

2016 Year In Review

DANE COUNTY
CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL
Collaborating for success in Criminal Justice.



January 2017

Dane County Criminal Justice Council has used 2016 as an opportunity to expand collaboration, data driven justice, and innovation.



Pre-Trial Reform: Implementation of the Public Safety Assessment

The Dane County Board has launched a pilot project to apply a data-driven assessment to reduce costly jailing of low-risk offenders. In December of 2016, Dane County began the implementation of the Public Safety Assessment (PSA), a risk assessment tool developed by Laura and John Arnold Foundation used at initial court appearances to make accurate, efficient, and evidence-based decisions on whether a defendant should be detained prior to trial or released to the community. The PSA is a nationally—validated, race-neutral, instrument currently in use in 30 other jurisdictions. The PSA will be fully implemented in Dane County starting February 2017. Dane County's use of the PSA will be evaluated by Harvard University's Access to Justice Lab in multi-year, randomized control trial.

Expansion of Community Restorative Court to all of Dane County

In 2014, the Community Restorative Court (CRC) was created as a pilot project in Madison's South Police District to provide young offenders a restorative alternative to the traditional criminal justice system. As part of the 2017 budget, Dane County expanded the Community Restorative Court to serve all of Dane County. The CRC uses restorative justice principles to divert individuals ages 17 to 25 from the traditional criminal justice system. This CRC brings a voice to victims and communities through its victim-based, offender focused, and community driven process. Participation in the program provides a young person who has committed a low-level offense the opportunity to work with community members to ensure accountability, determine restitution, and repair the harm done to the victim and community. Through the county-wide expansion, young offenders from across Dane County will have the opportunity to participate in the CRC.

Data Capability Expansion

In May of 2016 the County Board Office hired the Research Analyst position which works at the direction of the Criminal Justice Council.

By adding analytical capacity, the CJC can gain even greater traction in its collaborative work to address issues of equity and transparency in the Dane County criminal justice system.

Innovation: Data Driven Justice Initiative

This year, the Dane County Criminal Justice Council proudly announced their partnership in the White House led effort to embed data and analytics into criminal justice reform. In June 2016, the CRC joined a national cohort of over 120 communities who are participating in the White House Data Driven Justice (DDJ) Initiative. The DDJ Initiative works to support communities who want to use data to be smarter about diverting people with mental illness away from the criminal justice system and into community based treatment.

As participants in this initiative, Dane County has committed to three things:

- Combining data across system silos to identify individuals who are at high-risk and finding ways to provide effective, community-based services to help break the cycle of incarceration.
- Developing tools and trainings to help first responders effectively de-escalate crisis situations and safely divert people to the appropriate service providers instead of arresting them;
- Using evidence-based, objective, risk based assessment tools in pre-trial assessments. This will allow individuals who are considered low risk defendants to be safely released from jails; DDJ jurisdictions participate in regular calls where they share with each other best practices and discuss common challenges.

In 2017, the National Association of Counties (NACo), and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation will be carrying the work of this initiative forward. Dane County and other participating jurisdictions also gain access to the range of resources committed by technology companies, philanthropies and non-profit organizations toward improving the criminal justice system.

Data Sharing Feasibility Study

For a number of years, the Dane County Criminal Justice Council, criminal justice stakeholders and community advocates have sought greater data analysis capacity. Those efforts are detailed in Dane County Criminal Justice Mapping with the Center for Effective Public Policy (2013) and more recently, Dane County Resolution 556. Resolution 556 developed three workgroups designed to address racial disparities, length of stay issues, and mental health challenges in the Dane County Jail. A top priority of all three workgroups was resource development around data. The workgroups urged Dane County leaders to take immediate action to increase capacity to collect, monitor, analyze, and produce data disaggregated by race, gender and ethnicity.

The Dane County Criminal Justice Council (CJC) seeks to establish a data-sharing platform among criminal justice agencies in Dane County, Wisconsin. Analysis of the data provided by participating agencies will support CJC's work to improve the criminal justice system in Dane County.

Before a data-sharing platform can be established, an exploratory analysis must be conducted to: determine the feasibility of sharing data between the participating agencies; perform initial cross-agency data linking and analysis; and, identify database gaps and needs. To perform the exploratory analysis, the CJC research analyst will access administrative data collected and maintained by the participating agencies to determine whether the participating agencies are able to track individuals across systems for a period of time.

One key component in addressing the data needs is an agreement to share data across the multiple agencies. The Dane County Criminal Justice Council is finalizing the "Data Use Agreement for An Exploratory Analysis of Cross-System Data-Sharing Feasibility" (Agreement). This is made and entered into by and between the Dane County Criminal Justice Council (CJC) and the following participating agencies: the Dane County Sheriff's Office, the Dane County Office of the District Attorney, the Madison Police Department, the Dane County 5-City Consortium, the Dane County Clerk of Courts, and the Dane County Circuit Court Judges. The CJC research analyst will be working closely with agency data experts in 2017 to complete the Feasibility Study.

Applied Data Analytics

The public sector has entered a new era where technology is providing innovative forms of data never seen before. These data, combined with traditional survey and administrative data, provide a rich resource for data-driven decisions in public policy and the public sector. In response, the University of Maryland, New York University and The University of Chicago have partnered to develop a program that provides training to working professionals in the public sector. The aim is to provide an opportunity to develop the key computer science and data science skill sets necessary to harness the wealth of newly-available data and to creatively address real civic problems.



The program's design offers hands-on training in the context of real challenges facing the sector, by providing direct collaboration among government agencies and students in the program. The results of project collaborations become part of a broader, shared and open analytics platform to create a sustainable ecosystem of information sharing in this growing area of research.

Dane County's Criminal Justice and Equity Coordinator as well as the CJC Research Analyst have been accepted into this program and have also been awarded a full scholarship by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. The program begins in February and continues through June. Participants will be traveling to the University of Maryland at College Park for the first session and following sessions will be held at the University of Chicago.

Implicit Bias Training: Grant Provided Training Opportunity for Dane County Law Enforcement Agencies



In November local police departments in Dane County received implicit bias training to address racial bias in the criminal justice system. The program aims to discuss how stereotypes influence human behavior in an effort to better inform policing practices. After listening to presentation about the role of bias and anxiety associated with race from Rachel D. Godsil, Director of Research at the Perception Institute, law enforcement employees gathered to discuss strategies to counter stereotypes. The training was hosted by the Dane County Criminal Justice Council, Dane County Sheriff's Office and the Madison Police Department.

Dane County Jail Study

Although not a specific initiative of the CJC, the Dane County Jail Update Study completed in late 2016 will certainly be a topic of consideration in the year to come. The report by Mead and Hunt analyzes the cost of independently or sequentially addressing pressing issues to bring the jail system up to current jail standards, applicable state and federal codes and regulations, and inmate health and safety needs. The consultants presented two options for upgrading the CCB Jail and PSB Jail and/or eliminating the use of the CCB and consolidating operations at the PSB Site. The jail system, obviously, is a critical component of the criminal justice system and is of interest as the CJC considers system-wide improvements.