

# JRSA Electronic News

A monthly briefing for members

March 14, 2013

## JRSA News

### **Global Establishes New Business Solutions Council; JRSA Pres Tapped to Serve as Vice Chair**

Under the guidance of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and with the executive leadership of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative's (Global) Advisory Committee, Global has established the Global Business Solutions Council (GBSC)—a new cross-functional, multidisciplinary group of local, state, tribal, and federal justice representatives whose joint mission is to identify priority justice information sharing business problems and recommend solutions for the field. Leading the GBSC will be Chairman Michael Milstead, Sheriff, Minnehaha County, South Dakota, and Vice Chairman **Phillip Stevenson**, Ph.D., Director, Statistical Analysis Center, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, and President, Justice Research and Statistics Association.

The GBSC will identify critical information sharing challenges in the justice community and develop associated recommendations and products that can be implemented in the field. The GBSC's identification of these priorities will be achieved through a systematic process which fully considers the interconnected factors of changing political and economic environments, the evolving field of technology, and the dynamic demands on the justice and public safety enterprise. These priorities may include such issues as human trafficking, gun violence, reentry, mental health, or others as the council determines.

## National News

### **President Signs Violence Against Women Act**

After finally being passed in the House of Representatives on March 4, the *Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013* was sent to President Obama, who signed it on March 7. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was originally passed into law in 1994 to enhance the investigation and prosecution of violent crimes against women. The current bill, which was passed by the Senate in the last Congress but stalled in the House, included several provisions that became controversial during the run-up to the 2012 elections, including an expansion of services for immigrant victims of sexual violence, clarification on eligibility of services and training to victims regardless of sexual preference, and expansion of the authority of tribal courts over non-tribal defendants in limited circumstances.

The bill reintroduced this year in the Senate also includes the "[\*Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Registry Act\*](#)," or SAFER Act, which authorizes states and local governments to use a certain portion of their *Debbie Smith Act* funding to conduct one-year audits of the untested sexual assault evidence in their possession. States or local governments choosing to use their Debbie Smith funding for this purpose will be required to report certain information about their backlog in a manner accessible to the public. The Senate approved the current bill in mid-February.

## **OJP News**

### **NIJ, NIST Form Commission to Develop Guidelines for Forensic Labs**

The National Institute of Justice and the National Institute of Science and Technology have launched the [National Commission on Forensic Science](#). The commission will be composed of approximately 30 members and will bring together forensic science service practitioners, academic researchers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, and other relevant stakeholders to develop policy recommendations for the Attorney General. It will have responsibility for developing guidance concerning the intersections between forensic science and the courtroom, and developing policy recommendations, including uniform codes for professional responsibility and requirements for training and certification.

## **Publications**

### **BJS Releases Reports on Pretrial Release, Background Checks, and Victims**

The Bureau of Justice Statistics recently released the following reports:

[Pretrial Detention and Misconduct in Federal District Courts, 1995-2010](#), which highlights trends in the number of defendants released and detained pretrial, and examines the changing composition of defendants with federal pretrial dispositions. The percentage of federal defendants detained prior to case disposition increased from 59 percent in 1995 to 76 percent in 2010.

[Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2010 – Statistical Tables](#), which describes background checks for firearm transfers conducted in 2010. These statistical tables provide the estimated number of firearm applications and denials since the inception of the Brady Act in 1994 through 2010.

[Female Victims of Sexual Violence, 1994-2010](#), which presents trends in the rate of completed or attempted rape or sexual assault against females from 1995 to 2010. The report examines demographic characteristics of female victims of sexual violence and characteristics of the incident, including victim-offender relationship, whether the offender had a weapon, and the location of the victimization.

### **Latest NIJ Journal Features Article on a New Tool that Predicts Recidivism Risk**

The National Institute of Justice released [NIJ Journal No. 271](#), featuring an in-depth look at a new computerized system developed by the Philadelphia Probation and Parole Department, working with researchers at the University of Pennsylvania. It predicts which probationers are most likely to violently reoffend within two years of returning to the community. Also featured is an examination of the challenges facing the criminal justice system in combating human trafficking, and more.

### **Guide to Risk Assessment Implementation Available**

The National Youth Screening & Assessment Project just published [Risk Assessment in Juvenile Justice: A Guidebook for Implementation](#), which details the purpose and nature of risk assessment, defines risk

assessment concepts, describes some of the research evidence, and provides in-depth guidance on selecting and implementing an evidence-based tool.

