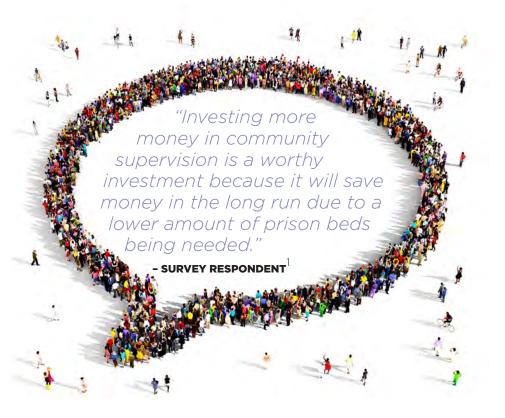
AN OPINION SURVEY OF THE

## COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS COLLABORATIVE NETWORK:



WHERE THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FIELD IS GOING AND WHAT IT NEEDS TO GET THERE



#### INTRODUCTION

n 2014, a network of membership associations that represent community corrections practitioners the Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN)—surveyed their memberships to gauge opinions about the state of the field. The survey sought to identify what community corrections practitioners believe are the significant issues and opportunities facing the field. CCCN's goal with the survey is to bring a fresh perspective about where the field needs to go and

what community corrections will need to get there, and allow those engaged in the national criminal justice reform debate to hear directly from those working with most people under correctional control.

Across the country, public and elected officials are beginning to shift the way they think about the best ways to enhance public safety. Just this past year, President Obama made a historic visit to a federal prison, and there is growing bipartisan support in Congress and state legislatures for criminal justice reform. While this national conversation around criminal justice policy is growing, the voice of practitioners that serve and supervise seven of every 10 people in corrections has not been heard fully in the discussion. This is critical since these practitioners offer a wealth of knowledge about "what works" in reducing recidivism and changing offender behavior and would be in the vanguard of any new initiatives taken under various bipartisan reforms.

Thousands of community corrections professionals work in probation, parole, pretrial services, diversion, specialty courts, and nonprofit service organizations serving and supervising the majority of people in the correctional system. If the community corrections field is going to rise to the new challenges the criminal justice reform debate presents, it is important to know what practitioners think so the field can successfully fulfill its current and potential new roles.

The survey results show that the field embraces key elements of the new approach CCCN says the field needs to take: Key benchmarks include increasing reliance on evidence-based practices,

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research and data driven approaches. The survey results show strong support for a field that prioritizes innovation, systems change, collaboration and training.

Those surveyed offered the following opinion on the key issues that relate to the community corrections field's approach to its future, the direction the field is moving in, and the challenges it faces:

- Awareness of, and support for evidenced-based practices, research and data driven approaches. More than seven in 10 survey respondents said they agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization relies on research and evidence to make decisions," and six in 10 agreed or strongly agreed that "my organization uses data to identify priorities or craft programs and policies." When asked, "what has been the greatest community corrections reform/accomplishment over the past five years," survey respondents said, increased reliance on evidenced-based practices², more effective use of risk assessment instruments and treating the cause of criminality all field benchmarks that are consistent with the shift towards evidence-based approaches. Nearly eight in 10 survey respondents said they agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization has fully adopted evidence-based practices."
- Awareness of, and support for collaboration, innovation, and staff training and development. More than seven in 10 survey respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization promotes staff training and development." Seven in 10 survey respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization encourages innovation," and about seven in 10 said they agree or strongly agree that "my organization promotes system change." Nearly eight in 10 respondents said that they thought their organizations collaborate well with other justice agencies, and more than eight in 10 thought their individual work was related to their organization's success.
- Awareness of, and prioritizing the need to address challenges facing community corrections. About half of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their staff or organization has the resources to accomplish their goals. When those surveyed were asked, "how can the community corrections field best inform government and the public of its needs," most cited responses that involve representing the field and communicating a shared message around what it needs to policymakers and the public. Those surveyed prioritized representing the field before legislators, policymakers, community organizations and advocates, providing materials to the media, and increasing the use of social media. About half of respondents disagreed, strongly disagreed or were neutral on whether their organization makes victims services a priority.

