

Cities on a Hill

NEWSLETTER

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Finding Jobs for Parolees Reduces Crime



CCI's most recent Civic Bulletin, *America Works' Criminal Justice Program: Providing Second Chances Through Work*, analyzes a potential model for addressing the major social and public policy challenge of how to reintegrate released ex-offenders into mainstream society. The authors, Drs. William B. Eimicke and Steven Cohen of Columbia University, argue that with record numbers of prisoners being released a tidal wave of recidivism is a real danger, one that could jump start crime rates across the nation.

The Criminal Justice Program is based on America Works' hugely successful efforts at moving people from welfare to work. The Criminal Justice Program simply applies the same methods to released prisoners.

Eimicke and Cohen found that America Works had been able to place in jobs nearly 78% of ex-offenders who completed their one-day orientation session. Over 44% of those placed were found to last at least three months. And, as of the completion of the study, the authors found that just over 40% of those eligible had reached the six-month employment milestone.

The authors also concluded that, based on current recidivism rates, at least 30% of those reaching that six-month threshold would have normally been returned to prison sometime during that period. Not only is preventing a return to prison obviously a benefit from a crime prevention standpoint, the authors found it also makes economic sense. While the cost to the government for those who would have ended up in prison would have been \$607,500, America Works was paid only \$423,000, an \$184,000 savings.

National Study of Graduation Rates Highlights the Failures of Public Schools

Public School Graduation Rates in the United States, a new report released by CCI this past November, uses a straightforward and reliable method to estimate the percentage of public high school students from the class of 2000 in the United States who actually graduated. Building on his work in a similar study on the class of 1998 released in the Fall of 2001, Senior Fellow Dr. Jay P. Greene and co-author Marcus A. Winters determined

that only 69% actually graduated nationwide.

Even more troubling was the public schools' lack of success in graduating minority students. While 76% of white students graduate, only 55% of African-American students and 57% of Native American students do so. Hispanic students fared

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The report has provided both policymakers and social entrepreneurs with a clear, proven method for dealing with the problem of released prisoners. Many questions remain about replicating this program elsewhere, but if nothing else, the report demonstrates definitively that success is possible and for considerably less than the cost of incarceration.

Access this report at:
www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cb_29.htm



CCI Presents Second Annual Social Entrepreneurship Awards

The three recipients of this year's awards were Rev. William S. Barnes, founder of Shepherd's Hope, Inc. in Orlando, Florida; James G. Hunter, head of the New Jersey Orators and one of its six original organizers; and Jacob Schramm, who established Washington, D.C.'s College Summit.

"Those recognized today by the Social Entrepreneurship Award program, and those we honored last year and hope to honor in years to come, embody the American tradition of self-organized charity," said Howard Husock, director of the Social Entrepreneurship Initiative. "They have all taken up the tradition, too, of philanthropy aimed at encouraging upward mobility and self-reliance." Mr. Husock is a Contributing Editor of *City Journal* and Director of Case Studies in Public Policy and Management at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.



Rev. William Barnes and his wife, Kim.

The Award carries with it a \$10,000 prize, and CCI will seek to bring winners to the attention of philanthropic donors nationwide. An Advisory Committee of leaders in the field of philanthropy selected the award winners from a large group nominated by charitable foundations and service organizations from across the nation. Over time, CCI plans to study the long-term impact made by winning organizations and the motivations and approaches of leaders of all nominated programs.

At the awards ceremony, CCI also announced the release of a new book as part of the Social Entrepreneurship Initiative, *By Their Bootstraps: The Lives of Twelve Gilded Age Social Entrepreneurs*, authored by Martin Wooster with an introduction by CCI Executive Director Henry Olsen. The book delves into the work and philosophy of twelve great men and women from the last major period of private, hands-on social entrepreneurship, providing models for the new generation of social entrepreneurs the Awards are designed to celebrate.

Award winners are selected from a pool of nominees submitted by foundations and individual philanthropists. Criteria and guidelines for submitting a nomination can be found at: www.manhattan-institute.org/html/se_form.htm.



2001 winner Rajiv Vinnakota (right) and 2002 winner Jacob Schramm.



Richard Cornuelle and Elizabeth Fonseca enjoying the evening with Larry Mone and Howard Husock.

Graduation Rate Study continued



Above: Initiative Director Howard Husock congratulates New Jersey Orators head James Hunter.

Right: Insitute President Lawrence Mone talks with Institute Trustee Frank Macchiarola.



Below: Philanthropy Roundtable President and keynote speaker Adam Meyerson chats with Howard Husock and Henry Olsen.



Dr. Jay P. Greene

even worse, with only 53% actually graduating. Asian students, by contrast, had the highest graduation rates of any of the ethnic groups with 79%.

The authors' findings paint a particularly disturbing picture when they break down the graduation rates for every state and the District of Columbia. Greene and Winters determined that among the states with a sufficiently sized ethnic population for whom data was available, 6 out of 31 graduated fewer than 50% of African-Americans, 6 out of 22 graduated fewer than 50% of Hispanics and 6 out of 17 graduated fewer than 50% of Native Americans.

The findings show problems for white students as well, albeit smaller ones, with less than 70% of white students graduating in 9 of 38 states. Asian students appear to be ahead of the curve in this respect as well, with only 2 states out of 23 having Asian graduation rates below 70%.

Because graduation rates reported by the states are often misleading, confusing, and implausibly high, they have previously been under-utilized as a measure of school performance. The accurate and easily understood graduation rates generated by Dr. Greene in this and his previous report have provided an important tool for holding schools accountable for academic performance.

Access this report at: www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_31.htm

Teachers' Practices at Odds with Standards-Based Reform, Study Finds

This October, CCI released a new report, *“What Do Teachers Teach? A Survey of America’s 4th and 8th Grade Teachers,”* which presented an alarming picture of the beliefs and classroom practices of many teachers. Christopher Barnes, the author of the report and the Director of the Center for Survey Research & Analysis at the University of Connecticut, found that large percentages, and often majorities, of the teachers surveyed rejected practices that are essential to the success of accountability and standards-based reforms.

The survey, of more than 1,200 teachers nationwide, found that a majority of teachers are opposed to class-wide standards for grading and prefer that students direct their own learning experience rather than the teachers themselves determining what they learn. Almost a third of teach-

ers also did not believe their role is to help students learn what the community has decided they should know, challenging the entire premise of inter-school standards of any kind.

Barnes discovered that only about a quarter of teachers place the greatest emphasis in evaluating student work on whether the student provided the correct answer. And the survey shows that only 15% of 4th grade and 13% of 8th grade teachers believe it is most important to teach students “specific information and skills,” compared with 74% and 72% respectively who believe that “learning how to learn” is most important.



Not surprisingly, in light of those findings, the survey also shows that teachers have low expectations for their students. In just two examples, half of 8th grade history teachers stated that they expect none of their students to know what the New Deal was, and only 70% expected most of their students to know when the Civil War was fought.

This survey casts significant doubt on whether America’s teachers will be willing, or even able, to implement the reforms policymakers around the country are now advocating.

Access this report at: www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_28.htm

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