

FLASH FAX/E-NEWS JULY 31, 2013

CJJR Accepting Applications for Information

Sharing Certificate Program Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) is accepting applications for its Information Sharing Certificate Program to be held December 9–12, 2013, in Washington, DC. The program, offered in partnership with the Juvenile Law Center and the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, will help professionals in the juvenile justice and other child-serving fields to increase their knowledge about information sharing, develop action plans for reform, and access technical assistance to break through barriers they encounter when implementing reforms. Visit: <http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/certprogs/informationsharing/certificateinformationsharing.html>

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OJJDP Releases Report of Family Listening Sessions on Juvenile Justice

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has released "OJJDP Family Listening Sessions: Executive Summary." In 2011, OJJDP and the Campaign for Youth Justice convened four listening sessions involving families and youth who have had direct experiences with the juvenile justice system at the local or state levels. This report summarizes the participants' experiences and their recommendations for reform. Visit: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/241379.pdf>

Criminal Offenders: Earnings and Education

The U.S. Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has compiled the only available annual data on the employment-related characteristics of criminal offenders, which became routinely available in 2006 from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Criminal Offenders: Earnings and Education provides a table and 2 charts on criminal offenders in adult correctional facilities, including earnings, education, disability, veteran status, limited English proficiency, and demographic characteristics. These data indicate declining employment and earnings among those subsequently sentenced to correctional facilities over the 2006-11 period. Nearly two-thirds had a high school education or more, up almost 5 percentage points over 2006-11. About a quarter of adult prisoners reported disabilities, in contrast to the approximately 10 percent of all 16 to 64 year-olds reporting disabilities in the ACS. Some 8 percent spoke English less than "very well," and 7 percent were veterans. For more data on the unemployment, employment, earnings and educational attainment of American workers, see ETA's new series, We've Got Your Number(s) — Key Workforce Trends. Visit: <https://winwin.workforce3one.org/view/2001319066778367755/info>

15th Bi-Annual Adult & Juvenile Female Offenders Conference October 6 - 10, 2013 Portland, Maine

The first AJFO conference was hosted in 1985 by the Minnesota Department of Corrections. Until then, no mechanism existed for training and networking for corrections professionals who worked specifically with female offenders. Because of gender and cultural needs of women and girls, many working in the field strongly believed that there needed to be an international and ongoing discourse regarding female offenders. A grassroots movement began to provide a forum for corrections professionals to come together every other year and share information and concerns regarding the needs, management and treatment of female offenders. Visit: <http://ajfo.org/about.html>

A Second Chance for Ex-Offenders

The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission took on an important issue last year when it reaffirmed and updated a ruling that barred employers from automatically denying people jobs based on arrest or conviction records. The guidance made clear that an arrest alone was not proof of illegal conduct or grounds for exclusion. It also explained that, when considering an applicant with a criminal conviction, the employer must take into account the seriousness of the offense, the time lapsed since the offense and the relevance of the crime to the specific job being sought. The point is to eliminate unfair obstacles to employment for the 65 million Americans who have criminal records, including those based on minor convictions that might have occurred in the distant past.

Last week, the E.E.O.C. stepped up enforcement in this area by filing discrimination lawsuits against two companies — the retail chain Dollar General, which operates more than 10,000 stores in 40 states, and the automaker BMW.

The suits charge the companies with violating Title VII of the Civil Rights Act by using discriminatory background-check policies that had disparate impacts on minority employees and applicants. The E.E.O.C. alleges that Dollar General disqualifies job applicants for a variety of crimes, including reckless driving or possessing drug paraphernalia, without considering the relevance of the offense to the job, as the commissions's guidelines require. According to the complaint, about 10 percent of conditionally hired black employees were discharged for failing background checks between 2004 and 2007 versus about 7 percent of others.

The complaint against BMW, which deals with a factory in Spartanburg, S.C., charges that in 2008 a new labor contractor hired by the automaker applied a company screening policy that had a disparate impact on minorities and denied employment to people who had worked at that plant for years without incident. The contractor dismissed 88 employees for having criminal records. The two companies said they would fight the lawsuits. The wiser approach would be to bring the screening policies in line with federal civil rights law. Visit: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/20/opinion/a-second-chance-for-ex-offenders.html?_r=0

