

# Translational Criminology

SPRING 2016

Promoting knowledge exchange to shape criminal justice research,  
practice, and policy

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## CEBCP Mission Statement

The Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP), housed within the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at George Mason University, seeks to make scientific research a key component in decisions about crime and justice policies by advancing rigorous studies in criminal justice and criminology through research–practice collaborations and proactively serving as an informational link to practitioners and the policy community. *Translational Criminology* advances this mission by illustrating examples of how research is converted into criminal justice practice.

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*Photos by Alexis Glenn and Evan Cantwell*

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## FROM THE DIRECTORS

We are proud to bring you another exciting issue of *Translational Criminology*, the magazine that showcases examples of collaborations between research and practice. This is the 10th issue of *Translational Criminology*—actually our 15th if you count its early manifestation as the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy’s (CEBCP’s) newsletter. Like our magazine, the CEBCP continues to move forward, growing into a unique and innovative university research center. This winter, we celebrated the graduation of Breanne Cave, who has been with us since the early days of the center and whom we highlight in this issue. Mentoring students and supporting their graduate studies is a central part of our center’s mission within the Department of Criminology, Law and Society here at George Mason University. Breanne’s contributions to both research and service in the CEBCP have been an important part of our growth, and she will be continuing her work as a research associate at the Police Foundation.

To update you on some of our activities: This year, our congressional briefing will be held late in the fall with collaborators from WestEd under the leadership of Anthony Petrosino, one of our senior fellows. Also, our next symposium will not be held in the summer as has been the case in the past, but will be convened in 2017; we look forward to connecting with all of you then for exciting panels on evidence-based crime policy.

The articles in this issue of *TC* reflect the two goals of CEBCP—the importance of building the evidence base for criminal justice practice, and also understanding and developing ideas on how to translate research into action. We first provide an update to one of the most-used tools at the CEBCP—the Evidence-Based Policing Matrix, and its related demonstration projects. This year, the Matrix achieved a major accomplishment—its 100,000th web hit—and has been expanded to include a wide variety of creative projects. Lum and Koper describe its development and what to look for in its future.

This is followed by two features that examine community-based programs that engage with research by Cody Telep, Tari Nelson-Zagar, and Julie Hibdon, as well as Sarah Jalbert, Holly Swan, and Dana Hunt. Often, we focus a great deal on efforts to incorporate research into practice by formal criminal justice institutions (police, courts, corrections). However, these authors remind us that many other nongovernmental organizations and groups are actively seeking to be more evidence-based, and face experiences and challenges that are both similar to and different from their governmental counterparts. Telep et al. describe a place-based crime prevention effort by the Seattle Neighborhood Group in Seattle, Washington, and Jalbert et al. explore the activities of Roca Inc. to help high-risk youth.

The articles by Dan Levey, Trevor Fronius, Sarah Guckenbug, Anthony Petrosino, and Nikos Passas are excellent cases for the need to build research and evidence-based infrastructure for two important areas of criminal justice practice. For example, although much research has been focused on homicide and violence, Levey and colleagues discuss how very little knowledge has been generated about family survivors of homicide, despite the significant impact that violence has on them. Passas dives into international financial crimes and efforts to counter them—also an area that could benefit from improved information structures, analysis, and research reflected in evidence-based crime policy more generally.

Finally, we showcase two translational studies that describe efforts by corrections agencies to implement evidence-based practices. Jordan Hyatt and Chadwick Libby present the results of a survey assessing the landscape for evidence-based practice in community corrections. Despite a great deal of knowledge now generated in this area, their survey reveals that implementing research in community corrections still creates a number of challenges. We also highlight a student of former National Institute of Justice director John Laub, who is engaged in a translational criminology research study—Nicole Frisch. She shares with us her thesis research on examining an embedded criminologist in a corrections agency. More generally, both articles reflect a growing area of research on translation, receptivity, and implementation of evidence-based crime policy.

As you can see, the demand for knowledge and ideas about research translation continues to grow. We hope you enjoy this issue of *Translational Criminology* and welcome new ideas for future issues.

David Weisburd, Executive Director, CEBCP  
Cynthia Lum, Director, CEBCP



# Looking Back and Forward: The Matrix and Its Demonstration Projects

BY CYNTHIA LUM AND CHRISTOPHER S. KOPER

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Cynthia Lum



Christopher S. Koper

One of the most enduring tools of the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy is the Evidence-Based Policing Matrix, an online resource that houses all moderate to highly rigorous evaluations of police crime control interventions (see [cebc.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix](http://cebc.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix)). Conceived more than eight years ago and brought online in 2010, the Matrix has surpassed the 100,000 mark in website hits and has been used by researchers and practitioners in both policing and nonpolicing fields. Our work on the Matrix has also expanded into projects on research translation, training, and technical assistance that we refer to as the Matrix Demonstration Projects. Our scientific perspective regarding the Matrix has been, and continues to be, that this knowledge is freely available, accurate, and updated to assist law enforcement agencies with high-quality research translation. Here, we share the history, recent developments, and future goals of the Matrix and its demonstration projects.

## History and the Objectives of the Matrix

The Matrix was not initially envisioned for policing. In 2006, we were asked to write a chapter for a book focused on how criminologists might contribute to counterterrorism studies. Since few evaluations of counterterrorism programs existed at the time, we hypothesized whether evaluations of law enforcement prevention activities could be applied to the counterterrorism arena. Our idea was to organize high-quality research by “mapping” it into a visualization using common characteristics of policing interventions to determine if those same features could be applied to thinking about effective homeland security measures (Lum & Koper, 2011).

Building on this idea, we formalized the Matrix for a Police Foundation *Ideas in American Policing* Lecture (Lum, 2009) into the tool you see today. Our intention was to create a free and accessible tool for practitioners in which research generalizations could be expressed for the purposes of creating and assessing law enforcement programs (see Lum, Koper, & Telep, 2011).

The purpose of the Matrix was to show multiple concepts simultaneously in a simple visual as seen in Figure 1, which could then be linked to the research itself. First, we included all moderate to highly methodologically rigorous evaluation studies of police crime control interventions, mapped as dots into a matrix with three dimensions. These dimensions correspond to the target of the intervention (x-axis), the level of specificity of an intervention to a particular problem or condition (y-axis), and the extent to which the intervention was reactive or proactive (z-axis). Second, by color-coding each dot, the findings of each study (e.g., effective, no effect found, harmful effect found, mixed effects) could be seen. Third, the mapping revealed clusters of effective or ineffective interventions around intersections of various dimensions, suggesting generalizations about effective interventions.

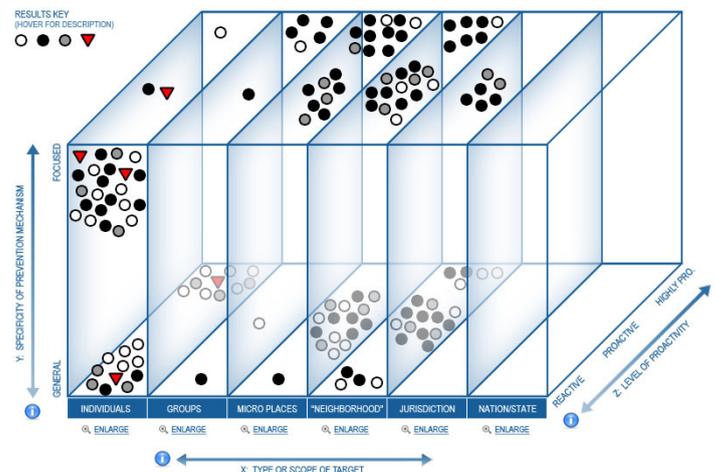


Figure 1. The Evidence-Based Policing Matrix

Three important themes from the mapping emerged, which have been supported by other systematic reviews: Police can reduce crime when they target their efforts on high-risk places and high-risk people, when they focus or tailor their efforts to problems at hand, and when they intervene proactively. These principles not only could be helpful to police in guiding the development of new interventions, but also in assessing existing ones. Indeed, one commander from England, Howard Veigas, mapped his agency's existing patrol strategies into the Matrix to see how they aligned with research evidence (see Veigas and Lum, 2013).

Besides using the Matrix to view general patterns in the research evidence about police crime prevention interventions, the Internet allowed us to create a tool in which users could access summaries for groupings of studies or information about individual studies. For example, we linked every "slab" of the Matrix (i.e., Individuals, Groups, Micro-Places, etc.) to an interactive summary list of studies (access, for example, the QR code in Figure 2 to view this for the "individuals" slab). We could also link every mapped study to a detailed summary of that study (access, for example, the QR code in Figure 3 to view an example of what is contained in these summaries). For researchers, we posted all of the data behind the Matrix itself for transparency.

### The Matrix Demonstration Projects

After the initial online development of the Matrix (which began as an unfunded project), the most significant development of the Matrix occurred. The U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) funded the Matrix Demonstration Project (MPD) as a close cousin to BJA's Smart Policing Initiative (see [cebcj.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix/matrix-demonstration-project](http://cebcj.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix/matrix-demonstration-project)). The MDP is a vehicle for training and technical assistance on evidence-based policing and the Matrix, as well as a diverse set of examples we have developed with collaborators on research translation. That funding advanced the development of extensive training on evidence-based policing and the Matrix, and also supported demonstration projects that used both Matrix information as well as the broader philosophy of research translation to create research-to-practice translation tools.

For example, one early project created in collaboration with members of the Richmond (Virginia) and Minneapolis (Minnesota) police departments is the Case of Places tool. This tool can be used by agencies wishing to develop combined detective-analytic units

that focus on investigating problem places, as opposed to traditional investigations that focus on people. Case of Places is an excellent exemplar of the goal of the MDP—to adjust existing systems of everyday policing to reflect research knowledge, using existing structures and processes of policing to facilitate translation. Another demonstration was developed with help from the Alexandria (Virginia) Police Department. In that demonstration, we took existing performance measures and activities used during field training of new police officers and converted those requirements and metrics into *evidence-based equivalents*. For example, one common activity and performance metric in field training is "knowledge of geography." Traditionally, this skill requirement emphasizes the importance of new recruits knowing how to get around their beat and knowing the street layout of their jurisdiction or district. An evidence-based equivalent might include knowing what aspects of geography or environment contribute to opportunities for crime, or knowing the location of crime hot spots.