This brief presents the results of this unique effort to survey the community corrections field, focusing in on the overall approach the field should take, and inform the emerging criminal justice reform debate that will affect community correction's future.



### THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS COLLABORATIVE

**NETWORK (CCCN)** is comprised of the leading associations in the probation, parole, pretrial services, and treatment fields and represents nearly 90,000-plus professionals around the globe. CCCN includes the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), the Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI), the Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association (FPPOA), the International Community Corrections Association (ICCA), the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA), and the National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE). CCCN's mission is to serve as the forum to develop and work on the emerging issues, activities, and goals of the community corrections field. CCCN is seeking to partner with the larger criminal justice field on strategies to help reduce recidivism, help people succeed by targeting their criminogenic needs, and help taxpayers get better public safety results from corrections. The Community Services Division of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC)— a federal agency established to provide assistance to strengthen state and local correctional agencies by creating more effective, humane, safe, and just correctional services facilitates and convenes the CCCN to formulate policy and communicate with each other on areas of common interest.

#### THE SURVEY

This survey is the first to ask those employed in community corrections their opinions about the field's priorities. As such, the survey focuses on issues that relate to the direction community corrections is taking, the influence policymakers and the public have in determining that direction, and the resources needed to address new and anticipated priorities. The survey also provided CCCN an opportunity to determine if it is working on policy and issue areas that association memberships consider priorities.

In the fall of 2013, the CCCN associations sent a 33-question electronic survey to their membership to solicit the opinion of practitioners "about the state of community corrections today, the most significant issues and opportunities facing the field, and the priorities the field should advocate in the future."

Over 1,200 CCCN association members participated in the survey – a number representative of the CCCN associations' combined membership. Of those who completed the survey, half said they worked in probation agencies, about one in five said they worked in probation and parole agencies, and the rest stated that they worked in pretrial, corrections, nonprofit agencies or for treatment providers. The largest numbers of respondents by state were from Ohio, Texas, New York, Arizona, Virginia, California, Florida, Indiana and Kentucky.



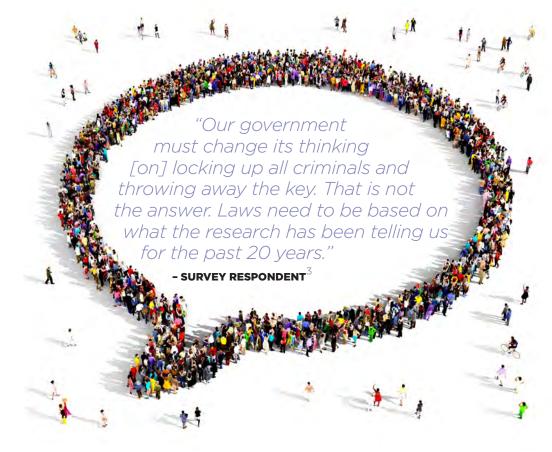


The Community Corrections Collaborative
Network was established in early 2012. When
the field was surveyed starting in 2014,
of those who completed the survey, 76
percent answered "no" to the question,
"were you aware of the Community
Corrections Collaborative Network
prior to receiving this survey?"
The lack of awareness of this
relatively new network created
the opportunity for the survey
respondents to bring fresh
eyes to a set of issues that
the CCCN association leaders
started working on together.

awareness

# HOW DO SURVEY RESULTS RELATE TO COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FIELD PRIORITIES?

The CCCN has articulated its approach to where the community corrections field needs to go, and what it needs to get there from the field's partners.<sup>4</sup> Key features of this approach include:



- Embracing evidence-based practices as a "foundation" to improve community correction work;
- Targeting research to identify what works;
- Targeting treatment and supervision only to those with assessed need;
- Embracing technology so the field can manage people effectively;
- Supporting workforce development, training, and skill building.

This approach means that community corrections partners must work with policy makers and funding sources to:

- Revise laws, policies, and practices, such as sentencing and reliance on treatment for lower risk, lower-need individuals so that they align with known risk reduction interventions;
- Collaborate to plan overall public safety approaches;
- Provide appropriate financial resources to community corrections organizations and programs.

