

THE YOUTH JUSTICE CORPS

Building healthier, safer communities with the talent, energy and contribution of youth offenders.

BRINGING THE YOUTH JUSTICE CORPS TO LIFE

It is envisioned that the Youth Justice Corps will be launched in geographically and demographically diverse sets of communities by accomplishing the following:

Marshalling the time, talents, and energy of those involved in the juvenile justice system to address un-met community needs through the work of a Youth Justice Corps.

Rallying the community to work alongside Youth Justice Corps members to increase the likelihood of community receptivity for youths under justice system sanctions.

Boosting the employability of Youth Justice Corps members by involving the members in job training that is in demand by the public and private sector and building a portfolio of skills and references viewed to be important by employers.

Increasing the sense of community connection of the Youth Justice Corps members by involving the Youth Justice Corps members with the community in the design, planning, development and maintenance of projects.

Featuring the contribution of the Youth Justice Corps in local, state, and national media to demonstrate the contribution made by the Corps members.

Making an argument that significant community-building initiatives are a far better use of resources than over-reliance on incarceration.

- The U.S. has over a million youth under court supervision and sanction..
- All of these youth either remain in the community on probation or return to the community following incarceration in the justice system.
- Crime victims wait without hope for restitution.
- Neighborhoods suffer from the lack of productive, educated youth, workers, and role models.
- States and local governments are faced with reducing vital public services.

YOUTH JUSTICE CORPS



Because service is an intervention that actually contributes to and does not detract from community fabric, a group of national and community leaders have teamed up to develop a strategy known as the Youth Justice Corps. The Youth Justice Corps is envisioned to become an effective community building initiative and will boost the likelihood of successful reintegration for those who have been involved in the juvenile justice system.

“The work we do for ourselves follows us to our graves. The work we do for our community lives on forever.”
Theodore Roosevelt

YOUTH JUSTICE CORPS OBJECTIVES

The support for a major service initiative is based on the inherent attributes of services to deliver results with the following objectives in mind.

The Youth Justice Corps will devote particular effort to:

- Improving the safety and livability of our public places.
- *Develop marketable employment and life skills in youth under the sanction of the juvenile justice system.*
- Build goodwill in the community
- Allow people to express their humanity in positive ways
- Develop a stronger sense of community
- Promote good citizenship

The Youth Justice Corps will:

- Serve as a rallying point to identify unmet community needs and engage the com-

- Improve economic vitality of neighborhoods
- Provide a measurable means to demonstrate a return on taxes invested in public safety
- Improve workforce quality for local businesses
- Provide opportunities to demonstrate that youth under the sanction of the juvenile justice system can make significant contributions to their community
- Provide a publicly supported mechanism to reduce reliance on justice systems and re-invest savings in proven community based prevention efforts
- needs in natural living settings
- Providing a training mechanism to further living, learning and working skills
- Providing optimum opportunity for staff–client relationship building and behavioral coaching
- Improving the likelihood of welcomed and successful reintegration
- Providing a vehicle to have participants earn and fulfill restitution requirements

The Youth Justice Corps will also meet public safety objectives by:

- Providing maximum supervision capability with the ability to assess risks and address



YOUTH JUSTICE CORPS OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The priorities of this strategic plan are to :

1. Ensure the successful re-integration of those youth in the juvenile justice system.
2. Convert justice system programming to service learning
3. Utilize service as a safe and effective alternative to prison

The planning and implementation phase will:

1. Establish the defensible basis of the Civic Justice Corps concept
2. Secure partnerships with funding organizations
3. Identify demonstration sites
4. Operate and evaluate demonstration projects
5. Publish results
6. Invite participation on a broader scale

Demonstration site criteria will include:

1. The commitment of key correctional policy makers to convert intervention programs toward service initia-

tives

2. The capability of a key community organization to host the Civic Justice Corps
3. The commitment from community development leaders to support and bring resources to Civic Justice Corps projects
4. Significant private sector leadership to ensure employability of Civic Justice Corps members
5. The participation of faith-based and other community organizations to enlist Civic Justice Corps participants in community activities
6. The collective agreement of partners to adopt an asset development approach

Demonstration sites will be structured as follows:

1. Managed by a community based non-profit or inter-governmental organization
2. Directed by an inter-agency steering group
3. Staffed by a strong commu-

The overarching goal is to develop responsible, productive citizens with meaningful relationships in the community, who can make lifelong contributions to their fellow community members.

nity organizer

4. Supported through national training and technical assistance
5. Evaluated by national research organizations

Community Justice Institute

Located in the College of Architecture Urban and Public Affairs at Florida Atlantic University, the Community Justice Institute (CJI) is a Type II Research Center sanctioned by the Florida Board of Regents and supported by state, federal, and private funds, as well as university resources. Staff, consultants and volunteers at the CJI work to support local, state, national, and international efforts to increase citizen access to and involvement in justice decision-making, and to channel justice intervention towards supporting the development of community capacity. Research, evaluation, training/ technical assistance, policy development and educational projects support innovative reform efforts that have focused on: detention alternatives, correctional leadership and management reforms, community policing, community and restorative justice implementation, disproportionate minority confinement, judicial reform, improving victim services, and citizen participation in alternative sanctioning processes.