Another demonstration is our hot spots lab, which showcases innovative crime reduction approaches led by law enforcement innovators in various agencies such as Sacramento (California), Seattle (Washington), Jacksonville (Florida), and Riley County (Kansas). Officers and analysts from these agencies, like Renee Mitchell, Clarke Kimerer, Tim Hegarty, Jamie Roush, and Michael Edwards, all of whom went on to be inducted into the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame, have provided the law enforcement community with solid examples of how police agencies can generate their own knowledge as well as implement evidence-based policing. We also developed tools that agencies could use to measure their officers' own receptivity to evidence-based policing (see Lum, Telep, Koper and Grieco, 2012), which then morphed into collaborations with two major police academies to develop basic training on evidence-based policing. Because the demonstration projects are meant to facilitate researcher-practitioner partnerships, we created the eConsortium to help link researchers to practitioners.

More recently, the Matrix Demonstration projects also gave us opportunities to develop processes in police agencies that might help institutionalize the role of research in law enforcement—making research "a part of the conversation" of policing, as we like to say. Asking agencies and officers to be more place-focused, tailored, and proactive is one thing, but how does this happen in practice? What tangible things can police officers do during patrol that reflects research evidence? In collaboration with Rebecca Neusteter and her



**Figure 2:**  
An example of a  
Matrix "slab"



**Figure 3:**  
An example of a  
Matrix study page

team at the New York City Police Department, we developed The Playbook, which includes a series of crime prevention and trust and confidence tactics (i.e., “plays”) that police officers, detectives, and first-line supervisors can carry out during their shifts that reflect the evidence. As first-line supervisors are essential to research translation in the field, we created workshops especially for this group and also undertook a year-long series of interactions with first-line supervisors in Leesburg (Virginia) to try out the idea of bringing research knowledge to this under-served group.

### **New Developments**

More recently, a number of new developments have occurred. Most importantly, we expanded our description of each study within the Matrix. Early on, the description of each Matrix study was the author-provided abstract in the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. However, spurred on by a collaboration with the Police Foundation to make the Matrix material more smartphone and app friendly, we went through a major effort last year to replace author-written abstracts with more detailed, structured, and standardized descriptions that also include links to other resources specific to that intervention. This effort also included partnering with the Police Foundation to convert the Playbook and the Matrix into a freely available mobile app, also increasing its accessibility.

Yet another recent creation is our Building Trust demonstration, developed in collaboration with the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy, and Fulbright scholar Tor Garnett from the Metropolitan Police Service in London, England. Here, the idea was to create a free web resource that could respond to the contemporary discourse and challenges facing law enforcement today with regard to rebuilding trust and confidence with their communities. Many agencies may not have the funds to hire regular subject matter experts to teach academy recruits or in-service officers about subjects such as implicit bias, procedural justice, and other important concepts of trust and confidence, but still want to provide their officers with evidence-based, reliable knowledge around these subject areas. Although the Matrix has focused a great deal on crime prevention activities, evidence-based policing encompasses a wide array of topics for which research can be helpful. Our development of the trust and confidence website intends to support this need.

### **Looking Ahead**

Many projects lay ahead for the Matrix team. We have, for example, received numerous requests to create matrices for other areas of policing research that focus on non-crime prevention outcomes (e.g., internal management, citizen fear, and police legitimacy). More importantly, our innovations are driven by our goals of finding new ways to make research evidence more digestible, of translating research into tangible, everyday policing activities, and of helping to connect research and researchers to practitioners. This means that ideas from the field are important; evidence-based policing is as

much about the demand and receptivity for research as it is about the supply and generation of knowledge. In particular, the Matrix projects have shaped our own learning about policing research, practice, and partnerships, and have provided us with the opportunity to train new policing scholars in this philosophy. One of our most exciting new ideas is with our partners at the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (and with the help of the US-UK Fulbright Program) with whom we are developing an international summer school for doctoral students of policing. The first summer school takes place this May and will not only focus on policing research, but also research translation and practitioner partnerships. In cooperation with the Police Foundation, we are thinking of even more creative and technologically friendly ways to provide research knowledge to officers, detectives, and supervisors in the field. We have much more to accomplish, but the sky is the limit with the Matrix, the Matrix Demonstration Projects, and evidence-based policing.

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# Community Building in Hot Spots: Seattle Neighborhood Group's Non-Police-Led Crime Prevention Approach

BY CODY W. TELEP, TARI NELSON-ZAGAR,  
AND JULIE HIBDON

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Cody W. Telep



Tari Nelson-Zagar



Julie Hibdon

There is strong empirical evidence that crime is highly concentrated at small units of geography, commonly referred to as hot spots. Prior studies have found that a relatively small number of micro places are responsible for a significant amount of total crime in a city (Weisburd, 2015) and that what police do in these places can have an impact on reported crime and disorder (Braga, Papachristos, & Hureau, 2014). However, less attention has been focused on attempts to address high crime locations with non-police-led interventions.<sup>1</sup>

Seattle Neighborhood Group (SNG),<sup>2</sup> a community-based, nonprofit organization in Seattle, Washington, has recently worked on a practitioner-led approach to crime prevention in hot spots. For many years SNG used a community organizing approach focused on two objectives: engagement between the Seattle Police Department (SPD) and affected communities, and development of community-based responses to improve high crime neighborhoods. SNG's efforts developed into an early community policing model, and a National Institute of Justice-funded evaluation deemed the program "a model partnership" (NIJ, 1992).

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, SNG developed a number of projects and programs to fill gaps in service. These included coordinating and supporting neighborhood-based "crime councils," providing trainings for residents on personal safety and using 9-1-1, helping landlords maintain crime-free property through education,

coordinating neighborhood cleanups and events, organizing graffiti paint-outs, facilitating relationships between immigrant communities and law enforcement, and working with neighbors affected by chronic nuisance activities.

SNG staff developed approaches to crime prevention that it felt worked well. But while there was strong anecdotal evidence from partners and the community that these multifaceted activities had made a difference, the organization was not able to say for sure that specific elements had been effective. In part, this was because there were often many variables that affected the outcome of their actions, and while partnering with SPD had been incredibly useful in community policing projects, it made it difficult to disentangle the specific effects of SNG's efforts.

Additionally, for many years SNG staff had a strong sense that some small places generated much of the crime and disorder in the neighborhoods and large geographic areas they focused on. A series of studies on the criminology of place, a number of which focused specifically on Seattle, strongly supported these beliefs (Weisburd, Groff, & Yang, 2012). The evidence that geographically constrained hot spots were responsible for much of the city's crime problem clearly echoed the ongoing experiences of SNG staff in the field.

<sup>1</sup> The Bureau of Justice Assistance Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Project recently began supporting a number of collaborative multi-agency effort focused on small units of geography (Griffith, 2014), including a project in Rainier Beach in Seattle that SNG has partnered on. That project is separate from this intervention.

<sup>2</sup> See [sngi.org](http://sngi.org)

## The Hot Spots Pilot Project

In 2011, the staff at SNG decided to pilot a program to concentrate its crime prevention and community building work in smaller geographic locations. This focus on particular crime hot spots was a change compared to the larger areas they operated in historically. The pilot was a test to see how well a practitioner-led crime prevention approach worked in reducing crime, without inputs from other agencies such as SPD. The pilot project focused on two initial hot spots with long histories of drug and disorderly activity: Little Brook Park, a small community park and the residential area surrounding it in the Lake City neighborhood, and a densely populated two-block area on Bell Street in the Belltown neighborhood. The program was designed to increase the community's capacity to create and maintain safer places and sustain any crime prevention gains over time. The intervention focused on community engagement and education through a number of programs and activities targeted to the dynamics of each hot spot, including community meetings, crime prevention trainings, and crime prevention through environmental design surveys.

In addition to aligning with research on crime and crime prevention at hot spots, SNG executive director Kay Godefroy also reached out to researchers (Julie Hibdon and Cody Telep) for assistance in evaluating the pilot project, as an important evidence-based objective. With support from the City of Seattle Human Services Department, Hibdon and Telep made three trips to Seattle to visit the target and comparison areas, conduct qualitative interviews with SNG staff and key stakeholders, obtain crime call data from the Seattle Police Department, and work with SNG on future hot spots efforts. These visits greatly improved the researchers' understanding of the issues at the selected locations and the nuances of project implementation. The strong support for evaluation from Executive Director Godefroy, coupled with SNG staff expertise in information science (Tari Nelson-Zagar worked previously as a librarian), made the organization especially receptive to a partnership with researchers.

The quasi-experimental evaluation led by Telep and Hibdon examined trends in calls for service before and during the intervention in the two target sites and nearby comparison areas.<sup>3</sup> Overall, they found promising evidence for the impact of SNG's community building and crime prevention efforts on reducing crime. Their time series analyses suggest police calls for service declined, on average, by 2.24 calls per week in Little Brook Park following the start of the intervention. This call decline was driven largely by declines in disorder and in drug and alcohol crime, the kinds of outcomes for which we would expect SNG's efforts to have the greatest impact. Comparison areas for Little Brook Park generally showed no

significant change in crime. The results for Bell Street were more complicated, in part because of the construction of a street park in the target site at the same time as the intervention. Still, there is evidence of a significant decline in disorder (2.71 calls per week on average) following the start of the intervention.

## Moving Forward with Non-Police-Led Crime Prevention in Micro Places

SNG's efforts in this pilot project were innovative and evidence-based, using what is known about crime concentrations and hot spots policing and applying those lessons to community-based crime prevention. We believe this is one of the only evaluations of a hot spots intervention led by a community-based organization and view the evaluation results as suggestive of the benefits of non-police-led interventions in hot spots. Community crime prevention in hot spots may be an especially useful tool in communities with strained police-community relations. This is not to suggest that community-led crime prevention should exclude the police. As noted earlier, SNG has a longstanding history of working closely with the SPD. It does seem, though, that community groups or nonprofits are especially well equipped to take the lead in partnering with residents.