The results from this survey show a high level of alignment by respondents to CCCN's approach to the field's future, particularly, the field's accomplishments, its challenges and the kind of activities on which community corrections should focus. Survey responses show the general arch of the CCCN's approach is on the radar screen and supported by practitioners.



#### **KEY FINDINGS**

AWARENESS OF,
AND SUPPORT FOR
EVIDENCED-BASED
PRACTICES, RESEARCH
AND DATA DRIVEN
APPROACHES.

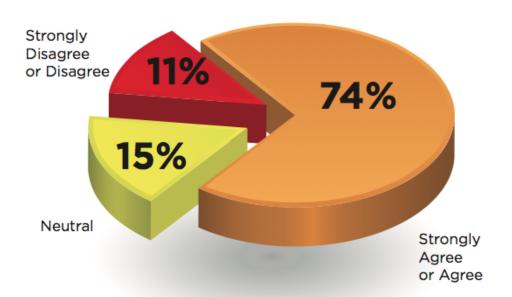
The community corrections field is moving towards an approach that seeks to reduce recidivism by engaging people in behavior change through supervision and treatment services that match an individual's risk and need. Increasing the fields' knowledge of evidence-based practices and using data and

research to drive decisions, organizational priorities, and craft programs and policies is essential to this approach.<sup>6</sup> Strategies based on these best practices have been proven to reduce reoffending, save money and improve positive outcomes.<sup>7</sup>

Respondents to the CCCN survey strongly identified with approaches tied to evidence-based practices, as well as research to identify what works in community supervision, and target treatment and supervision dosages to address the criminogenic needs of their clients.

## SURVEY QUESTION

"Does your organization rely on research and evidence to make decisions?"



More than seven in 10 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization relies on research and evidence to make decisions." Six in 10 agreed or strongly agreed that "my organization uses data to identify priorities or craft programs and policies."

#### SURVEY QUESTION

"Does your organization use data to identify priorities or craft programs and policies?"

| STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE       | <b>65</b> % |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| NEUTRAL                       | 21%         |
| STRONGLY DISAGREE OR DISAGREE | 14%         |

The survey showed widespread use of evidence-based practices within community corrections. Nearly eight in 10 survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization has fully adopted evidence-based practices."

When asked, "what has been the greatest community corrections reform or accomplishment over the past five years:"

- Half of respondents said movement towards evidence-based practices or an evidenced-based training or curriculum;
- One in four said "risk assessment instrument improvement;"
- One in five said shifting the field towards treating "the causes of criminality."



# AWARENESS OF, AND SUPPORT FOR COLLABORATION, INNOVATION, AND STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A proven, evidence-based approach to community corrections means that practitioners are going to have engage in training and development so that they can adopt constantly improving approaches to their work:

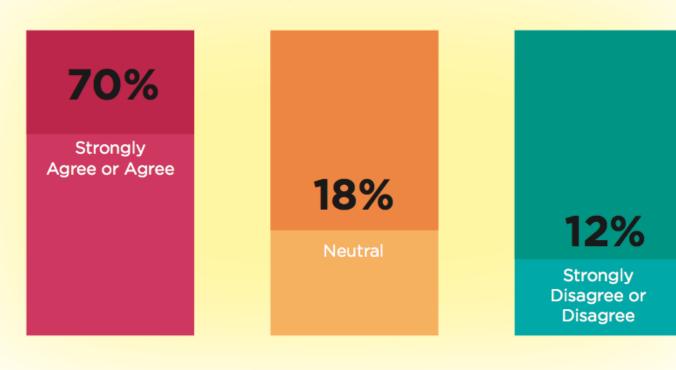
The research shows that if community corrections balance their approach so that they engage their client in

behavior change while also ensuring that the people they supervise comply with their conditions, their clients will be more successful. The field that community corrections is shifting towards embraces innovation: a well-trained staff is one that is engaged in continuous quality assurance, constantly shifting practice and approaches, and using new tools based on what is proven to work to help people under supervision change their behavior. Finally, innovative community corrections field is one that can effectively collaborate with law enforcement, the judiciary, prosecutors, and community-based treatment providers. Greater awareness of how the pieces of the public safety system fit with community corrections – efforts to get different agencies to operate outside of their own silo, and partner around an overall approach—are critical to community corrections success.

