



The Impact and Opportunity of Our Nonprofit Sector

A Case Study Analysis

Nonprofits drive change, innovation, connection, and the economy in ways that many people outside of the sector may not fully realize, and that many within the sector find challenging to articulate. Nonprofit organizations supported one in every eight Texas jobs, and made up 5.4% of the total U.S. Gross Domestic Product in 2018. Nonprofits do work that no other sector is willing or equipped to take on, yet these organizations are often viewed as less valuable than the public and private sector industry.

To highlight the true and significant impact of the nonprofit sector, the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service at The University of Texas at Austin LBJ School of Public Affairs, United Ways of Texas, One Star Foundation, and the Center for Nonprofits and Philanthropy at Texas A&M University came together to tell the economic story of nonprofit organizations in Texas. These partners curated data, delineated common sector practices, and crafted case studies to serve as tools to help those in and outside of the sector understand and explain the economic impact of each organization and the sector as a whole.

The following case studies highlight different nonprofit organizations across the state of Texas. Each is organized to align with one or more of United Way's impact themes: Connection, Intersection, Innovation, Foundation. These studies aim to be useful in sharing the work of the nonprofit sector with nonprofit and community leaders, policy makers, engaged citizens, and students interested in careers in the nonprofit sector.

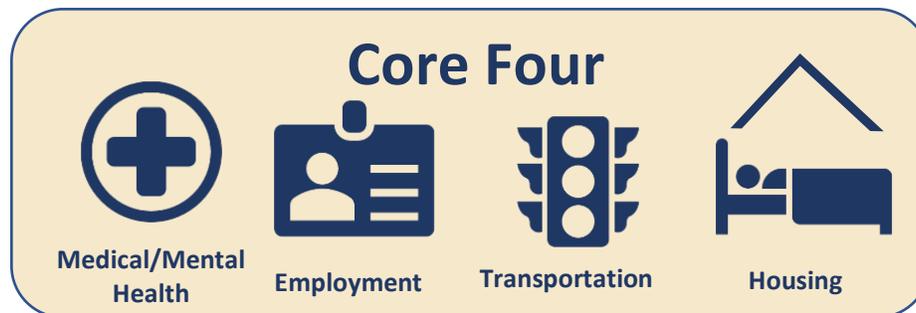


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Unlocking DOORS®

Nonprofit organizations have the skills and agility necessary to form and leverage connections to create meaningful impact. Unlocking DOORS®, a nonprofit organization based in Dallas, Texas, is doing the important work of connection to serve individuals with criminal backgrounds.

Reentry from the criminal justice system can feel like an uphill battle. Individuals often find that they need multiple services from job placement and preparation to securing transportation, food and housing. Though multiple organizations exist to meet various needs, there is no organization that meets all needs. Too frequently people get lost in the referral process, going from one organization to another, still unable to find the right combination of services. Unlocking DOORS® was created to help fill in these gaps. Through what they have trademarked as a “Reentry Brokerage®” system, Unlocking DOORS® connects the multitude of reentry services that exist and provides clients a home base for reentry.



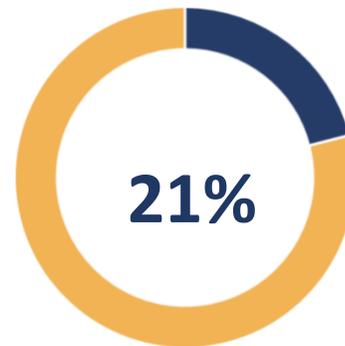
Unlocking DOORS® serves as a brokerage system, providing navigation and monitoring services to those with criminal backgrounds. A client walks into a beautiful office where a member of the Reentry Brokerage® team (Reentry Broker™) sits down with him/her to conduct a comprehensive intake which includes payment of a “one-time” \$5 fee, application completion, and a thorough risk/needs assessment to determine everything including the client’s risk for reoffending, specific needs, and skill sets. From there, the client and Reentry Broker™ work together to prioritize immediate needs and create an action plan which is individualized to the particular client. While clients take steps to achieve their plan, Unlocking DOORS® is there to support them along the way. The relationship that is built between the client and the Reentry Brokerage® team is one of trust that is viewed by the client as a “tower of strength” when the going gets tough (which it most assuredly will at some point). Once an individual becomes an Unlocking DOORS® client he/she is always a client. The organization is careful to balance the relationship with clients, ensuring it offers support as needed based on individual needs without overburdening. Christina Melton Crain, Esq., Founder and President/CEO of Unlocking DOORS®, reminds us that not all clients are alike – one client may only need assistance with a job because he/she currently has a place to reside and transportation; while another client may have a mental health issue which