### **NIJ-Funded Study Examines Prediction and Prevention of Wrongful Convictions**

Why are innocent people wrongfully convicted in certain cases yet acquitted in others? Could policy interventions prevent future erroneous convictions? The National Institute of Justice funded a newly released study, *Predicting Erroneous Convictions: A Social Science Approach to Miscarriages of Justice*, which compared cases where innocent defendants were wrongfully convicted to “near misses” – cases in which an innocent defendant was acquitted or had charges dismissed before trial. Visit the Wrongful Convictions webpage and study summary at <http://nij.gov/topics/courts/sentencing/wrongful-convictions/predicting-preventing.htm>.

### **NJDC Releases Standards on Juvenile Defense**

The National Juvenile Defender Center published *National Juvenile Defense Standards* to provide guidance, support, and direction to juvenile defense attorneys and other juvenile court stakeholders. This guidebook provides comprehensive information about the role and duties of juvenile defenders in the modern juvenile court system and a framework for representation anchored in law, science, and professional codes of responsibility.

### **OJJDP Bulletin Highlights Study on Detained Youth**

*The Northwestern Juvenile Project: Overview* is the first Beyond Detention series bulletin and introduces the Northwestern Juvenile Project, the first large-scale, prospective longitudinal study of drug, alcohol, and psychiatric disorders in a diverse sample of juvenile detainees. This bulletin describes the project’s goals, sampling and interview methods, areas of measurement, and selected findings.

### **Statistical Publication Discusses Children’s Well-Being**

The [Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics](#) recently released e-book versions of *America’s Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2012*. Agencies across the federal government collaborated to produce this report and advance understanding of the nation’s children and the resources needed to bring them a better future.

## **Conferences and Training**

### **NCPC Offers Campus Crime Prevention Training**

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and college crime prevention practitioners designed the *Campus Crime Prevention* curriculum to provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and resources to lead crime prevention services for their university and campus and to foster relationships with partners and necessary personnel to enable the success of their crime prevention plan. This training will provide the latest information, tools, and resources on campus crime prevention best practices, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), security surveys, community policing strategies, and crime prevention resources. The first of three trainings will be at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee

on April 9-11. More information is available at <http://www.ncpc.org/training>, scroll to the *Campus Crime Prevention* training sessions.

### **Training to be Held on Basic Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**

The Dennis Police Department in South Dennis, Massachusetts is hosting [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#) (CPTED), which is based on the principle that proper design and effective use of buildings and public spaces in neighborhoods can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life. The training of trainers will allow participants to learn how to train others on the theory behind CPTED and give an overview of the history of crime and the physical environment; teach the basics of CPTED principles and how they work; apply and show to others successful applications and techniques of CPTED to specific crimes; and work with community and business leaders on how to conduct a community safety assessment using CPTED principles. The training will take place April 30 – May 2 in South Dennis, Massachusetts. .

### **School Resource Officer Training to be Held**

The National Criminal Justice Training Center is holding the School Resource Officer Training Conference, [Protecting Our Children Through Prevention and Response](#), June 18 – 20, in Appleton, Wisconsin. This conference provides law enforcement and school personnel with up-to-date information on various issues impacting the safety of schools and communities. Sessions will focus on current trends in addressing school violence through crime prevention and response strategies as well as emerging technologies in law enforcement.

### **Save the Date for the 2013 National Criminal Justice Forum**

Make plans to attend the 2013 National Forum on Criminal Justice, *Integrating Research, Policy, and Technology to Improve Public Safety*, August 4-6 at the InterContinental Chicago Hotel in downtown Chicago. Details will be available shortly!

## **Announcements**

### **Partnership Forged to Create Hate Crime Prevention Initiative**

[Not In Our Town](#) has joined forces with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) for the [Working Together for Safe, Inclusive Communities](#) initiative to provide vital new resources for law enforcement professionals and facilitate connections between law enforcement and community partners. In the next two years, a set of new of tools will be created to help law enforcement, victims, and the community find and share new hate crime prevention strategies.

Part of the initiative is assembling a national network of leaders to share innovative strategies and best practices for hate crime prevention and improved community relations. For more information on the initiative or to join the network, go to <http://www.niot.org/cops>.