A high proportion of respondents to the CCCN survey highlighted the role innovation has in the field: more than seven in 10 survey respondents said they agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization encourages innovation."

#### **SURVEY QUESTION**

"Does your organization encourage innovation?"



Nearly eight in 10 respondents said that they thought their organizations *collaborate* well with other justice agencies. <sup>12</sup>

More than seven in 10 survey respondents said they agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization promotes staff training and development.<sup>13</sup>"

About seven in 10 of those surveyed said, they agree or strongly agree that "my organization promotes system change"—a sign that the respondents see themselves as system change agents, and part of an overall public safety system that is interdependent and in a dynamic state of change.



#### AWARENESS OF, AND PRIORITIZING THE NEED TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES FACING COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS.

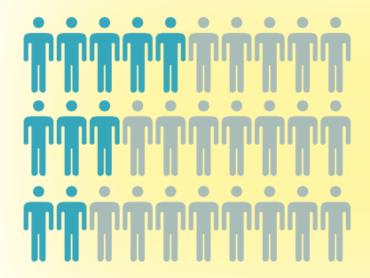
The community corrections survey showed strong support and knowledge of evidence-based practices among respondents as well as support for using data and research to drive practice and targeting treatment and supervision effectively. Those surveyed showed awareness of, and support for training and development, innovation, and collaboration.

The survey also identified a series of challenges that the field identified that they need to navigate in the future. These challenges generally fit three categories that roughly align with what the CCCN associations have said should be the focus of their work together through their network.

- Garnering appropriate resources to accomplish the field's goals;
- Educating, engaging, and building a broader constituency to support the community corrections field;
- Building better approaches to work with victims of crime.

#### SURVEY QUESTION

"Does your organization have adequate staff and resources to accomplish its goals?"



48% STRONGLY DISAGREE

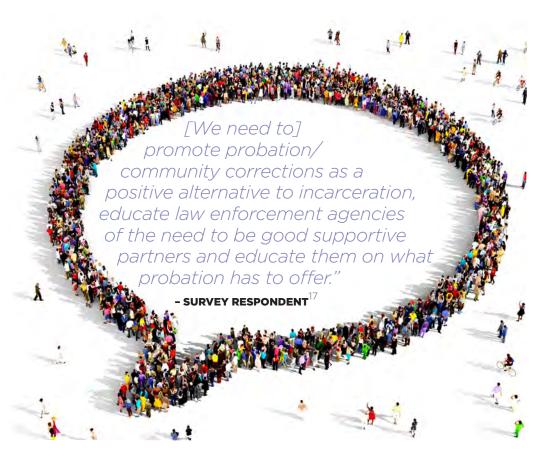
31% NEUTRAL

21% STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE

### GARNERING APPROPRIATE RESOURCES TO ACCOMPLISH THE FIELD'S GOALS.

As was recently noted by the Vera Institute of Justice, "community corrections agencies that incorporate practices supported by good research, are adequately resourced in staff and services, and enjoy the understanding and support of the courts and policymakers have the potential to achieve great results." But as the Vera Institute of Justice notes, "these results, however, are only possible with adequate planning and resources." <sup>115</sup>

Of those surveyed, about half disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "my organization has adequate staff and resources to accomplish our goals.16" The largest plurality that offered an opinion on this question indicated a need for more resource.



# EDUCATING, ENGAGING, AND BUILDING A BROADER CONSTITUENCY TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FIELD.

Along with working with the field's external partners to garner the appropriate resources for community corrections to assume new roles, CCCN leaders have called for the revision of "laws, policies, and practices<sup>18</sup>" so that the overall approach to supervision aligns with

evidence-based, research driven and proven ways to reduce recidivism.

