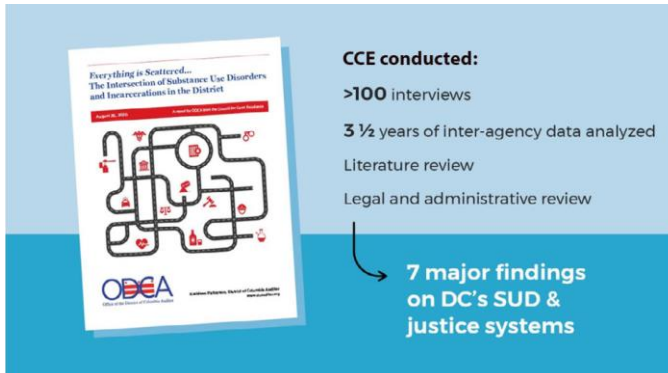


September 2020 Newsletter

CCE and D.C. Auditor Release New Report and Data on Substance Use Disorder Services for D.C.'s Justice-Involved Residents



In D.C., an estimated 11.5% of residents live with a substance use disorder (SUD) and this rate skyrockets to approximately 40% when looking at those in our jails. In light of this disparity and the need for a greater understanding of SUD services and care for D.C.'s justice-involved residents, CCE partnered with the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor to produce *Everything is Scattered: The Intersection of Substance Use Disorders and Justice-Involvement in*

the District. Released last month, our new report provides an in depth audit of SUD services provided by the Departments of Corrections and Behavioral Health. CCE conducted a novel analysis of treatment, arrest, and incarceration data from D.C. agencies, in addition to stakeholder interviews and policy research.

Everything is Scattered “expands the universe of what is now known about SUD clients and their involvement with the justice system, and we hope that the dataset will live on and be used by the District to improve SUD treatment outcomes and reduce justice involvement,” says Audit Steering Committee Chair **Michael D. Hays**. Our report made more than 50 recommendations, including enhanced pre-arrest diversion programs and significant inter-agency data sharing to better connect incarcerated residents with care upon release. The report has already been covered in the *Washington Post*, *WAMU*, and the *Washington City Paper*!

Remembering Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Her Support of CCE

CCE, our leaders, and our nation benefitted enormously from **Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's** commitment to court excellence, the courts' role in preserving the rule of law, and her decades of interest in Washington's culture and nonprofit community. We pause to recognize her distinguished life and mourn her passing on September 18, 2020. We are particularly proud that Justice Ginsburg was a longstanding supporter of the Council for Court Excellence.



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg with Former Board Chair Jay Brozost (left) and President Earl Silbert (right) in 2010

Justice Ginsburg knew **Charlie Horsky** and **Sam Harahan**, CCE's founding President and Executive

Director respectively, and she stayed connected to and supportive of CCE for the rest of her life. She spoke at CCE's 'Shades of Justice' panel along with other distinguished speakers at the Kennedy Center in 1996. As recalled by **June Kress**, CCE's Executive Director from 2004 to 2017, Justice Ginsburg also sponsored a Supreme Court reception for CCE in 2004 and gave remarks about the Council's meaningful mission. At CCE's 25th Anniversary, Justice Ginsburg agreed to write our commemorative report's introduction. In it she described CCE as a "remarkable local organization," having carried out its mission "with creativity and persistence, achieving impressive results." Dr. Kress also shared that "in 2010, just months after the passing of her beloved husband Martin, the Justice welcomed CCE back to the Supreme Court to honor what would have been Charlie Horsky's 100th birthday, and again for CCE's 30th anniversary celebration in 2012."

Justice Ginsburg was also an annual donor to CCE, frequently sending personal messages on beautifully engraved notecards. We were particularly touched earlier this year, as her final gift to CCE was her most generous ever. This winter she donated a portion of her 2019 Berggruen Institute Prize for Philosophy and Culture to CCE. We are all indebted to Justice Ginsburg for her distinguished service on the bench, as an advocate, and as a champion of justice in our community.