More important than the initial evaluation, however, was the partnership that was fostered between SNG and researchers. Discussions with the research team around the challenges encountered during the pilot process, and the subsequent evaluation findings, gave SNG staff the confidence to keep the basic model, develop a more rigorous site selection process, and make the model more robust and expressive. Part of the overall evaluation efforts included products designed to enhance SNG's future efforts. Telep and Hibdon developed a training manual for SNG staff that covers some criminological theory related to place-based prevention and community building, discusses using crime data to identify hot spots, summarizes prior responses to crime hot spots, and details ways to conduct a rigorous evaluation internally. This document has proven to be an excellent guide and rich resource for deploying SNG's hot spots model.<sup>4</sup>

Telep and Hibdon also worked with SNG to create a resident survey instrument that will now be used to assess changes in residents' views about their neighborhood, perceptions of disorder, and fear of crime, as well as victimization experiences. They also gave helpful feedback on an expanded physical inventory that will be used to assess changes in disorder and site characteristics. SNG's comprehensive problem-solving approach to tackling hot spots is summarized in Figure 1.

<sup>3</sup> Evaluation report available from Telep and Hibdon upon request.

<sup>4</sup> A modified version of this manual will soon be available from Telep and Hibdon as a Center for Problem-Oriented Policing guide on identifying and responding to hot spots.

# Got a Hot Spot?

Seattle Neighborhood Group's  
Practitioner-led crime prevention approach



Figure 1: SNG hot spot response model

SNG's relationship with researchers has also been valuable for providing staff with access to current research, expertise in the discipline, and translation of research findings into practical applications. It is typically difficult for nonacademic entities to keep up with current research, in part because of the expense and access issues in obtaining most academic publications, and in part because much of the research literature is not written with a focus on relevance to real-world situations.

At the 2015 American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, Telep and Hibdon presented on the pilot project evaluation and Nelson-Zagar led the creation of an SNG poster presentation (see Figure 1). The poster was an opportunity for SNG staff to delve into the literature, develop the model, and discuss the real world of crime prevention program delivery with researchers, many of whom had little experience with community crime prevention practitioners. SNG staff can move forward even more confidently with its work to reduce crime in small geographic areas, and continue to benefit from a rich, ongoing relationship with researchers.

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# Providing Services in a Rapid Scale-Up Context: The Importance of Research Partnerships

BY SARAH KUCK JALBERT, HOLLY SWAN, AND DANA HUNT

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Sarah Kuck Jalbert



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Dana Hunt

Serving youth in the community who are at high risk for incarceration is a serious challenge for nonprofit service providers and community corrections agencies. The mission of Roca Inc., a nonprofit organization founded in 1988 serving the Greater Boston area, is to “disrupt the cycle of incarceration and poverty by helping young people transform their lives.”

For 25 years, Roca has served young people who have rejected or have been rejected by other institutions in the community (e.g., schools, social services, employers), with the goal of reducing incarceration and improving employment opportunities for their participants. To achieve this goal, Roca has maintained a years-long partnership with researchers from Abt Associates, and has embraced evidence-based practices to help guide its programs, monitor implementation fidelity, and improve or modify program components. This partnership has become even more important recently, as Roca has rapidly expanded its service capacity as part of an innovative initiative in Massachusetts: the Juvenile Justice Pay for Success (PFS) Initiative, the largest PFS project to date in the United States.

The premise of PFS is that government funds should be invested in “what works” and payment to providers for their services should be tied to demonstrated success. The state pays providers like Roca only after they have demonstrated success on an agreed-upon metric, in this case, a reduction in incarceration bed days for program participants. PFS is an approach that has potential to scale effective interventions to much larger populations in need of services since it provides up-front funding for programs looking to serve more of their target population. Few programs are able to operate with high fiscal uncertainty and upfront financial outlay, so intermediate funders agree to cover up-front service costs that will be reimbursed by the state if the program can show that its services led to success. Such arrangements have provided Roca with the resources needed to

expand the program into underserved neighborhoods and serve greater numbers of high-risk young men.

However, rapidly expanding capacity can threaten implementation fidelity, risking a program’s effectiveness in serving participants and achieving outcomes, and potentially undermining its reputation. In this article, we discuss how Roca has addressed those challenges by using data and capitalizing on research partnerships.

## The Roca Model

Historically, Roca took an all-inclusive approach to the population it served—mostly youth (male and female) who were referred to the program, provided they were disconnected from other services, school, and work. In 2012, after reviewing the evidence on service provision for high-risk youth, the program’s leadership decided to streamline Roca’s model to focus exclusively on the highest risk portion of their population who were not getting services elsewhere in the community: young men aged 17-24 years who have been involved with the criminal justice system, may be involved with gangs or drugs, have dropped out or are at-risk of dropping out of school, and have no history of stable employment. In partnership with Abt Associates, Roca streamlined its intake risk assessment screening tool and added items to assess certain criminogenic needs, consistent with the evidence behind the Risk-Need-Responsivity approach. The outcomes of this initial screening are used to help trained youth workers (YWs) align eligible participants to stage-based programming that includes prosocial modeling, transitional employment, cognitive skill-building, and life skills, depending on the risks and needs of the youth participant.

Underpinning Roca’s intervention model is the use of relentless outreach to actively engage youth both in and out of the program. At intake to Roca, eligible participants are assigned to a YW’s caseload,

at which point the YW begins outreach, which means actively becoming a part of the participant's daily life. This includes engaging with participants in the community, interacting with their social networks and family, and talking with schools, probation, and police officers. This difficult but crucial task is designed to start the development of a strong bond that provides the foundation for further programming. In addition to serving as a source of information and support, the YW actively encourages program involvement, serves as a role model, and provides a consistent example of anti-criminal thought and prosocial behavior. Relationship building is also incorporated into the transitional employment phase (TEP) of Roca's model. The TEP provides a context for positive learning through relationship development with the crew supervisor and the social network of peers created by the work crew to reinforce prosocial and appropriate work behaviors, and publicly sanction inappropriate work behaviors.

Change at Roca is conceived as a process: The young men move along a pathway of education, pre-vocational training, life skills, transitional employment, and unsubsidized employment opportunities. The stage-based programming component of Roca's model is based on evidence-based practices that align with the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of Behavior Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984), particularly Motivational Interviewing (MI) and cognitive skill-building. In alignment with TTM, the Roca model recognizes that relapse is critical for successful behavior change and YWs are trained to recognize and capitalize on these moments using MI and CBT in order to advance the youth's progression through the program's stages.

The final cornerstone of the Roca model is the engagement of individuals within community institutions (e.g., schools, mental health services, the criminal justice system, social services, churches, and even gang members) to identify key individuals within these institutions who may assist in Roca's programming and help identify and address barriers to participant success. Roca views these partnerships as a way to "wrap-around" their participants to provide support, safety, and access to resources and opportunities. Ultimately, Roca's model is designed to promote networks of support to help participants sustain life and behavior changes beyond their engagement with Roca.

### **Roca's Scale-Up under a Pay-For-Success Model**

The scale-up of Roca's capacity after engaging in the Massachusetts PFS initiative was dramatic. In 2012 the program served 28 new youths at one site; in 2014 that number grew to more than 300 across three sites. Because of the massive scale-up, process and implementation evaluations were critical for dynamically identifying potential ramifications of the scale-up process and evaluating the influence of these ramifications on measured program outcomes to determine whether fidelity to the model is being maintained. Early in the PFS contract development, Roca engaged Abt Associates'



evaluation team to consult on evaluation issues, design a process and implementation evaluation, and assist in developing intermediate outcome measures and data to support these measures.

At the time of the PFS initiation, Roca already had rich data on staff and participant performance that was organized to support Roca's internal metrics. Researchers at Abt assisted Roca to standardize measures of risk and need, added complementary data points and cohort-based tracking to support independent evaluation of implementation fidelity and intermediate outcomes, and helped Roca's data team identify queries and reports that would be useful for outside evaluation. Roca's program data now capture current program status and progression in stage-based programming, and define program transitions in a consistent and easily interpreted way. The data and evaluation staff have created documentation for data elements and made these available for use by Abt analysts. Such data management has been critical for Roca's program monitoring and continuous improvement efforts under PFS, and highlights a key role that researchers can play in PFS contexts.

### **Maintaining Fidelity during Roca's Rapid Scale-Up**

In many ways, Roca has maintained fidelity to its programming and expectations during scale-up. Most youth enrolled in 2012 have had at least one termination and re-engagement from initial programming (e.g., educational programs and engagement), consistent with the expectation of relapse in the Roca model. High proportions of youth progressed into a second stage of programming (e.g., pre-vocational and life skills training) in 2012 and 2013, with lower proportions in later years. Since Roca expanded, larger proportions of participants have received certifications like GEDs and pre-vocational certificates when compared to earlier program years. The expansion is too recent to track progression to transitional employment for newer enrollees, which will be a closely monitored metric in the months to come.

As scale-up during the PFS experiment has progressed, however, Roca management has expressed some concern that participants referred from state sources have different risk profiles than the

profiles of youth Roca typically engages and serves. On average, state-referred active participants have fewer risk factors present than the traditional Roca client (see Table 1). However, these numbers are somewhat skewed by the high numbers of missing risk factors, perhaps due to the difficulty in locating state-referred youth who may have incomplete addresses or transient living situations, making it difficult for YWs to assess their risks. Nevertheless, of all participants who are actively engaged, those referred by the state had significantly fewer risk factors than Roca's traditional participants, a number that decreased over time. Conversely, the risk profile of Roca's non-PFS client population has remained stable.

Eligibility criteria/risk factors	PFS		Non-PFS
	State referral	Self-recruit	
Current criminal case	88%	83%	84%
Criminal history	74%	83%	80%
Gang/street involvement	53%	65%	64%
Current drug involvement	73%	80%	82%
No history of employment	72%	71%	66%

**Table 1. Eligibility/risk factors among Roca participants**

Finally, despite the dramatic increase in numbers of youth served, Roca's YWs have maintained high levels of contacts with them (see Table 2). For later cohorts of youth, the number of contacts necessarily declines as the observation window shortens, but gross measures of contacts within defined timeframes remain high. This number is consistently high across the Chelsea and Springfield sites, though contacts are somewhat lower in the Boston site.