brings up a completely different priority of services. It is important to fit the services to the actual person and not the other way around – a focus on what will work best for the client based on each unique situation and circumstance is what is most impactful. Additionally, clients that are regaining their independence need a place where they can go for services; but it is important not to give them more than what is required to get them moving in the right direction. Doing so can have adverse effects if handled incorrectly

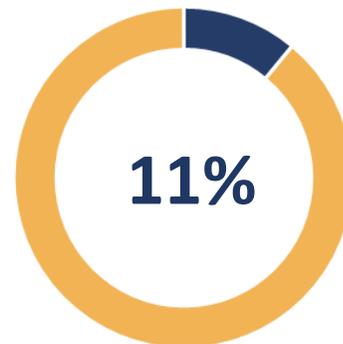
Evidence-Based Practices Are Top Priority

“The identification of risk and needs is a critical step, because supervision and programs are most effective at reducing future crime when they are specific to an offender's individual profile. Failing to match treatment with an offender's risk level can, in fact, have serious consequences. Research shows, for example, that putting lower-risk offenders in intensive programming increases their recidivism rates. Evidence-based interventions targeting offenders with a moderate to high risk of committing new crimes produces better outcomes for both the offenders and the community.”

Texas Wide Recidivism Rate



Unlocking DOORS® Recidivism Rate



Recidivism rate is accurate for the state of Texas as of the January 2019 Legislative Budget Board Report. Recidivism rate for Unlocking DOORS® was last updated June 24, 2019.

The average cost to incarcerate one “general population adult offender” in Texas is roughly \$22,500 per year. Over the past ten years, Unlocking DOORS® has served 4,190 formerly incarcerated clients. At an eleven percent reconviction rate, this means that Unlocking DOORS® is preventing reincarceration for an average of 442 people each year. Unlocking DOORS® annual expenditures amount to \$1,202,337 and it saves Texas nearly seven times that each year in recidivism costs alone.



UNLOCKING DOORS® SAVES TEXAS \$8,392,500 PER YEAR IN RECIDIVISM COSTS.

- This number only scratches the surface of the organization's true impact. Unlocking DOORS® is currently connecting clients with 265 organizations statewide that offer housing assistance, mental and physical healthcare, and access to food, clothing, job training and placement, among other services. When people are connected to these resources via Unlocking DOORS® they are able to make progress towards self-sufficiency, which has long-term benefits to both the individual and society. Unlocking DOORS® is working with a criminologist to help quantify multiple levels of impact through expansive data analytics. Through this process the organization will be able to evaluate their progress, alter their techniques, and ensure the biggest possible return for their clients and the State of Texas. Some metrics may include cost savings related to increased consumer capital, decreased recidivism, increased access to mental healthcare, and decreased emergency medical visits.

- NONPROFITS DO THIS WORK BECAUSE THEY CAN.
IN MANY WAYS THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT CAN.

Unlocking DOORS® witnessed a gap that separated the people who were formerly incarcerated to the services they need to successfully reintegrate into society. The public sector lacks the resources, and in some cases, a shared political will to provide this group of people with what they need. Given the vulnerability of this population, the private sector does not have a clear way to monetize this problem. Without anyone there to fill the gap, everyone loses. The individuals may miss the opportunity to care for themselves and their families. Society pays more to provide disconnected services that fall short of meeting needs, or eventually pays the cost of re-incarceration. The private sector loses potential consumers and employees. Thankfully, the nonprofit sector frequently steps in to make the necessary connections and fill the gaps.

Research shows that by supporting individuals who have been involved in the criminal justice system, entire communities are uplifted – poverty decreases, public safety increases, and children get more time with their families. Through its mission and work, Unlocking DOORS® realizes the immense potential benefit of serving its target population. It also understands the importance of proven metrics for sustainability and government buy-in. For these reasons, Unlocking DOORS® is building out a comprehensive data analytic system, constantly improving their process, and humanizing their clients through excellent customer service – all in order to connect people with the resources they need to live productive and rewarding lives.

