
APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friend,

Since becoming Executive Director of the Council for Court Excellence a little less than a year ago, I have watched our dedicated staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers tackle some of the most pressing issues in the District. From beginning community engagement around a much-needed new jail, to evaluating how D.C. provides substance use treatment to people involved with the justice system, to publishing a new guide to help vulnerable adults, CCE has been hard at work. I am pleased to share with you a snapshot of a few of the high-impact initiatives that have been part of our focus since the start of 2019, all designed to help build better justice in the District.

Sincerely,



District Task Force on Jails & Justice

There is widespread agreement that the current D.C. jail, which opened 42 years ago, can no longer safely or most effectively serve the people who are incarcerated and work there. But beyond the aging facility's physical needs, CCE – and many others throughout the city - believe that planning for the future must include a broader consideration of how a jail should be used, who it should house, and what is the appropriate scale for our community. This requires understanding the public health and safety needs of the District, and a holistic focus on how a new facility fits into the community's priorities. To that end, CCE was awarded funding from the [Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants](#) to focus on synthesizing best practices and our community's vision for a new correctional facility.

This January, CCE began partnering with the [Vera Institute of Justice](#) and the [National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens](#) to establish the [District Task Force on Jails & Justice](#), an independent advisory body dedicated to redefining D.C.'s local approach to corrections, ensuring that our jail is one part of a just and equitable system. The Task Force is a distinguished and interdisciplinary group that includes community leaders who are directly impacted by jails, organizations that work to serve currently or formerly incarcerated people, government leaders, judges, and research and policy experts.

The Task Force will evaluate the critical elements of a new correctional plan, make recommendations about who should and should not be held in our local facilities, and articulate our community's priorities for a jail's population, location, design, and services. Chaired by Dean Emerita Shelley Broderick of UDC's David A. Clarke School of Law, the Task Force had its first meeting on April 15. This fall it will publish its initial "blueprint" outlining the critical elements needed for designing a new jail. CCE staff is managing the work of the Task Force and many of our Board leaders and other volunteers will be involved with the project, supporting research or committees, or serving as Advisors.

Stay up-to-date with the Task Force's upcoming meetings and community events by following it on [Twitter](#) or getting involved in our Criminal Justice Committee.

Justice Potter Stewart Award Dinner

The 23rd Annual [Justice Potter Stewart Award Dinner](#) will be on Thursday, May 23 at the Organization of American States. CCE is thrilled to be honoring **Mark E. Herzog** of Sidley Austin LLP, **Michele A. Roberts** of the National Basketball Players Association, and **Pauline and Charlie Sullivan** of Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE). Our esteemed honorees have made countless contributions to justice in the District, and have paved the way for much of the current work being done to build a better justice system in D.C.



We hope you will [join us](#) next month in celebrating all that our awardees have accomplished! We also are grateful for our many [generous sponsors](#) who have committed their support for these amazing honorees and CCE!

[Purchase tickets today!](#)

CCE Publishes a New Community Guide



In March CCE published [When Adults Need Help Making Decisions and Managing Daily Affairs](#). The first of its kind, *When Adults Need Help* explains in non-technical language the resources that are available to people in D.C. who, because of illness, physical or intellectual disabilities, aging, or dementia, may need extra help when making important life decisions, handling their finances, or dealing with similar responsibilities of everyday life.

Additionally, CCE is proud to announce it has received a grant from the [Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation](#), which supports non-profit organizations that empower individuals living with paralysis. CCE will use the grant in 2019 to create more accessible versions of *When Adults Need Help* to ensure that everyone in the District will be able to access the vital information within the Guide.

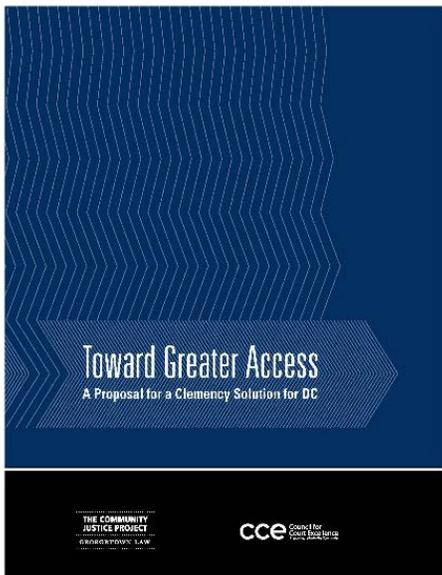
If you want to support our efforts to make these videos and other accessible tools, consider getting involved in our Justice Education Committee!

To request copies of the Guide, please e-mail communications@courtexcellence.org.

"This guide is designed to reduce stress for residents of the District who may be helping someone who is getting older, facing a major health issue, or has a disability. CCE wants to make sure everyone in D.C. can be empowered to make the best decisions for themselves or their loved ones."

– Misty Thomas, CCE Executive Director

D.C.'s New Clemency Board



This spring, the Mayor began seeking applications for appointees to the District's newly established Clemency Board. They are seeking one D.C. barred attorney member, a member with experience with returning citizens, a mental health member, a member with a background in victims' rights, and a D.C. resident member. You can apply to be considered as a Board member [here](#).

CCE is very proud to have been part of the advocacy that led to the passage of the Clemency Board Establishment Act of 2018. Working with Georgetown Law's Community Justice Project, CCE drafted the initial policy report for the D.C. Council, *Toward Greater Access: A Proposal for a Clemency Solution for DC*, and advocated for the bill's passage. We are pleased that the District is beginning to assemble our local Clemency Board to review applications for pardons and commutations from D.C. Code Offenders. We also hope that many of CCE's leaders and allies will consider applying to the Board.

Read Our Latest Testimony

- [February 6, 2019](#): CCE testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety at the Performance Oversight hearing for the Office of Victims Services and Justice Grants.
- [February 8, 2019](#): CCE testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety at the Performance Oversight Hearing for the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice.
- [February 12, 2019](#): CCE testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on Health at the Performance Oversight Hearing for the Department of Behavioral Health.
- [February 21, 2019](#): Theodore Whitehouse, CCE Board Member and Chair of the Reentry Subcommittee, testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on Facilities and Procurement at the Performance Oversight Hearing for the Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs.
- [March, 28 2019](#): CCE testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on Facilities and Procurement at the Budget Hearing for the Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs.
- [March, 28 2019](#): CCE testified before the Committee on Government Operations of the Council of the District of Columbia at the Budget Hearing for the Executive Office.
- [April 4, 2019](#): CCE testified before the D.C. Council's Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary at the Budget Hearing for Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants.

Thank You to Our 2018 Scarlet Oak Circle Members



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Visit our [website](#) to learn more about the prestigious Scarlet Oak Circle.

Get Involved!

If you're not already involved in one of CCE's committees or on our Board of Directors, we encourage you to join! We have four program committees that would welcome new, engaged members: [Civil Justice](#), [Criminal Justice](#), [Youth Justice](#), and [Justice Education](#). We also have Finance, Nominating, and Fundraising Committees that would greatly benefit from additional members who could bring their expertise to support the mission of CCE. Please contact [Jeff Capley](#) if you're interested in joining any of these groups. *We can only do our work with the help of generous leaders like you!*