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Unlocking DOORS™ Host Site for Safe Streets & Second Chances Study

Texas non-profit to be a part of Innovating Prisons and Reentry to Foster Change

DALLAS, TX – MAY 15, 2018 – Unlocking DOORS™, Texas' most innovative and cutting-edge community reentry resource network for former offenders, is hosting a national training for a two-year research project led by Dr. Carrie Pettus-Davis, Founding Director of the Institute for Justice Research and Development and Associate Professor at Florida State University. The policy reforms are led by Texas Public Policy Foundation and Koch Industries, Inc. The first four pilot states of Safe Streets & Second Chances (S3C) are Texas, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Florida. Weeklong training is underway at Unlocking DOORS™ in Dallas for weeklong training for researchers leading the randomized controlled trial with 1,100 study participants across the four states, 30 prisons and 14 rural and urban communities. In addition to Dallas, Hill and Hood Counties are also part of the research.

Dallas is a natural test site for the study given that Unlocking DOORS'™ nationally-unique model and the S3C initiative approach the concerns of recidivism in a similar manner – with an evidence-based focus on the individual needs of the client.

"I am thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate with Unlocking DOORS™ as my research team embarks on one of largest studies of reentry done in this country," remarked Pettus- Davis. "Unlocking DOORS™ is a natural fit because they are highly innovative and are eager to engage in research that identifies cutting edge strategies that are scalable."

"We are so pleased to be selected as one of the four initial test sites, and as the host site for the national training," said Christina Melton Crain, Esq., Founder and President/CEO of Unlocking DOORS™.

Similar to Unlocking DOORS'™ nationally-unique model, the S3C initiative approaches the concerns of repeat offenders and recidivism with an evidence-driven focus on two components integral to successful reentry and reintegration into society. A collaboration between Unlocking DOORS™ and Florida State University Research Team sets out to accomplish the following:

- Remove barriers to success for individuals after prison by using research to bridge policy reforms and effective reentry service approaches
- Revolutionize the manner and means by which reentry services are delivered to individuals with criminal backgrounds
- Generate science to implement and scale evidence-driven policy and reentry service innovations
- Close the gap and lag between scientific discovery and the adoption of those findings in practice

On average, 70,000 ex-offenders are released back into Texas communities each year. Historically, the community-based former offender programs throughout the State of Texas are limited to those offenders on probation or parole supervision. And, the programs available have not historically coordinated their services to create a comprehensive reentry plan. It is out of this need that Unlocking DOORS™ was formed.

Unlocking DOORS™ is Texas' most comprehensive "community reentry resource network". Unlocking DOORS™ uses a unique and highly-successful "Reentry Brokerage™/Data" program model to connect former offenders with the specific services and resources they need to find a future of self-sufficiency that is crime-free – i.e., employment, job training, housing, medical/mental health treatment and transportation.

"I'm hopeful the work we're doing at Unlocking DOORS™ will serve as a great launch for Pettus-Davis and her research," Crain said. "Without programs like ours, and the close and dedicated cooperation of our partnerships, many former offenders will reoffend, costing taxpayer dollars, increasing our crime rate, and destroying the chances for a holistic, healthy, and productive society."

As part of the research for Safe Streets & Second Chances, data collectors will collect information from individuals while they are in prison, immediately after release, and then 4, 8, and 15 months after release from prison.

Each host site will be staffed with a research team comprised of a Project Manager, Clinical Research Associates, Research & Assessment Specialists, and Reentry Program Specialists.

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About Unlocking DOORS™
Founded in 2010 and headquartered in Dallas, Texas, Unlocking DOORS™ is a statewide "Community Reentry Resource Network" that seeks to create and promote a safer more productive society by revolutionizing reentry service delivery to former offenders through individual and community empowerment, education and engagement. Through its nationally-unique and unduplicated Reentry Brokerage™/Data Model, Unlocking DOORS™ reduces crime by guiding those with criminal backgrounds to a future of self-sufficiency that is crime-free. By collaborating and coordinating with numerous "brokered" partners and providers statewide (223 and counting), Unlocking DOORS™ pulls together all resources, organizations, and programs into one coordinated effort, allowing for cross-networking, collaboration, cohesion and a stronger service model for those with criminal backgrounds. For more information, visit www.unlockingdoors.org or follow @prisondoors on Twitter.

About the Institute for Justice Research and Development at Florida State University
The Institute for Justice Research and Development (IJRD) at Florida State University aims to advance science, policy, and practice to improve the well-being of individuals and families impacted by criminal justice system

involvement. At IJRD, we understand that the United States is ready to grapple with a major civil rights challenge of the 21st century – excessive incarceration rates driven by racial, economic, and behavioral health disparities. IJRD acknowledges that there is overall public, political, and fiscal will for evidence-driven approaches to addressing human behaviors. Its aim is to generate evidence that facilitates systemic policies and practices that generate the best outcomes for individuals, families, and our communities, relying on science - not incarceration, as the driving solution. Established in 2018, IJRD conducts rigorous, applied research with innovations in both scientific discovery and advancing scientific methods. IJRD offers high quality educational opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students as well as postdoctoral fellows. IJRD provides cutting edge training and support to current professionals. For more information, visit https://csw.fsu.edu/research-overview