justice Systems for the 21st Century, a subcommittee of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) Courts and Corrections Committee has been charged by the CCAP Board with developing programs to promote best practices in criminal justice. First introduced as a means of promoting the 2003 CCAP Prison Overcrowding Task Force recommendations, the awards program has evolved over time to focus on best practices in general, rather than just programs that are designed to address overcrowding.

**AWARD PROGRAM GOAL**

This honor is awarded to an individual or organization that is not directly employed by a county corrections facility or JDCAP member facility or agency, although the nominee may be a county employee or elected officer who interacts with corrections or juvenile detention or alternative programs. The nominee should possess experience that demonstrate an active role in promoting activities that improve the successful re-entry of supervisees back into the community.

**NUMBER OF AWARDS**

No more than one award will be presented each year.

**ELIGIBILITY**

- A Re-entry Program Nominee cannot be presently employed by a county correctional, juvenile detention facility or alternative program in Pennsylvania.
- A Re-entry Program Nominee must have provided support, resources or assistance to the advancement of the mission of the submitting entity
- A Re-entry Program Nominee must be nominated by a CCAP member or a JDCAP member.

**PREPARING AND SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY**

Use the official award form in this brochure or available online at <http://www.pacounties.org/ProgramServices/Pages/Criminal-Justice.aspx> click on "Criminal Justice System Best Practices Awards – Re-entry Program"

**DEADLINE**

Entries must be submitted via email using the electronic form no later than close of business **February 15, 2019.**

**JUDGING AND SELECTION**

All entries will be scored by the Committee on County Criminal Justice System Best Practices. The winning entry will be announced at the CCAP annual conference in March, and afterwards,

contacts identified for each winning submission will be notified. Awards will be presented at an event in a location chosen by the awardee.

**NOTICE**

By applying the applicant agrees that items submitted for the program narrative will be posted on the CCAP and JDCAP websites, and made available to counties who wish to establish similar best practices. The signatures on the submission indicate agreement with the public posting, and the award recipient may be asked to share additional information with other counties. The Committee on County Criminal Justice Systems Best Practices reserves the right to disqualify an entry if all of the required elements are not included. Further, entries not receiving a minimum score may be disqualified. Further, entries that fail to achieve a minimum score may be disqualified.

## OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Entrants must complete all sections for the entry to be considered complete. A copy of this official entry is available at <http://www.pacounties.org/ProgramServices/Pages/Criminal-Justice.aspx>

Name/County Nominator Mark Bartholomew/Northampton

Address 669 Washington St.

City, State, Zip Code Easton, PA 18042

Title Deputy Warden for Classification

Contact Phone 610-829-7405

### PARTNER INFORMATION

Name of nominee Workforce Board of the Lehigh Valley

Title of nominee LEAP Program

### NARRATIVE

**Enter narrative that explains the following:**

**Contributions** – Discuss the contributions the nominee has made to improving county corrections or juvenile justice re-entry services at the local, regional, or state level

In 2015 the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley was awarded a \$500,000 U.S. Department of Labor grant to partner with Northampton County Department of Corrections to provide returning citizens from the Northampton County Jail with critical job readiness and employability skills needed to get and keep a job, lower recidivism rates, make communities safer and reduce costs to county taxpayers. Grant funding expired September 11, 2017. One of two key components of the LEAP program is the creation of the LEAP Center, a mini-CareerLink Center, placed right in the jail for the pre-release LEAP program. The other key component is a seamless transition to the PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley, where participants can avail themselves to all the career services, training and support available at CareerLink. Building on the overwhelming success during the grant funded period, the LEAP program became county funded in September 2017. The LEAP program has served over 100 unduplicated inmates per year. The LEAP program's outcomes show drastically reduced recidivism rates when compared to the general jail population. Since 2017 only 6% have returned within the first 12 months post-release while the general population returns at a rate of 48% in the first 12 months. Additionally 75% of LEAP graduates obtain employment or enroll in education within 30 days of release; many of these individuals have no formal work history. As can be seen by these results the LEAP program improves county corrections not only by providing a high quality relevant treatment service

during incarceration, it also connects returning citizens with pro-social activities such as employment post-release.

**Promotion of best practices** – Explain how the nominee has knowingly or unknowingly promoted the goals of the best practices program

LEAP promotes the best practices program in its day to day operations by utilizing several evidence-based practices that have a direct impact on program outcomes. Those include: the use of risk, needs, responsivity principles, by using an evidence-based practices such as motivational interviewing and teaching an evidence-based curriculum and by providing strong links to established community supports post-release. The combination of these practices along with consistent persistence have resulted in a program that is successful in reducing recidivism among its graduates.