Support CCE Today

CCE Hosts Virtual Bench-Bar-Media Dialogue

On September 1, CCE hosted *Shut Out or Shut Down?: Challenges in Ensuring Public Access to Courts and Government During COVID-19*, our first virtual Bench-Bar-Media Dialogue event. Panelists U.S. District Court Judge **Trevor McFadden**, Chief Deputy Attorney General **Jason Downs**, media attorney **Katie Townsend**, and journalist **Jason Leopold** discussed court and government agency transparency and accessibility during COVID-19. The expert panelists addressed a range of challenges caused or exacerbated by COVID-19, discussed state and federal court adjustments to virtual proceedings, and considered the implications of the growing backlog of FOIA requests. The panelists also shared their visions for moving forward, with many noting that they hope many of the innovative uses of technology brought on by the pandemic, including continuing remote access to court proceedings, will continue even when the courts are fully operational and open again. Thank you to all of our panelists and moderator **Jim McLaughlin**, of the Washington Post, for participating in this timely dialogue! You can watch the full panel discussion [here](#).

DC Reentry Action Network Hosts COVID Outreach Events

In early August, members of the **DC Reentry Action Network** (RAN) visited Wards 1, 7, and 8 to engage in conversations about the needs of D.C. returning citizens, preventing the spread of coronavirus, and to distribute over 1,000 coronavirus prevention kits that included personal protective equipment (PPE). Additionally, RAN was able to distribute over 500 free boxes of non-perishable, pantry food items provided by **Fresh Direct** and hand out more PPE at Safeway locations in Wards 7 and 8 at an August 13th community outreach event. These various outreach events targeted communities that are being severely affected by COVID-19, and helped expand residents' knowledge of RAN and its important mission to speak as a collective voice for reentry in the District, and advocate for D.C.'s returning citizens. CCE is proud to support RAN in its community outreach efforts!



District Task Force on Jails & Justice Solicits Community Feedback as it Finalizes New Recommendations

CCE continues to support the [District Task Force on Jails & Justice](#), which is slated to release its “Phase II” implementation plan this winter. Over the last year, the Task Force has heard from nearly 2,000 D.C. residents through focus groups, community workshops, a town hall, and a survey about their priorities regarding D.C.’s approach to incarceration, community alternatives and supports, and local control of our justice system. With the support of our partner the **National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens**, the Task Force held four virtual community engagement sessions earlier this month. Attendees received updates from the Task Force and provided feedback on issues such as needed services in a jail, prioritizing community-based investments, and alternatives to incarceration.

Coming up on **October 7, from 4-6 pm**, the Task Force is hosting a **Virtual Town hall on restoring local control of parole**. Task Force members want to hear from residents on whether the District should create a new Board of Parole, give release decision-making authority to the Superior Court, or explore other options. If you would like to participate, you can [sign-up for a 3-minute testimony slot or submit written testimony here](#).

Join CCE in Creating an Equitable Justice System

Fiscal Year 2021 Reentry Services Budget Wins!

Despite the devastating financial impacts of COVID-19, the District’s FY21 budget includes several promising investments designed to improve the reentry outcomes for our returning citizen neighbors. First, the District added an additional \$300,000 in funding for new grants. These funds will go to community-based service providers who work with D.C.’s justice-involved residents, many of whom have been significantly and disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Additionally, the District allocated \$1 million in recurring funding for a three-year housing pilot for men returning from incarceration. Thank you to **RAN** for leading this advocacy effort!

Get Involved! Join a Committee!

Like what you read here? Want to get more involved in improving justice in D.C.? Want to help CCE develop future projects? Like to share ideas and network with others who care about the same issues you do? **If so, please join one of CCE’s four signature committees!** *Click on the link below to contact the staff liaison for each committee and be added to the email list.*

- [Civil Justice](#)
- [Youth Justice](#)
- [Justice Education](#)

- [Criminal Justice](#)
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[Donate](#)

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