Measure	Chelsea	Boston	Springfield	All Sites
# Youth with One or More Contact	248	169	195	612
Average # of Contacts per Youth	105	55	95	88
Average # of ACTUAL Contacts per Youth	84	41	75	69
Average # of ATTEMPTED Contacts per Youth	18	11	19	16
Average # of THIRD PARTY Contacts per Youth	4	3	2	3

**Table 2. YW contacts by Roca site**

## Conclusion

By working internally and with Abt Associates to establish evaluation capacity prior to scale-up, Roca has been able to monitor its expansion with continuous feedback from its own data systems and also receive episodic feedback from an external evaluation team. Roca's experiences in scaling-up under the PFS initiative provide a case example for the critical role of data-driven feedback, particularly in criminal justice contexts where the stakes are high and the services are expensive. Understanding implementation processes will be critical as funders increasingly encourage program planners to replicate evidence-based models; and building data and evaluation capacity for measuring fidelity to existing programs before embarking on large-scale expansion will be essential for success.

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# What Research Is Needed to Help Family Survivors of Homicide?

BY DAN LEVEY, TREVOR FRONIUS, SARAH GUCKENBURG, AND ANTHONY PETROSINO<sup>1</sup>

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An estimated 14,249 persons are murdered nationwide each year (2014, FBI Uniform Crime Report). Although homicide results most tragically in the immediate loss of the victim's life, there are many other long-term costs of a single homicide including those extending to the victim's family and friends (in this article, we refer to them all as "homicide survivors") and to the larger communities. In fact, it is estimated that a single homicide costs society approximately \$17.25 million in lifetime costs (i.e., direct costs associated with the homicide and long-term loss of wages and taxes; DeLisi, Sween, Hachmeister, Moore, & Drury, 2010) and this does not account for the direct costs to survivors. Estimates on the average number of family members who survive the loss of a family member to homicide range from 45,000 up to 240,000 survivors each year (Armour & Umbreit, 2007).

The act of homicide is often intense, unexpected, and traumatic for survivors, especially for parents of children who are murdered. The rush of emotions is intense and includes feelings that they did not protect their children, and abiding grief over not being able to see their children grow up. Almost immediately, homicide survivors are left behind to work to rebuild their lives, and cope with subsequent trauma, grief, and complex legal processes that follow. Over the past four decades, organizations and advocacy groups such as Parents of Murdered Children ([www.pomc.org](http://www.pomc.org)) emerged out of a need for ongoing emotional support to these survivors and to advocate for them in the justice system. Because of these groups, there has been greater recognition of the unique needs of homicide survivors, both in terms of access to mental health services and greater information sharing during the criminal process (e.g., notification by law enforcement of the progress of the case). Unfortu-

nately, research on survivors and the impact of programs tailored for them has lagged and much more needs to be known.

## The Current State of Homicide Survivor Research

Research on homicide and its deleterious consequences has identified its role in subsequent neighborhood instability and residential mobility (Boggess & Hipp, 2010), cognitive deficits among youth (Sharkey, 2010), and psychological trauma, particularly among those closest to the victim (Mezey, Evans, & Hobdell, 2002).

The grieving process for homicide survivors is generally longer than that for survivors of loved ones who die from other causes such as accidents or disease. Some would argue that there is no true end to the grief following the loss of a loved one to homicide. It is understandably difficult to ascribe any true timeline for recovery of survivors; one can only hope to reach a point of a "new normal." The factors that may influence the recovery process include the relationship of the survivor to the victim and the offender, their personal coping style, whether they have access to and have received mental health services, and availability of other social supports (Horne, 2003). In addition, how quickly support services are provided to survivors may make a difference in their ability to reach this "new normal."

In addition to trauma and stress due to the circumstances surrounding their loss, family survivors are also likely to have contact with police, district attorneys, and others working on the case within the justice system. One of the gaps that led to the creation of POMC in the late 1970s was that the needs of survivors were not being considered by the justice system (e.g., survivors were not being notified when an arrest was made, when court dates were scheduled,

<sup>1</sup> We thank Staci Wendt and Claire Morgan of WestEd for their comments on earlier versions of this article.

or when a suspected perpetrator was being released back to the community, and were not being offered support to deal with the loss). Although there is greater recognition of homicide survivors and crime victims in general throughout the system, many survivors today continue to express dissatisfaction with the communication they receive from police investigators and district attorneys about their case (Zinzow, Rheingold, Hawkins, Saunders, & Kilpatrick, 2009).

Few studies have examined the impact of interventions on the mental, emotional, and physical health of survivors of homicide. The few studies that have been done tend to focus on mental health and psychological interventions for survivors of homicide and are limited to qualitative data generated from interviews with survivors, or descriptive studies on service utilization (e.g., Horne, 2003).

### **Where Do We Go from Here? A Future Research Agenda**

Survivors may access many types of services and support (e.g., survivor support groups and intensive retreats) to help address emotional and psychological trauma, but to our knowledge, there are no impact evaluations examining interventions that provide services to homicide survivors. However, more and better knowledge could improve the lives of these indirect victims and reduce the costs associated with their trauma. For example, a common approach for assisting homicide survivors that POMC uses is the peer support group. These peer support groups provide homicide survivors a safe, confidential, and secure place to share their feelings, memories, and stories of their loved ones. Anecdotal reports indicate that homicide survivors perceive these peer support groups as being positive influences in their healing process. But no carefully designed evaluations of the impact of the peer group in this area have ever been done. A future research agenda should include impact studies that examine short- and long-term impacts of these types of peer support groups for homicide survivors, and what types of support group models are most useful.

Other interventions being used, albeit infrequently, with homicide survivors include survivor retreats. Survivor retreats bring family survivors together to discuss the grieving and healing process as a group with trained facilitators. A pilot study of one retreat-style intervention demonstrated positive impacts on physical, mental, and spiritual health and well-being outcomes; however, the study included only eight persons. More research with larger samples is needed to better understand the impact of survivor retreats on participant well-being.

Although not an intervention, fatality review boards are used in cases resulting in the death of a child and often in cases of domestic abuse resulting in death, which involves a deep investigation into the pathways and causes that led to an individual's death. However, the role of survivors in this process is not well understood, nor is it known if families benefit or suffer as a result of participating in the process. In addition, few studies have been done to assess the impact of interventions as they relate to the satisfaction homicide survivors express about the procedural justice system.

Finally, family survivors of homicide, in particular, suffer a range of negative consequences dealing with the murder of a loved one. There is insufficient research documenting the emotional and psychological trauma on homicide survivors and how these change over time. Research is also needed to specify the financial costs to homicide survivors including time off from work, loss of wages, or financial support from victims; the use of daycare for children so adults can attend court or meet with police; and long-term professional counseling. Impact evaluations that introduce and study the provision of social supports to family survivors of homicide to see what role they could play in ameliorating these negative consequences and offsetting costs is critical, as mentioned above.

Many resources, services, and interventions are available to survivors of homicide, yet it is unclear whether survivors are aware of them or access them after the loss of a loved one, and it is uncertain whether these supports are truly effective in improving the short- and long-term outcomes for survivors. It is also unclear how long survivors need different types of support services after experiencing a traumatic event. For example, some services might be crucial to receive immediately following a homicide while other services are more effective over the long-term. Another point of uncertainty is understanding whether there are differential impacts on different populations and circumstances of homicide. For example, when homicide occurs on a regular basis in the community (e.g., violent urban settings), do existing community norms affect how families experience trauma and engage supports? In short, what works, with whom, and under what circumstances?



### **Concluding Thoughts**

Despite the number of persons impacted by homicide, research on homicide survivors has been sparse. Concurrently, the federal investment in research on victims of crime has been modest, and little funding has been available for studies on homicide survivors. Of course, mounting a rigorous study with family survivors poses significant challenges. For example, there would be strong objections to implementing a randomized controlled trial on survivors of homicide, as there would be ethical concerns in randomizing family survivors to a support group or a no-treatment control. However, randomized studies could compare different levels of intensity of the intervention or different interventions, so that all homicide survivors seeking services receive something. There are also several quasi-experimental evaluation

designs that could be employed in these settings that would strengthen causal implications of research in this area. Future research on the impact of these interventions should include larger sample sizes and valid comparison groups to facilitate stable conclusions about their effectiveness.

It is clear to those whose lives have been forever changed that homicide has consequences for survivors that last a lifetime. How we as a society treat those who have been injured by crime currently is a reflection on all of us as citizens. The families and friends of murdered victims deserve the support and services that will be most effective in helping them through the trauma and loss of their loved ones. More research is needed to understand how to help these survivors and support them throughout their lives as they face this significant loss.

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# Collective Action for Trade Transparency against Financial Crime

BY NIKOS PASSAS

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Nikos Passas

Financial controls against serious crime intensified in the aftermath of 9/11 and grew to counter not only money laundering but also the financing of terrorism and sanctions violations. Countering terrorism finance through financial controls is not only about cutting off funds or displacing sources and methods of funding. Rather, the point is to undermine the finances and support networks of targeted groups. Countering terrorism finance helps focus on both fundraising and expenditure, as well as on partners, associates, facilitators, support networks, methods of operation, and distribution of labor that are involved in financial crime and terrorism financing. The aim is to understand and identify key nodes of information, networks, enablers, and supporters to better target for more effective and sustainable results.

Within the anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) infrastructure, trade is the weakest link. Despite substantial efforts, laws, measures, and resources, there has been no systematic review or consistent action with respect to trade, which constitutes the biggest security and crime vulnerability. Even if all current trade rules were to be fully and consistently enforced throughout the world, billions of dollars could still be moved illicitly without detection and sanction. Imports and exports can hide illegal or controlled commodities trade, but they often shield significant illicit financial transactions. This can be accomplished by mis-declaring the quality, quantity, value, origin, destination, and final use of goods. Mis-invoicing, trade diversion, counterfeiting, and cargo theft are some of the most common methods (deKieffer, 2008; Passas, 1994; Passas & Nelken, 1993).

