

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/put-your-hands-together-for-hands-on-learning>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

A wonderful way to develop knowledge is by doing something. This quote, from Veras co-founder Herb Sturz, is inscribed on the wall in the main conference room in Veras central office. I know that the quote is there because it applies to the work of the entire Institute, although I choose to think that it contains a special nod to Veras demonstration projects. And every summer it takes on special meaning for [Adolescent Portable Therapy](#) (APT).

When APT therapists ask young people what they think they need in order to make changes in their behavior, they don't say counseling. By far, the most common answer is I need to get a job. And we agree. The tricky thing is that there's often a wide gap between knowing you need to do something even sometimes that you want to do something and taking the steps to get it done.

That's why the quote holds special relevance for us at APT each summer. Instead of just encouraging kids to get jobs, APT provides kids with paid internships at New York City organizations. They start out nervous, poised to quit before they begin, ready with the justification that it's not very much money. Our impossibly bold young people become incredibly risk-averse when faced with the challenge of the workplace. But over the course of the summer, with coaching from our summer work-readiness team, it's amazing to watch how they develop confidence and knowledge from the simple act of doing something.

You can show your support for APT and our summer work readiness program by joining us on Tuesday, July 26 from 6-9 p.m. for an evening of food, friends, and live music. [Event details](#)

Transformative change, sent to your inbox.

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