Exploring Sustainable Strategies for Decreasing Recidivism through Interdisciplinary Research

Vulnerable populations are confronted with wicked problems for which social scientists and policy makers have struggled to design effective sustainable solutions. These groups, such as ex-offenders, homeless, veterans, and chemically-dependent persons, confront a myriad of colliding barriers, such as inadequate housing options, unsustainable employment, unreliable transportation, untreated mental health challenges, improper childcare, and poor self-esteem.

If not addressed these barriers block the successful reintegration of one in the community and become contributing factors to higher rates of recidivism. Conceived as the tendency to relapse into a previous condition or mode of behavior, recidivism is a perfect example of a wicked public policy issue not fully understood because of its multidimensional nature.

The purpose of the 2018 International Conference on Decreasing Recidivism is to explore the root causes and various dimensions – political, economic, social, spiritual, and cultural – that must be taken into consideration while devising concrete strategies to tackle recidivism effectively.

The conference will bring together scholars and practitioners from diverse disciplines (economics, sociology, public administration, political science, public policy, criminal justice, social work, business, anthropology, law, psychology, psychiatry, information technology, journalism, education, public/mental health, etc.) to collectively explore the multiple facets of the problems and emerging opportunities of decreasing recidivism locally and around the world. Questions can be forwarded to conf@iarcpa.org.

OUTSIDE CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

Each day of the conference will end early in order for participants to enjoy the entertainment and fare offered in nearby Baltimore. Conference fees do not cover any activity, but special evening opportunities will be identified for participants at conference check-in.

Participants may consider arriving a day or two earlier and/or staying a day or two later to experience all that Baltimore’s Inner Harbor offers during the day. One can hop on a water taxi to visit some of the historical and character filled neighborhoods surrounding the harbor, enjoy exquisite meals at any one of Baltimore’s desirable restaurants, or visit many great attractions offering a variety of memorable experiences include: the National Aquarium, Maryland Science Center, Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture, Geppi’s Entertainment Museum, and the Babe Ruth Museum.

For a full exploration of all one can do while in Baltimore, log onto Visit Baltimore’s website at www.baltimore.org.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Sunday, June 17th
Conference begins at 12:30pm with a full afternoon of workshops (Lunch on your own prior to start) followed by an outstanding opening dinner with Keynote Speaker Terry O’Connell. Evening on your own.

Monday, June 18th
Breakfast keynote by Professor James Foreman, Jr. followed by breakout sessions and lunch keynote by Teresa Njoroge, a successful ex-offender, with the day ending at 5:00pm. Evening and dinner on your own.

Tuesday, June 19th
Breakfast with Keynote Speaker Shirley Moore Smeal followed by breakout sessions and a highly lauded “Restorative Practices” workshop presented by Terry O’Connell. Conference closing at 4:30pm by the Dean of the College of Public Affairs, University of Baltimore.

2018 International Conference
**Conference Keynote Speakers**

Mr. Terry O’Connell is an Australian restorative justice pioneer. A 30 year police veteran, he developed the ‘restorative conference script’ in 1991. He is the recently retired Australian Director for Real Justice, a sister organization to the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) based in Bethlehem, PA. He has provided restorative training to diverse professions including counselors, psychologists, youth workers, police and correction officers, teachers and social workers.

He is recognized for his innovative use of restorative processes with serious crime. A strong advocate for explicit restorative practice, Terry’s influence has resulted in some ‘cutting edge’ practice in education, youth work, and aged care. His work has featured in two award winning Australian ABC documentaries.

Ms. Shirley Moore Smeal is currently the Executive Deputy Secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, a position she has held since April 2010. She is second in command of the agency responsible for nearly 16,000 staff and over 50,000 inmates. As Executive Deputy Secretary, she oversees numerous administrative, programmatic, security and operational areas for the Department.

Executive Deputy Secretary Moore Smeal began her career in corrections in 1987 as a clerk typist and moved progressively up the correctional ranks serving in increasingly responsible positions of deputy superintendent, superintendent of SCI Muncy, and regional deputy secretary. In August 2010, Governor Edward Rendell appointed her to serve as the Acting Secretary of Corrections.

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