When CFT is not based on the best evidence and analysis, the result is missed targets, false positives, false negatives, and security weaknesses. In this paper, I review the challenges we face and outline some practical solutions.

## The Challenges

Three types of global flows need monitoring and analysis for a clear picture of illicit flows: financial, information, and trade. Ideally, these flows must be traceable and analyzed in parallel, so that discrepancies and anomalies can be revealed and studied. Most of our attention so far focuses on finance and information, but even there the work is imperfect and sources are not cross-checked. Trade, on the other hand, is for the most part non-transparent and neglected.

Within trade flows, abuses and crimes do occur routinely, and encompass money laundering, tax evasion, bribery and corruption, subsidy, and other types of fraud including sanctions violations, embargo and quota violations, and capital flight, as well as the financing of terrorism and WMD proliferation. Many terror groups have used commodities in their modus operandi: from the Islamic State and al Qaeda in Iraq to the Kosovo Liberation Army, Jemaah al Islamiya, Tamil Tigers, Hamas, Hizballah, the Northern Alliance, and other groups (Passas, 2011a, 2011b; Passas & Jones, 2006).

The amount of money involved in these illicit transactions is not known with precision but it is certainly staggering, given the trillions of dollars in trade volume annually. Our vision is blurred for several reasons. First, relevant information to analyze the problem is not collected in one place for consolidated analysis at the national and international level. Some data are collected by Customs, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FINCEN), the Department of Commerce, port authorities, and their counterparts in other countries. Other data are in the hands of banks, insurance companies, brokers, shippers, and logistics companies, as well as importers and exporters. No one is getting the full picture because no one collects all of the information in one place.

Second, financial institutions are expected to monitor transactions with such data, but end up identifying much less actionable intelligence than desired. A good deal of compliance work has become

automated tick-the-box exercises that yield millions of suspicious activity reports and massive false positives. These tend to waste the time of the personnel who must deal with them, rather than allowing them to engage in good analytic work to identify the highest risks and possible offenders, and to improve collaboration with controllers. Financial institutions are incentivized primarily to avoid heavy fines and damage to their reputations, rather than to discover and chase away bad clients. In addition, financial institutions can only review data about their clients and cannot access government or other banks' data or analysis. This leads to costly duplication of work and an incomplete view of the problem.

Third, while some analysis has been done on trade-connected informal remittance and payment networks, such as *hawala* (the S. Asian remittance vehicle of choice for migrants and their families), there has been no systematic assessment of trade threats and vulnerabilities in different economic sectors. Even when it comes to Informal Value Transfer Systems, a term I coined in a study for the Dutch Ministry of Justice (Passas, 1999), no threat assessment has been done since 2003 (Passas, 2003a, 2003b). These informal payment networks evolve constantly and adapt to different countries' regulatory and law enforcement practices, in many of which they are outlawed (FATF, 2013). It is essential to keep an eye on these changes and realize that *hawala* is not only a challenge for controllers, but also an invaluable intelligence asset (Passas, 2008) that can be leveraged in many places for both control purposes and assistance to fragile communities. This could address at once and synergistically financial crime control, development, and humanitarian policy objectives (Passas, 2015, 2016; SIGAR, 2013).

Finally, the value of open source information is underestimated and underutilized. Reviewing and working only with classified and private data excludes information on the internet, in the press, in public reports, and in research literature from NGOs and academics. Yet, these sources point to knowledge gaps, misunderstandings, contextual information, insights, and items unavailable elsewhere that might contradict conventional wisdom or non-public data, and discredit sources we should not rely too much on. This is all particularly relevant to the analysis of illicit networks, identification of beneficial ownership, adverse media news in local or foreign publications, terrorism finance, sanctions violations, corruption, illicit enrichment, and other issues of interest to those in charge of due diligence and investigative tasks.

## The Solution

The answer to these challenges is to stop missing opportunities: All of the necessary data are not in one place, but do exist. *Hawala* is not only a problem but also an intelligence resource. Further, agencies that gather useful information should share it for purposes of developing better analytics to inform more evidence-based practices to counter financial crimes and the financing of terrorism. Open-source data are also available for analysis. The private sector and

researchers can assist with additional data, perhaps operating in secure environments to provide analysis and feedback to both government and business.

More specifically, several data categories can be collected systematically:

- Inbound Manifest/Movement data are provided to governments by carriers and shippers on goods arriving in a country by road, rail, sea, and air. These records offer details on what goods are received where, and when and who is involved.
- Outbound Manifest/Movement data are provided on goods leaving a country.
- Import Declarations go to governments when goods enter the economy. These are usually in aggregate form.
- Export Declarations are for goods leaving the economy.

Some of these data are published online, but there are also companies that collect and provide such information for a fee (e.g., Port Import Export Reporting Service, or PIERS). U.S. import and export data can be obtained from U.S. Department of Commerce and International Trade Commission websites. Other countries publish theirs in revenue collection and official statistics agencies' websites. The United Nations also publishes trade information. Port and ship-loading information, Electronic Data Interchange records, which are standardized computer-to-computer documents, can be used for the analysis for shipments, invoices, and container movements. Trade finance, insurance, storage, satellite imaging, cash handling, and movements data can be added to the database too. In the United States, for example, Geographic Targeting Orders have been used in different states and yield complete records of Money Service Business transactions.

By adding crime statistics, criminal records, reports of investigations, open source literature in multiple languages, and qualitative on-the-ground sources such as interviews from different jurisdictions, we can make case studies, pattern analysis, and the mapping of criminal networks much easier, much richer in detail, and more policy-useful. Oil, trade finance, antiquities, food and agriculture, medical, and arms-related data can be tracked and added to databases especially for action against terrorist groups like the Islamic State that control territory, have access to natural resources, or engage in trade and perform quasi government functions that leave traces.

Following an evidence-based perspective, concrete steps the U.S. government should consider include the following:

- Ensure all government data are gathered and analyzed in one place (FinCEN?) that can also liaise with law enforcement agencies for swift action.
- With appropriate legal pathways, bring all available private-sector trade data and open source data together through a trusted third party, such as a university, that can develop a

system to receive, securely store, and analyze them in a consolidated way. A university can generate new data and collaborate with government agencies to develop patterns, identify irregularities, generate typologies and red flags, issue guidance, and produce evidence-based investigative clues that can be shared with banks for action and feedback. Many of the problems cited with respect to financial institutions could be resolved with this type of collective action and synergies among business and the government. The university would also help obviate the reluctance of businesses to share information for competitive reasons.

- Update information on hawala and related Informal Value Transfer Systems. Methods keep changing and adapting to regulatory and law enforcement practices around the world. A new hawala review will be instrumental to more effective AML/CFT as well as control of illegal migration and smuggling. When hawala intermediaries want to help, they can. The Islamic State blackmails and robs them too. Victims of extortion can be great intelligence sources.

The feasibility of these proposals is demonstrated by the results of work on Informal Value Transfer Systems and trade of commodities like gold, diamonds, and tobacco at Northeastern in collaboration with U.S. government agencies right after 9/11 (Passas, 2004a, 2004b). Other studies have been conducted in partnership with the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (free trade zones and financial crime in six jurisdictions) and with the Arizona Attorney General's office, when we combined Money Service Business official and PIERS trade data to analyze a trade-based money laundering case involving the United States, Mexico, and China (Passas, forthcoming). Many overseas partners are ready to join a collective action (offering data, adding resources, facilitating interviews, etc.), especially in targeting the Islamic State. Similar universal condemnation and collective action took place in the Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography (see [www.missingkids.com/FCACP](http://www.missingkids.com/FCACP)), so there is precedent for acting against specific targets with consensus.

An illustration of how such analysis can be done to generate clues for follow-up and investigations is a comparison of import and export official records to see where these do not match. Items declared as exported from country A to country B should be about the same as items declared as imported to country B from country A. This is often not the case, as shown in past tobacco trade statistics between the United States and Japan or Switzerland in Figure 1.

Another example is the review of pricing irregularities that make no commercial sense, such as cases where obviously cheaper goods are imported for too high values. Scrap gold (in blue in Figure 2), for instance, must be much cheaper than pure gold (in red). This is the pattern observed in U.S. imports of gold from Mexico. Scrap and pure gold U.S. imports from Colombia, however, are highly variable, raising the question of who in the United States is buying scrap gold for double the price of pure gold, and why.

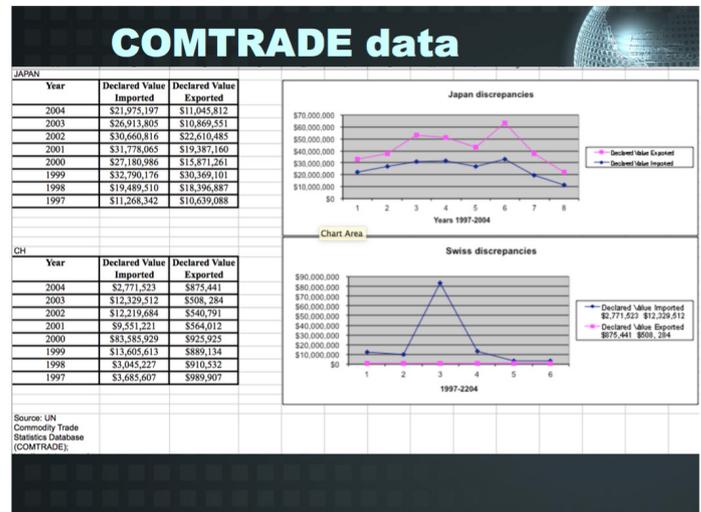


Figure 1

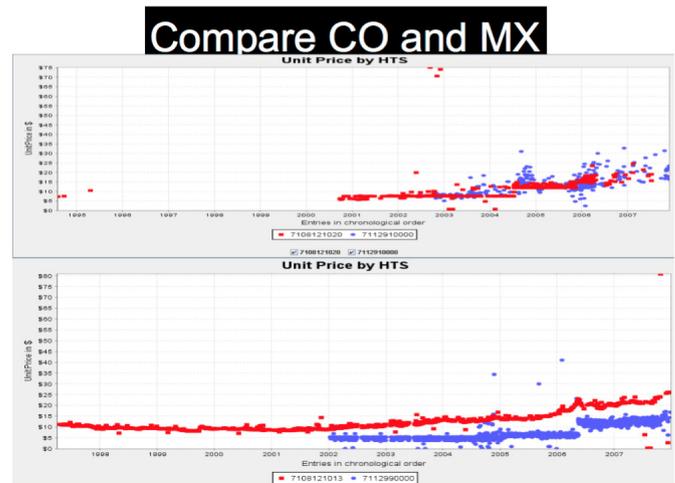


Figure 2

Such red flags can be communicated to banks and relevant businesses for focused action and to obtain additional information. This exchange can generate valuable new insights into specific targets and help control terrorist finance more effectively and at much lower costs.