To make broad changes to "laws, policies and practices," the CCCN leaders identified a need to:

- Communicate a shared message: CCCN must work together to develop a common message on the importance of community corrections to federal, state, and local policymakers and to the public;
- Represent the field: CCCN should work together to inform all stakeholders of the need to develop community corrections proposals and policy at the federal, state, and local levels.<sup>19</sup>

Survey respondents agreed that there is a deep need for the field to focus on communications and effective ways to represent what community corrections needs to succeed.

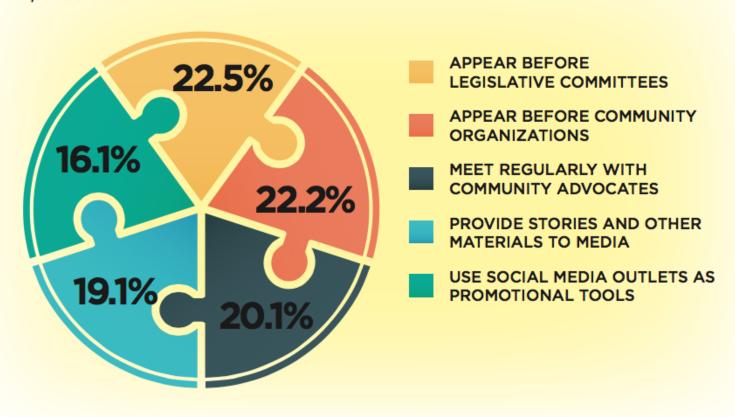
Seven in 10 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "my organization promotes my accomplishments." However, when those surveyed were asked "how can the community corrections field best inform government and the public of its needs," the top actions identified by those surveyed all fit squarely within domains of work that involve representing the field, and communicating a shared message.

Top activities identified by those surveyed<sup>20</sup> included:

- **Representing the field** before legislators, policymakers, community organizations, and community advocates by meeting with them regularly, and;
- Communicating a shared message by providing materials to the media and use of social media.

#### **SURVEY QUESTION**

"How can the community corrections field best inform government and the public of its needs?"



### BUILDING BETTER APPROACHES TO WORK WITH VICTIMS OF CRIME.

The community corrections field has been working towards embracing the concept that the overall approach should: hold the people they supervise accountable, engage clients so that they can make positive changes in their behavior, and protect the rights of victims and the larger community at the

same time. Promoting restitution, timely notification of hearings and helping victims find resources to move past the harm of what occurred are among the ways community corrections can help victims of crime.<sup>21</sup> In turn, crime victims have said they would support a community corrections field that was adhering to evidenced-based practices, and proven approaches to changing someone's behavior.<sup>22</sup>

There is strong support for community corrections approaches among crime victims, particularly as an alternative to prison or jail.

When burglary victims were surveyed in the Iowa Crime Survey about their attitudes toward what punishments they preferred, they voiced stronger support for community corrections approaches like community service (75.7 %), regular probation (68.6%), treatment and rehabilitation (53.5%), and intensive probation (43.7%). Support among surveyed burglary victims for a short jail term (41.4%) and a prison sentence for more than a year (7.1%) received much less support. When polled as part of the first ever survey of crime victims in California, crime victims said by more than a two-to-one margin that they want the state to focus on providing supervised probation and rehabilitation programs instead of more prisons and jails. The Council of State Government and the Pew Charitable Trust recently recommended a dozen ways that the field could prioritize better strategies for working with crime victims.

As part of the approach CCCN would like the field to move in, the network has said that they want to expand the role of victims in community corrections: the leading associations that represent the community corrections field want their profession to recognize that victims are an integral part of the justice process—and that their involvement throughout the process is necessary.

However, surveyed respondents indicated that finding effective ways to work with crime victims is an area for improvement. Of those who were surveyed, about half (49 percent) of those surveyed were neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed that, "my organization makes victims services a priority."

## CONCLUSION: BRINGING THE VOICE OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PRACTITIONERS INTO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE CONVERSATION.

