



INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY • COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK • IJRD.CSW.FSU.EDU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 15, 2021

CONTACT: Janeen Piotrowski

Institute for Justice Research and Development, FSU College of Social Work
(850) 329-0205; jnpiotrowski@fsu.edu

Unlocking Doors™ Partners with the Institute for Justice Research and Development to Improve Criminal Justice Outcomes

Dallas-Based Non-Profit Uses Data-Driven Innovative Model for Reentry to Reduce Crime

TALLAHASSEE, FL., and DALLAS, TX — Unlocking Doors, the State of Texas' comprehensive community reentry network for those with criminal backgrounds, has begun implementing a data-driven reentry model developed by researchers at the Institute for Justice Research and Development (IJRD) at Florida State University.

“Our partnership with the Institute for Justice Research and Development pairs the latest science on successful reentry with our expertise in providing services to thousands of individuals reentering the community from incarceration each year,” said Christina Melton Crain, Founder and President/CEO of Unlocking Doors. “By implementing IJRD’s innovative, data-backed model to our current assessment regimen, we can make an even bigger impact to improve lives, reduce reincarceration and continue making the communities we serve safer.”

The 5-Key Model for Reentry provides behavioral health-focused supports for individuals leaving incarceration and coming back home. The five key ingredients include healthy thinking patterns, meaningful work trajectories, effective coping strategies, positive social engagement, and positive interpersonal relationships.

“Adoption of data-backed research is crucial to reduce unnecessary reliance on the criminal justice system,” said Carrie Pettus, PhD, MSW, founder and executive director of IJRD. “We are thrilled to partner with Unlocking Doors to help them implement this effective model to support individuals releasing from incarceration.”

A team from IJRD will provide the Unlocking Doors reentry services staff training, ongoing consultation, and support while the model is integrated into their reentry services.

The model has been piloted in seven states in more than 100 correctional facilities and in 24 rural and urban counties with over 3,000 individuals in the context of a randomized controlled trial. Preliminary results suggest that this approach is working as study participants' levels of well-being improved in the 15-month follow-up period and increased well-being was associated with lower levels of re-incarceration.

Early findings of the research can be found [here](#) and real-life testimony from program participants can be found [here](#).

###

About the Institute for Justice Research and Development

The mission of the Institute for Justice Research and Development at Florida State University is to use science to improve lives, communities, and institutions by developing and researching innovations that reduce unnecessary reliance on the criminal justice system and by offering solutions that produce equity and prosperity across race, socioeconomic class, and behavioral health status. We believe achieving a justice system that is equitable and effective, promotes thriving individuals and families, and ensures public health and safety, is possible utilizing IJRD's science-backed research and data-driven solutions. For more information on IJRD, please visit ijrd.csw.fsu.edu.

About Unlocking Doors®

Founded in 2010 and headquartered in Dallas, Unlocking Doors® is the states' most innovative and comprehensive reentry network. The non-profit network creates stronger communities by guiding people with criminal backgrounds to become law-abiding, self-sufficient members of society – which reduces crime and saves taxpayers money. Using its unique and extraordinarily successful “Reentry Brokerage®/Data and Predictive Trends” program, the organization serves as a model for how other cities, states and communities can help those with criminal backgrounds help themselves. For more information, please visit www.unlockingdoors.org