Rather than shooting in the dark, we can shed light on shadowy economic activities and go after well-defined targets. The data, the networks to produce new data, the technology for analysis, the analytical capacity, the previous experience, and the willingness to collaborate are all there. The switch to turn the lights onto economic activities supporting the Islamic State, Boko Haram, al Shabab, and other terror groups is in our hands.

*Continued on page 26*

# The Division of Policing

*of the American Society of Criminology*

In 1941 former Berkeley Chief of Police **August Vollmer**, UC Berkeley professor of police administration **O.W. Wilson**, and others gathered to form what is now known as the American Society of Criminology (ASC). Originally created to further professionalize policing and advance police science, the ASC blossomed into the diverse organization it is today, spanning every aspect of criminology and criminal justice research and practice, where numerous divisions have flourished.

More than 70 years later, the ASC Board returned to its roots and approved the creation of a Division of Policing. Since its founding in April 2014, the Division has sought to advance theory, knowledge and practice in policing through rigorous research, evaluation, translational activities, and partnerships with police practitioners. Learn more about the work and activities of the Division and its committees at **[www.ascpolicing.org](http://www.ascpolicing.org)**.

We invite current ASC members to join these efforts by becoming a member of the Division of Policing. Annual dues are only \$15 and just \$5 for students. Visit our website for more information.

We also invite all interested policing researchers and practitioners to a special Division reception and awards ceremony at the ASC Annual meeting in New Orleans in November. Visit **[www.ascpolicing.org](http://www.ascpolicing.org)** for more information and to submit nominations for Division awards honoring distinguished achievement in policing scholarship and practice.



# Exploring the Evidence-Based Policy Landscape in Community Corrections: Results from a Statewide Agency Survey

BY JORDAN M. HYATT AND CHADWICK J. LIBBY

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Jordan M. Hyatt



Chadwick J. Libby

Recent attempts to reduce the prison population have meant more defendants and inmates are being shifted onto community supervision. As a result, the number of people under some form of community supervision has risen to 1 in 52 adults (Kaeble, Maruschak, & Bonczar, 2015).

The benefits of this reallocation of the population are readily apparent: Fewer individuals reside in prisons, thus reducing costs, potential harms from prison, and increasing opportunities for community integration. While the increased reliance on community supervision presents its own financial and practical challenges, community supervision also presents an untapped opportunity to deliver treatments designed to reduce recidivism. Ensuring that community supervision services are effective and deliverable within existing agency frameworks, and that they are evidence-based, has become more important than ever.

The incorporation of evidence-based programming in correctional supervision emphasizes the use of rigorous research in making policy decisions and is commonplace in other disciplines, most notably medicine. But within the criminal justice system, progress has been incremental, with the unique nature of correctional supervision both encouraging and impeding the deployment of data-driven supervision strategies. The key dimensions of evidence-based programming have been operationalized as the Principles of Effective Intervention (PEI) (Gendreau, 1996; Taxman, 2002). The PEI incorporate commonly successful characteristics of effective programs into several categories. These include, but are not limited to, assessing both risk and needs, enhancing intrinsic motivations to spur behavioral change, engaging pro-social and community support for offenders, using directed practice to reinforce new skills, and measuring practices and outcomes (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990;

Lowenkamp, Flores, Holsinger, Makarios, & Latessa, 2010). Essentially, the PEI set out the traits of programs that have already been shown to be effective.

Evidence-Based Policies (EBP) in correctional supervision successfully actualize the PEI. Qualifying programs share common features, including focusing on cognitive and behavioral change, employing multi-modal treatments, targeting high-risk and high-needs offenders, and tailoring treatment strategies to the unique competencies and fluencies of the target population (e.g., Allen, MacKenzie, & Hickman, 2001). By employing data to inform decisions regarding supervision and treatment strategies, EBPs encourage agencies to use programming with demonstrated effectiveness and to contribute to correctional research efforts. This rigorous approach is designed to explicitly subvert the long-held and largely anecdotal justifications for many of the supervision strategies that characterize supervision. By explicitly linking program characteristics to expected outcomes, EBPs also provide a means to increase accountability, provide feedback, and measure incremental changes within the correctional environment. For agencies focused on changing long-held practices, relying on EBPs can foster an environment in which the key dimensions of supervision are those that focus on the quality, not the quantity, of the oversight.

## Assessing the Current EBP Landscape

Despite a strong grounding in research, the adoption of EBPs by probation and parole agencies has not been uniform or particularly rapid (Petersilia, 1997). These programs can be challenging to implement, with many of the costs borne up front. Understanding what evidence-based practices are in place in a jurisdiction, as well as the general perceptions of EBPs, their advantages, and their price

tags, is an important first step in encouraging the adoption of these types of programs.

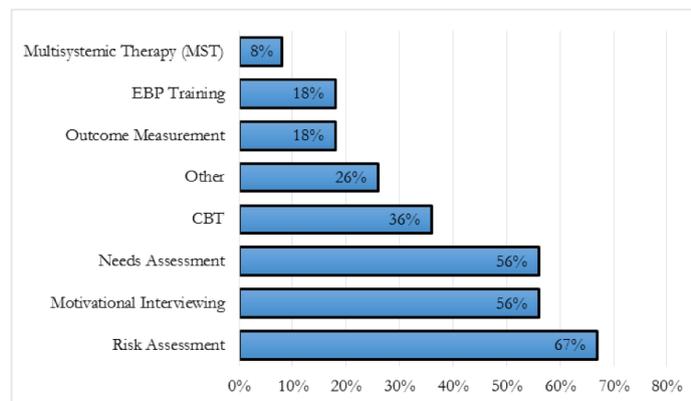
With this in mind, the current study was conducted in collaboration with the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania, a professional organization for the leaders of probation and parole agencies in the state. Faced with the challenge of encouraging the implementation and usage of evidence-based policies and programs through the strategic planning process, we sought to survey the current EBP “landscape,” including what interventions had been implemented, what hurdles were common, and what goals were commonly held by probation and parole agencies in Pennsylvania. The survey covered a range of issues germane to EBPs: current practices; goal, risk, and needs assessment tools; and caseload size.

The survey was first administered in person, as part of a daylong workshop on Evidence-Based Policies and Workload Analyses conducted during the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania’s annual meeting in September 2014. The in-person conference pencil-and-paper instrument was then adapted for online delivery to the full Association membership list and available for completion between October 1 and December 1, 2014. In total, 108 anonymous responses were received to both forms of the survey (72 online, 36 in person). Here, we discuss one domain of particular importance to the implementation of EBPs: describing the current efforts and challenges experienced by agencies seeking to move toward employing the PEI in supervision protocols.

### Results from the Survey

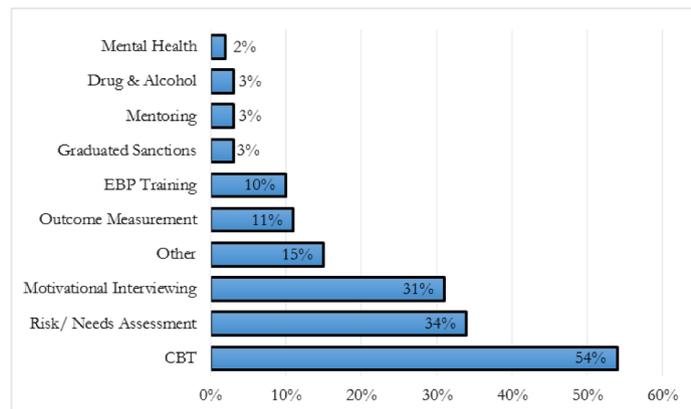
As expected, the majority of responses were from a chief probation officer or the individual filling the highest position for the agency (84 percent), with an additional 5 percent of responses coming from the board of the state-level parole agency. Responses were received from counties representing the range of agencies’ sizes and capacities in the jurisdiction. Overall, 30 percent of responding agencies had more than 5,000 offenders under supervision, 65 percent supervised between 2,000 and 5,000 individuals, with the remaining 22 percent of responses coming from departments with fewer than 1,000 active probationers or parolees.

Several items on the survey directly addressed current EBP practices. Importantly, approximately 24 percent of respondents indicated that their agency had not been able, or had not attempted, to implement any form of EBP. Among those responses that indicated some form of EBP implementation had taken place, the vast majority of EBP efforts focused on risk assessment (67 percent), needs assessment (56 percent), and motivational interviewing (56 percent; Figure 1). In a series of follow-up questions, respondents indicated the primary hurdles to program implementation were related to a lack of training, departmental structure (e.g., caseload sizes, staff turnover, or limited resources), and funding.



**Figure 1. What evidence-based practices (EBPs) have been implemented at your agency?**

Participants were also asked to indicate, regardless of current practices, what evidence-based programming they would like to implement in their agency (see Figure 2). The majority (54 percent) of respondents indicated they would like to implement some form of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Risk and needs assessment (34 percent) and Motivational Interviewing (31 percent) were also commonly desired programs. Note that respondents could, and often did, select more than one program.