At a time when there is a national conversation commencing on criminal justice reform, there is a need to hear directly from those practitioners that currently serve and supervise seven out of 10 people in the corrections system *and* who may be asked to take on new challenges. This first ever survey of the probation, parole, pretrial, diversion and nonprofit sectors that together make up community corrections field is an important contribution to the national conversations happening around criminal justice policy: the voice of the community corrections practitioner affirms the role that the field wants to play in criminal justice policy reform, and what practitioners believe they would need to improve outcomes.

The CCCN survey respondents supported the use of evidenced-based practices, research and data driven approaches. The field acknowledges the importance of training and staff development, innovation, collaboration and system change. These findings are consistent with an overall approach to supervising, serving and supporting people in the corrections in a way that reduces recidivism, improve people's lives, and generates better outcomes for the whole public safety system.

The CCCN survey also showed that that field prioritizes community corrections shift to the most effective approach to meet the need of the people they serve. To make that shift, community corrections practitioners say that they need to marshal appropriate resources to support the field. Survey respondents prioritized representing and communicating a shared message around the field's needs and priorities to policymakers and the public.

The field also reported that they thought their organizations had not made victims services a priority – something that is a hallmark of what community corrections thinks they should offer people who have been harmed by crime and violence. Enhancing the community corrections approach to crime victims is also something key to the public seeing the value of having more people served by community corrections approaches.

For those engaged in the national criminal justice reform discussion, this survey offers an opportunity to hear, for the first time, what practitioners who work with the vast majority of people under correctional supervision on what they think they need to generate better outcomes. The associations that comprise the CCCN plan to build on this survey in future work, and make sure that the public and policymakers that can support field and help change policy consistent with what community corrections needs.

#### **ENDNOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> Response from a survey participant to the question, "what actions would you like to see the CCCN and its partner agencies take in the next five years," and "are there any additional comments you would like to make regarding action steps?"
- <sup>2</sup> Forty-five percent of respondents named evidence-based practices, 25 percent named risk assessment instrument improvement, 22 percent named treating the causes of criminality, and eight percent named evidenced-based training/curriculum among "what has been the greatest community corrections reform/accomplishments over the past five years?"
- <sup>3</sup> Response from a survey participant to the question, "what actions would you like to see the CCCN and its partner agencies take in the next five years," and "are there any additional comments you would like to make regarding action steps?"
- <sup>4</sup> See, U.S. Justice Department, National Institute of Corrections, Bureau of Prisons, *The Community Corrections Collaborative Network: Safe and Smart Ways to Solve America's Correctional Challenges*. (Washington, DC: 2014).
- <sup>5</sup> Response from a survey participant to the question, "what actions would you like to see the CCCN and its partner agencies take in the next five years," and "are there any additional comments you would like to make regarding action steps?"
- <sup>6</sup> Evidence-based approaches have gained significant momentum in recent years across many criminal justice agencies. Evidence-based approaches are premised on the accumulation of evidence showing that one type of approach leads to more positive outcomes than others: Under an evidence-based practice approach, it is ineffective to spend time or resources on treatments or practices that have minute effects or are not producing their intended effect at all. Craig E. Henderson, Douglas W. Young, Jill Farrell, and Faye S. Taxman, "Associations among state and local organizational contexts: Use of evidence-based practices in the criminal justice system," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* (2009), S23-S32.
- <sup>7</sup> Pamela M. Casey and others, *Offender Risk & Needs Assessment Instruments: A Primer for Courts* (Williamsburg, VA: National Center for State Courts, 2014). http://www.spokanecounty.org/data/scljc/BJA%20RNA%20Final%20 Report\_Combined%20Files%208-22-14.pdf
- <sup>8</sup> Response from a survey participant to the question, "what actions would you like to see the CCCN and its partner agencies take in the next five years," and "are there any additional comments you would like to make regarding action steps?"
- "The relationship that community supervision officers establish with their supervisees has been conceptualized as a "dual role relationship" (Trotter, 1999). That is, officers must establish a relationship with the offender that reflects the dual roles of their profession. Officers must first and foremost work to protect and promote public safety vis-à-vis their supervision and monitoring of offenders on their caseload. Officers must also fulfill a social casework role, as they are often required to not only help secure needed community resources for their supervisees but also to work with offenders one-on-one to change their behavior and improve their criminal and social outcomes. How officers navigate these dual roles—how they reconcile being both "counselor" and "cop" (Skeem, Eno Louden, Polaschek, and Camp, 2007; Trotter, 1999)—can impact the nature of the relationship that develops between officers and their supervisees (see Manchak et al., 2013; Ross, Polaschek, & Ward, 2008; Skeem & Manchak, 2008)," See, Sarah M. Manchak, Patrick J. Kennealy and Jennifer L. Skeem. Officer-Offender Relationship Quality Matters: Supervision Process as Evidence-Based Practice. *Perspectives*, Volume 38, Number 2, Spring, 2014.
- <sup>10</sup> Jackson, Brian A., Joe Russo, John S. Hollywood, Dulani Woods, Richard Silberglitt, George B. Drake, John S. Shaffer, Mikhail Zaydman and Brian G. Chow. *Fostering Innovation in Community and Institutional Corrections: Identifying High-Priority Technology and Other Needs for the U.S. Corrections Sector.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015. http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\_reports/RR820.html.