LEAP participants are assessed using the LS-CMI, a risk, needs, responsivity assessment tool. The tool indicates the risk level across eight domains. The LEAP staff are able to tailor individual case planning to the results of the assessment and coordinate with Jail staff and other contracted staff to address the needs such as drug and alcohol treatment, housing, and criminal thinking patterns.

LEAP staff is trained in Motivational Interviewing, which is shown to increase intrinsic motivation among criminal justice involved individuals. They are also trained in NCTI's True Colors and use the JobTec curriculum in the classroom. These two best- or evidence-based practices contribute to the overall success of the program graduates.

Additionally LEAP promotes the goals of the best practices program by their proven track record of providing linkages to community supports for post-release services. LEAP graduates connect with providers primarily through existing partnerships at the Lehigh Valley CareerLink Centers. These supports allow graduates to navigate the early days of reintegration and for many, a start of a new way of life. Partners include four Recovery Centers, homeless shelters, transportation, and interview preparation.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Please include any supporting documentation to demonstrate the impact of the project in cost or population outcomes, or other data to demonstrate the considerations utilized in determining the scope or design of the project. Scoring will be based on factors including the entrant's description of the problem, the soundness of the approach, and success in meeting goals and objectives. Award submissions will receive consideration for outcomes or best practices supported by data. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION SHOULD BE COPIED AND PASTED DIRECTLY INTO THE FORM USING THE BOX BELOW.**

In making the case to transition from grant funding to county funding Northampton County Jail determined a way to calculate the return on investment based on the reduced recidivism rate. (Date as of December 2018) As for recidivism, of the 86 participants released since September 2017, there is a rate of recidivism of 6%, compared to the general population of 47.8%

(difference of 41.8%). This recidivism reduction can be calculated to a cost savings of more than \$433,000. (86 inmates released to date, 41.8% of that total is 35.9. Reasoning that LEAP prevented 35.9 people from recidivating, we can calculate a cost savings as follows; 35.9 people times 105 days (the average length of stay for sentenced inmates) times \$115 (cost per day, per inmate). The program costs roughly \$300,000 per year and produces an overall savings or value to the county.

The program has consistently met its contractual benchmarks. It also maintains fidelity to the core curriculum, JobTec. While the program has a steady core, it is responsive to participant needs and interests. In the late fall of 2018 several participants expressed interest in entrepreneurship. In response DJ Kormanik from CADCA will began a Start Your Our Business information session for LEAP participants in January 2019. The session will focus on identifying skills/talents and matching them to business opportunities, learning what it takes to become an entrepreneur and completing an entrepreneurial assessment.

Quality programs are not only valued for their ability to produce outcomes as outlined in a contract but also by the impact and transformation they yield for the graduates. Each quarter the program highlights feedback received from graduates in their report. In January 2019 the program reported this participant feedback. *Edward P. - During the past 5 weeks I would have to say that I have learned how to explain my criminal background from a negative and turn it into a positive. I've learned how to correctly write a resume and because of the gaps in my employment history it would be best for me to use a functional resume rather than a chronological. I have learned about an effective way to interview for a job. I've gained knowledge on writing thank you letters, cover letters and their effectiveness. In the past 5 weeks, I would say I've gained a bunch of valuable skills that are more important to leading a satisfactory life than I ever thought about, skills that will help me not only gain employment, but also friends. Friends can be a valuable asset to finding meaningful employment through networking. It have opened my eyes to a lot of possibilities.*

While LEAP and the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley have been approached by PCCD and the DOC about the program model, we are unaware of any counties that have replicated it. The LEAP program has been a highly successful program in Northampton County Jail, and given the statewide presence of CareerLink Centers, we believe this program has strong potential to be replicated in other settings.

**Each application must be submitted with the signature of the nominating party.**

Signatures can be entered electronically, or submitted via fax using a separate form. To sign, right-click on the signature line, select "Signature Setup" from the drop down, and follow the

prompts. If submitting signatures on a separate form, enter "FAXING" on the signature line.

X 

(Enter Title) DEPUTY WARDEN OF CLASSIFICATION

**SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY – To submit the entry, save a copy of this completed form after all information, including signatures and supporting materials have been added. When saving the form, please assure that the document name includes the county name, the type of project and the year – (i.e. FranklinReentryAward2019). Address an email to [bpenyak@pacounties.org](mailto:bpenyak@pacounties.org) and attach the award submission.**