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Wilson Foundation Announces Additional \$1 Million in Prison Reentry Initiative Grants

BATON ROUGE – Spurred by the knowledge that Louisiana has the highest prison recidivism rate in the world, the Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation today announced the awarding of \$1 million in Prison Reentry Initiative investments for 2017.

“We are eager and excited to see these programs grow these enhanced services for clients in our community,” said Dan Bevan, president of the Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation. “These programs were selected because the Foundation believes they are the most capable of creating lasting change for returning citizens in the Greater Baton Rouge community.”

The Prison Reentry Initiative is designed to create a dramatic reduction in the percentage of formerly incarcerated individuals who return to prison and an increase in the cost-savings to the community associated with successful reintegration. This is the second year the Foundation has made investments totaling \$1 million in prison reentry programs.

“Through the first nine months of our 2016 investments, more than 1,000 people have been served,” Bevan said. “Nearly 300 formerly incarcerated individuals have gained vital skills and are maintaining stable life conditions, more than 80 employers have committed to hiring returning citizens, and nearly 100 community members have learned empathy for the plight of the incarcerated returning to society. We look forward to these partners continuing to build on the momentum our first cohort has created.”

Programs receiving funds for 2017 are:

- **Awana Lifeline Prison Ministries**, \$40,000 for *Program Operations*: Awana operates programs in six Louisiana Department of Corrections prisons focused on strengthening the bonds between incarcerated parents and their free children to stop the generational prison pipeline. Malachi Dads and Hannah’s Gift programs teach parenting from a distance to become spiritual nurturers and positive role models, while the Returning Hearts Celebration provides an opportunity for incarcerated parents to reunite with their children and develop relationships.
- **Capital Area Human Services District**, \$80,000 for *Behavioral Health Reentry Program*: CAHSD has partnered with East Baton Rouge Parish Prison to ensure those identified with mental illness/substance abuse are assessed upon admission by a Behavioral Health Professional and assisted by a Peer Support Specialist to develop a behavioral healthcare plan that is followed while incarcerated and for at least six months post-release.
- **Capital Area Reentry Coalition**, \$150,000 for *Building the Best*: The Coalition provides coordination and outreach for all reentry service providers in the 10-parish region. The Coalition will increase the number of partners and service providers, identify and disseminate best practices, and develop an advocacy plan on behalf of returning citizens.

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- **Capitol Area Reentry Program**, \$50,000 for *Connecting to Success*: Partners Capitol Area Reentry Program and Turning Point Outreach Services support a continuum of services providing family reunification, employment and rehabilitation services to clients to resume being productive and contributing members of their community and to avoid recidivism.
- **Christian Outreach Center of Baton Rouge**, \$30,000 for *Life Transformation Program*: This program provides job training, financial literacy and life skills programming, combined with a matched savings program to provide stability in transportation, education and housing.
- **Church United for Community Development**, \$50,000 for *Case Manager, Kingdom Men*: Church United serves high-risk incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men from Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. James and West Baton Rouge parishes through sober living, housing, individual action plans and transitional employment.
- **Connections for Life**, \$20,000 for *Connect2Empower*: Connections for Life provides female returning citizens with a peer mentor and intensive case management, focusing heavily on job readiness, employment identification and placement.
- **Frontline Legal Services**, \$40,000 for *Prison Clinic Program*: Frontline Legal Services will serve incarcerated individuals who are living with HIV/AIDS who are within 180 days of release, providing educational programming and linkage to medical care, substance abuse treatment, housing and appropriate legal services.
- **Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana**, \$75,000 for *Goodwill Re-Integration Program (GRIP)*: The GRIP program focuses on individuals exiting local correctional facilities by providing a holistic approach addressing the needs of its participants, including intense case management, supportive wrap-around services, mentoring, technical skills training and job readiness training.
- **Louis A. Martinet Foundation**, \$75,000 for *Re-Entry Court Services, Inc*: RCS will provide court support services to the 19th Judicial District Court's Re-Entry Court Program. Eligible offenders have the opportunity to receive two years of intense education and training while imprisoned at Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) or Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women. Offenders participate in intensive case management and supervised probation while transitioning back to their community upon release.
- **Louisiana Public Health Institute**, \$25,000 for *LA-PRI Data Development Project*: A complement to the state's Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative, this project will help parishes start to perform case planning before release that is driven by individual prisoner risk and need assessments, allowing for mapping the needs of reentry populations onto the availability of support services.
- **LSU Foundation**, \$35,000 for *LSU Law Parole and Reentry Clinic*: The Clinic provides students with the opportunity, under professorial supervision, to prepare offenders for their appearance before the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Parole and develop successful reentry plans to reduce recidivism. The Clinic will also develop and prepare for publication standards of practice for parole and clemency representation as well as standards for improved due process protections before the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Parole.

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- **Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency**, \$25,000 for *Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative*: The state’s Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative is an evidence-based framework for sustainable system change through state-local partnerships with the goal of affecting every prisoner returning home. Reentry stakeholders will work together to reduce the statewide recidivism rate by 25 percent by 2022 and by 50 percent for higher risk returning citizens by 2028.
- **O’Brien House**, \$50,000 for *Relapse Prevention for Successful Reentry*: O’Brien House will expand and intensify its services for returning citizens by providing pre-release assessments to expedite referrals, providing a specialized counselor on the treatment team, expanding job readiness services and job counseling, and formalizing a post-discharge after-care program.
- **One Touch Ministry**, \$80,000 for *Reentry Housing*: One Touch Ministry provides housing opportunities for returning citizens at high-risk for recidivism. Program services include financial literacy, budgeting, linkage to care, transportation, housing-related educational programs and other supportive services.
- **Refined By Fire Ministries**, \$135,000 for *Reentry Benefiting Families*: In this collaboration, Refined By Fire Ministries will be working closely with the Pointe Coupee Parish Detention Center, the Capital Area Regional Reentry Program and the West Baton Rouge Parish Transitional Work Program. Efforts will focus on identifying individual needs of each participant to determine personalized case plans that include assessments, reentry life skills and education programs. Case managers will also provide referrals to community partners and monitor referrals to confirm releasing participants' access to needed services upon release.
- **Texas Public Policy Foundation**, \$40,000 for *Right on Crime Louisiana: Reentry*: Modeled after successful criminal justice reform in other states, Right on Crime Louisiana will provide the necessary support and information structure to secure policy-level changes to make practical, positive impacts on the lives of returning citizens, their families, their communities, and the state's economy, through a collaborative model sharing best practices in criminal justice and reentry reform across the state at all levels of system involvement with reentry and reintegration.

Information regarding the Prison Reentry Initiative is available at www.hawilsonfoundation.org/prisonreentry.

About the Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation

Huey and Angelina Wilson established the Foundation with a focus on enriching the lives of the people of the Baton Rouge area. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson believed that communities are strengthened when people begin to see themselves as resources and find successful ways of marshaling their talents and the talents of local people and organizations to solve problems.

The Foundation believes that for people to be self-sufficient and productive members of society they must have basic needs of healthcare and education met. Therefore the Foundation invests in organizations and programs focused on four priority areas: human services, healthcare, education and prison reentry. In addition, the Foundation believes that the most disadvantaged – including the sick and disabled, the indigent, and the formerly incarcerated – need particular resources so they are better able to be competent and productive citizens. The Foundation’s staff and trustees seek to invest in organizations and programs that are a solid fit to successfully address these needs and prioritize requests that address the root causes of problems rather than treating the underlying symptoms.

Learn more on the Foundation’s website at www.hawilsonfoundation.org.