- "Public safety system stakeholders include a wide range of entities, from prisons and law enforcement agencies to victim advocates and faith-based community organizations. Working collaboratively with all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of systemic change can result in a more coherent continuum of care; one that uses evidence- based principles to reduce recidivism. By collaborating with each other, governmental agencies and community-based providers can jointly provide a comprehensive and integrated array of services that could not be provided by a single organization. Access to a well-organized network of services and pro-social community connections can greatly enhance an offender's ability to succeed." See, Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.
- <sup>12</sup> The survey question was, "please rate your responses to the following on the following scale: my organization collaborates well with other justice agencies."
- <sup>13</sup> The survey question was, "my organization promotes staff training and development."
- <sup>14</sup> Response from a survey participant to the question, "what actions would you like to see the CCCN and its partner agencies take in the next five years," and "are there any additional comments you would like to make regarding action steps?"
- <sup>15</sup> Peggy McGarry et al. The Potential of Community Corrections to Improve Community Safety and Reduce Incarceration, (New York, New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2013).
- <sup>16</sup> The survey question was, "please rate your responses to the following on the following scale: "my organization has adequate staff and resources to accomplish our goals."
- <sup>17</sup> Response from a survey participant to the question, "what actions would you like to see the CCCN and its partner agencies take in the next five years," and "are there any additional comments you would like to make regarding action steps?"
- <sup>18</sup> U.S. Justice Department, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Prisons, *The Community Corrections Collaborative Network: Safe and Smart Ways to Solve America's Correctional Challenges*, 2014.
- <sup>19</sup> U.S. Justice Department, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Prisons, *The Community Corrections Collaborative Network: Safe and Smart Ways to Solve America's Correctional Challenges*, 2014.
- <sup>20</sup> The specific survey question was, "how can the community corrections field best inform government and the public of its needs?" The specific answers, ranked by frequency were, "appear before legislative committees; meet regularly with community advocates; provide stories and other materials to media; use social media outlets as promotion tools."
- <sup>21</sup> "Presidents message: The Voice of the Victims." *Perspectives*, Volume 38, Number 2, Spring, 2012.
- <sup>22</sup> Sentencing, Corrections and Public Safety Guiding Principles for Crime Victims and Survivors in America. (Washington, DC: The Council of State Governments and the Pew Center on the States, 2011).
- <sup>23</sup> Gene M. Lutz; Kristine Fahrney; B. Keith Crew; Michael Moriarty Iowa Adult Crime Victimization Survey, (Cedar Falls: University of Northern Iowa 1997).
- <sup>24</sup> California Crime Victims' Voices: Finding from the First-Ever Survey of California Crime Victims and Survivors. (Oakland, California: Californians for Safety and Justice.
- <sup>25</sup> American Probation and Parole Association, "Position Statement: Victims of Crime," January 2012, https://www.appa-net.org/eweb/Dynamicpage.aspx?site=APPA\_2&webcode=IB\_PositionStatement&wps\_key=771fcea9-2483-4ba3-8d00-b57c1f58fb50