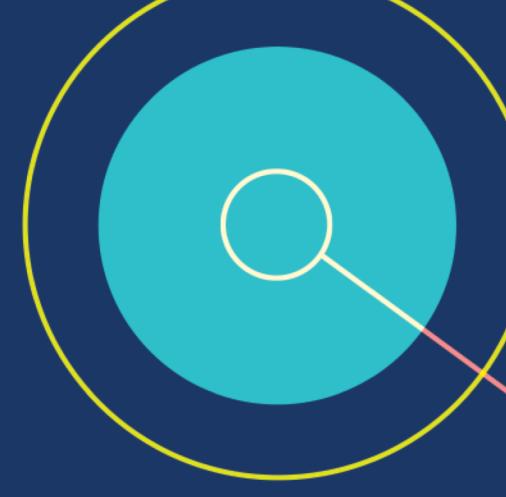


# RETURNING CITIZENS REENTRY PROGRAM

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Sponsor: Greg Fairchild, Resilience Education and UVA Darden School of Business



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Motivation:** Education during incarceration is not widespread and its delivery against purported benefits is not well understood or carefully examined.

### Research Questions:

- What are the summative impacts of education during incarceration?
- In addition to potential lowered recidivism, what are other beneficial outcomes of education during incarceration?
- Who are the other key players in this area, and how do they operate and evaluate their own programs?

## RESILIENCE EDUCATION

Partnership between Darden School of Business and two correctional facilities in Virginia: Dillwyn (men's) and Fluvanna (women's) [1]

Provides four entrepreneurial educational programs, taught by Darden MBA students:  
• Entrepreneurship  
• Foundations in Business  
• Financial Capability  
• Achieving Success in Personal Finance

### Objectives:

- Reduce recidivism
- Promote financial stability
- Deliver high-quality educational programming for underserved populations
- Expand perspectives of MBA volunteers

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Benefits of prison educational programs:

- Educational programs generally lower recidivism
- Educational programs have a positive effect on post-release earnings and employment
- College-level classes lower odds of inmates engaging in misconduct while in prison

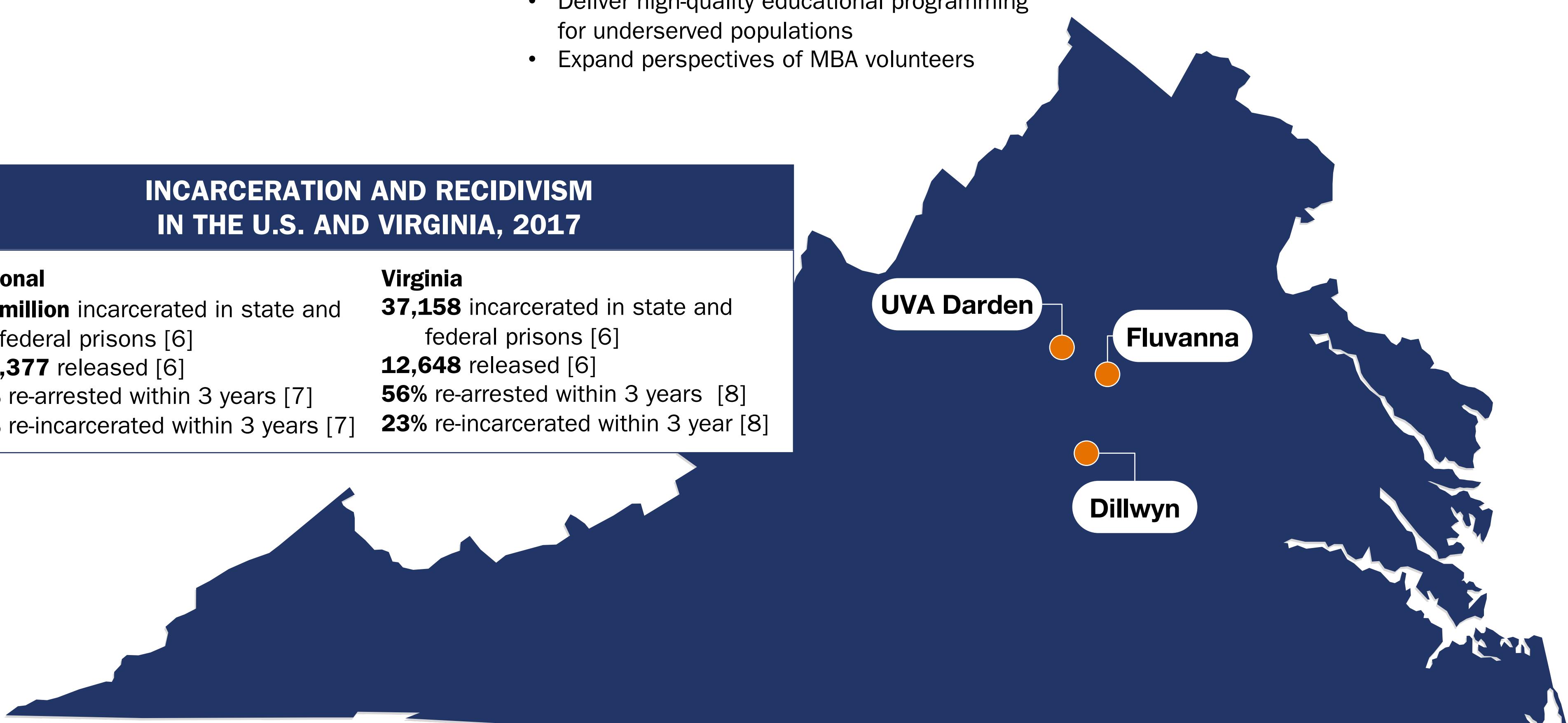
Recidivism is an imperfect outcome measure