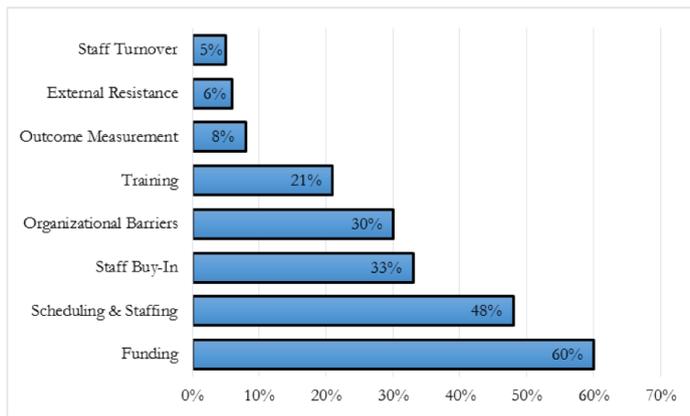
**Figure 2. What EBPs would you like to implement at your agency?**

The vast majority of responses to questions inquiring into the perceived value of evidence-based programming were positive. Representative examples can be seen below:

- “The benefits are numerous—a reduced revocation rate, an increase in the successful completion rate, providing staff with clear guidance in supervising cases, removing some of the subjectivity (going with your ‘gut’).”
- “EBP will create a more efficient and effective intervention for most offenders. Recidivism will be reduced and assigning the correct level of services based on needs makes sense financially and practically. Resources would be better allocated to address criminogenic needs of appropriate offenders.”
- “Will allow the leadership team to determine what is working and what is not working, and provide great assistance in

- managing caseload numbers (“banking” low-risk cases), etc.”
- “We would be heading in the right direction by using researched-based approaches; however, we would not come close to having the dosage intensity needed to match the outcomes in the research.”

Additional inquiries were made into why, given the recognition of the value of EBPs, as well as the Association’s encouragement, agencies had not yet started, or attempted to use, any of the programs on their “wish list.” Issues relating to the cost of implementation and maintenance were seen as the most significant impediments to the long-term usage of a general program focused on EBPs, representing 60 percent of all responses. Scheduling and staffing concerns appeared in less than half of the responses. However, for a majority of respondents, internal culture was the largest issue they faced; staff buy-in (33 percent), organizational barriers (30 percent), and training (21 percent) were all seen as major impediments (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. What do you see as the two biggest hurdles or challenges to reaching your goals?**

### Implications for Community Correctional Policy

During our assessment of the landscape for EBP in community corrections in Pennsylvania (including through several follow-up interviews), we identified four important themes surrounding EBPs in community corrections:

**1) The landscape is currently bleak, but promising.** Despite an intensive educational campaign lasting several years, one quarter of all responding agencies made no attempt to develop or implement any evidence-based supervision or treatment strategies. There is, however, cause for optimism. Among this sample, many other agencies have at least tried (some unsuccessfully) to implement a wide range of EBPs, in particular CBT. This suggests that educational efforts, both at the state and local level, influenced the long-held beliefs of some agency heads and opened the door for the future development of programs based upon empirically validated principles. The most promising efforts have occurred within the juvenile system, where we found that the transition to evidence-based programming was more successful and faster in that smaller and more treatment-oriented environment.

**2) Organization readiness matters.** For many respondents, organizational readiness is both the most significant concern and the one perceived to be linked with the successful implementation of any EBP. Moving away from the more traditional management of supervision over individuals to an approach to offender management that includes treatment and rehabilitation is often a jarring cultural transition, as reported by participants. Doing so requires changing staff mindset using sustained educational campaigns and providing practical training to communicate the essential value of data collection, research, and fidelity to standardized treatment and supervision protocols. These reforms take time. In addition to ensuring that internal culture is ready to support the shift to evidence-based strategies, respondents also noted that the judiciary, the prosecutor, and the defense bar, as well as other key members of the criminal justice community, must also be convinced; too often this aspect of the transition is overlooked and, in the long run, this can become a limiting factor.

**3) Resources trump ideology.** EBPs are expensive: Training costs are high, many require modifications to data collection or basic infrastructure, ongoing training efforts are needed, and, in some cases, the EBPs themselves are proprietary. Even for agencies with extensive programming budgets, this can be a difficult fiscal hurdle to clear. This is especially true for departments seeking to not only implement EBPs, but to conduct evaluations of their own interventions or those that want to develop new programs reliant upon the PEI. Regardless of how engaged or willing an agency is, if it cannot pay for the services needed, there simply will not be a program. Though these data provide few solutions, considering these issues up front and openly can offer the chance to facilitate the collaborations and relationships needed to address them head-on.

**4) Research collaborations can support EBP development.** Generally, the agency heads and leaders that responded to the survey had been tasked with exploring—and running—EBPs on their own. Although the Association, as well as other local and national organizations, supported educational efforts, many respondents reported they felt they lacked the requisite experience to conduct even preliminary or exploratory program evaluations to support an evidence-based framework. This, unsurprisingly, tracks with the size and resources of the department. Larger agencies indicated a history of collaborating with academic and internal researchers to support evidence-based policies; smaller divisions do not have this luxury. The data collection requirements, as well as the monitoring needed to ensure program fidelity, can be daunting for agencies without a dedicated researcher on staff. Working with outside researchers, at least during planning phases, offers an opportunity to develop prospective solutions, as reported by those agencies who had participated in such collaborations.

## Conclusions

The implementation of evidence-based programming in community supervision represents a shift toward the next ideological phase in community supervision. In addition to facilitating the development of policies and practices based on the best evidence available, many EBPs, such as risk and needs assessment, represent key developments in the way the criminal justice system understands, classifies, and treats offenders. This process, especially for agencies with limited resources and cultures resistant to change, can be difficult. We see indications here that some, but not all, agencies have made progress toward conversion, but significant logistical and philosophical challenges remain. This represents the gulf between increasing levels of knowledge regarding best practices, and what many agencies are pragmatically able to implement. Continued efforts in education and in research are needed to close this gap.

## Acknowledgments

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# Examining the Success of an Embedded Criminologist Partnership

BY NICOLE FRISCH

*In this issue, we feature graduate student Nicole Frisch of the University of Maryland, College Park, who carried out a translational study during her pursuit of a master's degree. Nicole, now a doctoral student at the University of Maryland, shares some of her findings below.*



Nicole Frisch

Embedding an academic criminologist within a criminal justice agency has been proposed as a method to integrate research into criminal justice policy and practice. Such an approach has gained popularity, so much so that it is now being funded by organizations such as the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and also by a few police agencies themselves. Researchers' accounts of their experiences as embedded criminologists suggest that these partnerships are highly productive and offer numerous benefits to both academics and criminal justice agencies (Braga, 2013; Jenness, 2008; Petersilia, 2008; Taniguchi & Bueermann, 2012). In light of the recent shift toward implementing evidence-based policies and practices, assessing the utility of these collaborations is an important area of research for translational criminology.

In this article, I report on one such embedded criminologist partnership that I studied, focusing on examples of research translation. Often, researchers write about their own partnerships, but more objective empirical analysis is needed in this area. The partnership I studied involved an assistant professor at an East Coast university embedded into an east coast state corrections agency. In 2012 the partners received one year of federal funding, but continued to work together on several research projects after the funding period. Through interviews with the partners, a comprehensive review of documents, and observation, I developed a holistic understanding of this partnership, as well as its successes and challenges. My goal was to systematically describe and evaluate the embedded criminologist model, and to understand when and how the research generated from this partnership was translated into policy and practice in the corrections agency.

## Description of the Embedded Criminologist Partnership

The partnership was initiated by the corrections agency that had been seeking a research partner. With the help of a mutual connection, the agency's director of research was introduced to an assistant faculty member at a nearby university who was interested in serving as an embedded criminologist. Together these two individuals brainstormed a series of ideas for future research projects, and applied for—and successfully received—a grant to fund the partnership.

Embedded criminologist partnerships can take many forms. In this partnership, the grant paid for part of the professor's teaching time through the university so that the professor could work on-site at the corrections agency two days per week. In this embedded model, the criminologist was treated like an employee and was immersed in the agency's routines. The department of corrections provided the researcher with an office, computer, email address, and access badge, in addition to security clearance for the agency's data systems. The criminologist attended various meetings with the research and executive staff, and they worked together on research projects and policy issues. The embedded criminologist also participated in "brainstorming sessions," which consisted of long, informal conversations with agency staff regarding potential research questions, designs, and types of data to collect. Over time, the researcher became familiar with the corrections agency's routine practices, goals, and constraints, and the partners formed a strong relationship based on mutual respect and trust.

This understanding of the agency environment was essential to the criminologist's ability to advise on at least eight of the agency's research projects. For example, the partners designed and executed a randomized experiment to examine the effects of relocating prisoners to different counties. They have also studied the state's parole

practices, neighborhood-level determinants of recidivism, prison visitation policies, and recidivism patterns throughout the state. Both the corrections agency and the researcher benefited from this partnership. For the department of corrections, the principal advantage was direct access to an expert researcher to advise on concrete issues in which the agency was interested. The embedded criminologist approached research differently than many of the agency's staff, thereby providing a fresh look at, and questioning of, longstanding agency concerns. These questions served as a valuable opportunity for agency staff members to critically assess and justify their routines, and helped identify areas for improvement. This partnership also provided the assistant professor with access to agency data and the unique opportunity to advance the criminologist's scholarship. These advantages also extended to the graduate students advised by the professor, who worked with agency data and conducted policy-relevant research. With grant funding, these benefits came at no financial cost to the agency or the researcher.

Although the advantages to both parties were numerous, this collaboration also faced challenges. Designing mutually beneficial research often required compromise between the parties, for example, if the most rigorous methods were not feasible for the agency's budget or goals. Another common challenge to both the embedded criminologist and the practitioners at the department of corrections was the considerable time commitment required to conduct rigorous research and to acclimate the professor to the agency environment. However, after grant funding expired, both parties continued to invest substantial time in building their relationship and conducting multiple research projects together.