- Only accounts for reported crime
- Not measured consistently
- Considers returning offenders equally (even when inappropriate)

## INCARCERATION AND RECIDIVISM IN THE U.S. AND VIRGINIA, 2017

**National**  
**1.5 million** incarcerated in state and federal prisons [6]  
**622,377** released [6]  
**68%** re-arrested within 3 years [7]  
**36%** re-incarcerated within 3 years [7]

**Virginia**  
**37,158** incarcerated in state and federal prisons [6]  
**12,648** released [6]  
**56%** re-arrested within 3 years [8]  
**23%** re-incarcerated within 3 year [8]



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

### Instruction and Course Design

Eliminate redundancy with other prison education courses (e.g., in the Career and Technical Education Program) that cover similar material

Address criminogenic factors and population

- Revise syllabi to include these components
- Tailor course offerings to the prison population and address criminogenic factors (rather than other MBA students)

Obtain accreditation so students receive college credits for participation

Revise instructor training process

- Create semester-long instructor training where Darden students learn the course material, how to teach to the prison population, and shadow current instructors in their courses



### Students

Revise application

- Obtain consent from applicants to be surveyed in the future (even if they do not end up participating in Resilience Education courses)

Ease application restrictions to increase pool of applicants

- Remove GED/high school diploma requirement, limitations on infractions, allow for transfer of prisoners to course-site locations
- Create a match control: eased restrictions should lead to enough new applicants who are qualified but cannot otherwise be included in the course due to space restrictions

### Evaluation/Fidelity Checks

Program evaluations should be tied directly to syllabi to ensure that objectives are being met

Create a pre- and post-test tied to syllabi

- Currently, only math skills are evaluated before and after course completion
- Add a measure of baseline comprehension of course materials to be covered. For instance, if Resilience Education seeks to instill confidence in its students for job interviews, then include a Situational Judgment Test to estimate their knowledge of appropriate business behaviors in different scenarios

Conduct instructor evaluation

- Since instructor turnover is so regular, all instructors should be evaluated to the same standards throughout the course

Administer post-release survey to collect data on employment status, utility of program for finding jobs, confidence in job placement process, and well-being.

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