### **Determining Success**

Studies of researcher-practitioner partnerships do not provide a clear consensus on how to define a partnership as successful. Using a variety of elements from this literature (e.g., Nutley, Walter & Davies, 2007), I measured the success of this embedded criminologist partnership based on the perceptions of the individuals involved, the fulfillment of the initial goals, and the degree to which research was translated into policy and practice. With regard to the first two measures, interviewed subjects unanimously agreed the embedded criminologist partnership was successful and the majority of initial goals were fully met. Here, I focus more on the third measure—whether research had been translated into practice.

The one direct example of research translation was that the agency developed and instituted a new policy to incentivize recidivism reductions in community corrections centers. This new policy was based on an evaluation study conducted by the embedded criminologist and the agency. However, other types of indirect research translation also occurred. Employees of the corrections agency reported they learned a great deal about research design and criminological theory by working with the embedded criminologist. This skill transfer is akin to Nutley's interactive model of research use

(Nutley et al., 2007; Tseng, 2012). Furthermore, the chair of the state's parole board stated on official record that the board will consider shortening supervision for certain offenders, a recommendation derived from the embedded criminologist's assessment of parolee recidivism and cost-effective policy options. Although no change has yet occurred, this shift in perspective on policy options and openness to research-based decisions marks another way that the embedded criminologist partnership influenced the agency.

Two mechanisms underlying research translation were identified from these examples: 1) conducting research that is responsive to the agency's specific needs, and 2) frequent, effective communication between the partners. The evaluation study that prompted the creation of a new policy was tailored to address recidivism of a certain population of offenders residing in community corrections centers in the state. The embedding of a criminologist also allowed research to help influence the development of the new policy that aligned with the goals of the agency. But iterative and effective communication between the partners was also crucial to research translation. The final policy was a result of numerous conversations between agency staff and the researcher, brainstorming sessions, and drafts of the actual policy.

The amount of research translation that did occur seemed relatively modest considering the quantity and variety of studies the partners engaged in (although some studies are still ongoing, which may explain the low research use thus far). Still, indications of success were found, and were not surprising given the ideal conditions under which this partnership was formed and the mutual commitment by both parties for the partnership to succeed. Prior to the partnership, the corrections agency was already motivated to conduct and use innovative, high-quality research. And all parties involved acknowledged the importance of external funding in facilitating this partnership.

### **Conclusions**

Based on this study as well as previous accounts of embedded researchers in criminal justice agencies, it would appear that this form of collaboration can be highly productive and beneficial for all parties involved. However, two barriers rooted in the apparent divide between criminal justice agencies and academic criminologists may inhibit success in embedded criminologist partnerships or prevent them from forming in the first place. The first, which may be waning, is the distrust or skepticism between criminal justice agencies and academic researchers. Several of the interviewees with whom I spoke described criminal justice agencies as unwilling to open their doors to external researchers. Despite the advantages of such partnerships, it may be that only some agencies are willing to embed a researcher within an organization and provide the access and mentorship needed to enable success.

More significantly, there is a lack of incentives for researchers to engage in these partnerships. Academic researchers are not rewarded in tenure or promotion decisions for collaborating with practitioners

unless the experience results in publications in top-tier journals. In light of the time commitment required of academic researchers to learn about an agency setting, become successfully embedded, and complete research projects, this reward structure may be a considerable obstacle even for the most experienced and tenured professors (see sentiments expressed by Petersilia, 2008, and Rosenfeld, 2014).

Engaging in a highly involved partnership could be risky to an assistant professor's career. The partnership I examined offers an alternative perspective: With the right people, motivation, and external funding, pre-tenured professors can engage in successful researcher-practitioner partnerships that promote research translation and also scholarship. And, as shown here, these partnerships also offer opportunities for newer researchers—like myself—to study research translation, which can serve as important preparation for future involvement in such partnerships.

Collaborations that form in spite of these barriers must balance the priorities of academic researchers and practitioners so that all parties can benefit from the endeavor. This may be easier said than done. More translational research and objective investigations of embedded criminologist partnerships are needed to understand how we can foster productive, successful working relationships between researchers and criminal justice practitioners.

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## Collective Action for Trade Transparency against Financial Crime, continued from page 18

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# Interview with CEBCP's Most Recent Graduate Dr. Breanne Cave

BY COLLEEN KEARNEY RICH

After finishing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice at Norwich University, Breanne Cave joined the U.S. Marine Corps, where she was deployed to Iraq twice. When Cave returned from her second deployment, she began to do some research on the topics in which she was interested.

"I googled 'crime and place' and Dr. [David] Weisburd's name came up," she says.

That web search led Cave to George Mason University, the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, graduate study, and a career. Translational Criminology caught up with Cave as she leaves Mason with a PhD and embarks on a research career.

## **When did you graduate and what did you choose to do your dissertation on?**

I defended my dissertation on January 25, 2016, and my degree will be conferred in May of this year. I did my dissertation on police activity in street segments in Baltimore, Maryland, after three years of helping to coordinate field research in the city.

## **Where are you working now?**

I'm now a senior research associate at the Police Foundation, a nonprofit think tank in Washington, D.C.

## **What kinds of research are you working on now?**

I'm working on a number of different projects related to policing, public safety, mental health, and juvenile delinquency, and also working on papers and research tools intended to enhance collaborations between practitioners and researchers. I enjoy the cross-disciplinary nature of some of the projects I'm working on. For instance, one project is related to an intervention being developed in Shoreline, Washington, that is intended to improve police responses to calls for service that involve people with mental illness. That involves some very interesting data sharing and data analysis problems. I'm also providing research support to the City of Hayward to plan a truancy and repeat absence prevention program.

## **Do you have any advice for people thinking about getting their master's degree or PhD in criminology?**

I'd repeat advice I was given, which is that everyone's journey through grad school is different, and it's always a bad idea to compare yourself to others. If I could do everything over again, I would have



Breanne Cave

tried to have more perspective when things didn't go the way I wanted them to. I had some frustrating moments when I wasn't working as quickly as I wanted to, or when I had setbacks with my dissertation that forced me to re-do work. People don't always talk about it, but these things happen pretty often, and I think most grad students will struggle at some point in the process. It was good to hear I wasn't the only one who was having difficulties!

With that said, I made a couple of decisions that worked out well for me. As a practical issue, I benefited from taking classes on geoinformation sciences, because it made me realize how much I like coding and gave me some tools for accomplishing certain types of tasks that I don't think I would have learned otherwise. It also led me to develop a broader research interest in developing the evidence-base surrounding information use and information sharing in policing.

More broadly, I benefitted from developing interests and relationships outside of graduate school. I spent the first couple of years of grad school pretty narrowly focused on course work and my assistantship, which was positive in some ways, as I definitely needed to spend the time to get acclimated. But it also felt like real life was on hold, as I didn't have much besides grad school going on. During the latter half of grad school, I got married, made a lot of friends, and played a lot of sports, and generally enjoyed myself a lot more. Obviously, that was a really important time in my life and I would have missed out on things that are important to me had I solely focused on academics.

# Criminology, Law and Society

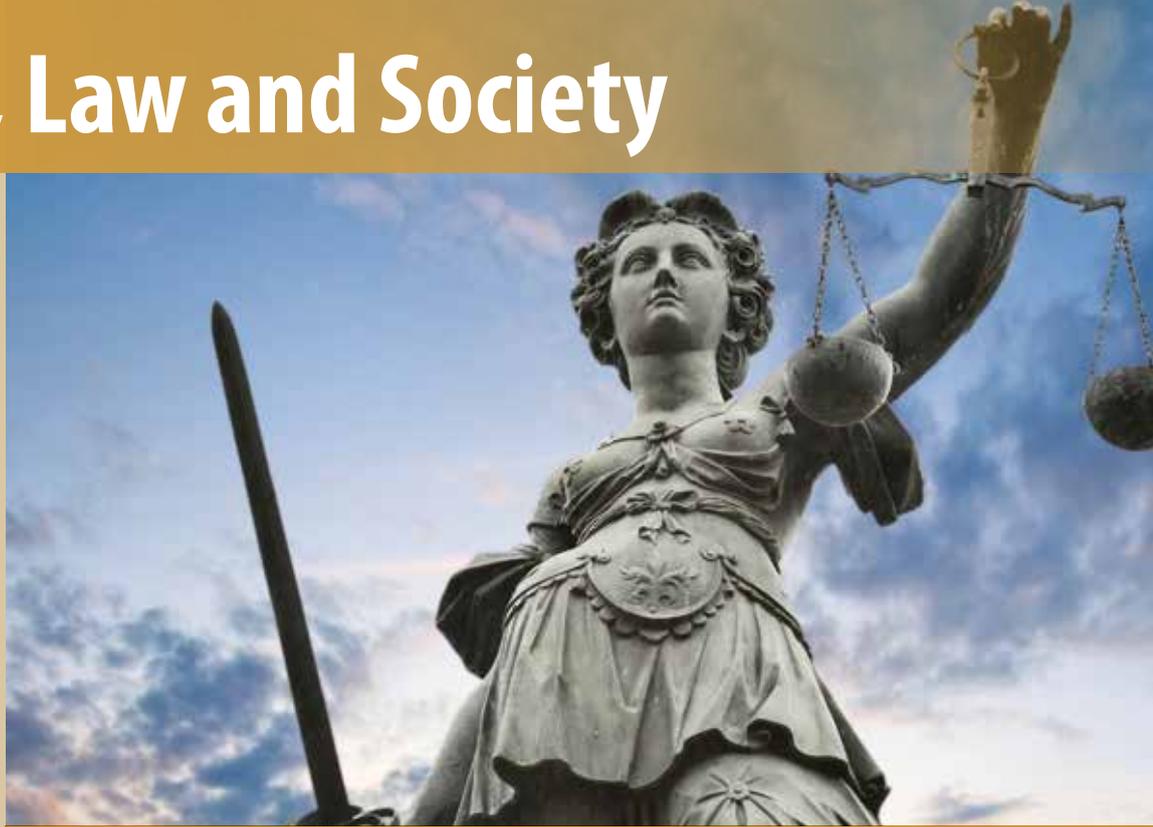
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