

# SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN'S JUSTICE REFORM INITIATIVE

June, 2018



An action focused initiative that amplifies the unique needs of justice involved women, mobilizes new SFAPD engagement approaches, and advances faith based and community, criminal justice reform efforts.

San Francisco Adult Probation Department (SFAPD)  
City and County of San Francisco

## **San Francisco Women's Justice Reform Initiative**

### **About the Women's Gender Responsive Coordinator**

In September 2017, the San Francisco Adult Probation Department hired Geoffrea Morris as its first Women's Gender Responsive Coordinator. Geoffrea is a native of San Francisco's Bayview Hunter's Point community and a graduate of Phillip and Sala Burton High School. She has a Bachelor's degree in Child and Adolescent Development from San Francisco State University; a Master's degree in Social Work from California State East Bay; and a Juris Doctorate from Golden Gate University.

For nearly twenty years, Geoffrea has been involved in improving the lives of children, families, and individuals throughout San Francisco's most disenfranchised communities. Geoffrea's journey into social service and community building started in her teen years when she became an integral member and program pioneer at the Bayview Hunter's Point YMCA. Her passion for children and families continued as she became a site support substitute for the San Francisco Unified School District to then becoming a county social worker for the CalWORKs Program and later a child protective service worker. During her tenure in the Human Services Agency, Geoffrea successfully assisted countless individuals and families in navigating their way through cumbersome government systems in order to achieve success, self-sufficiency, and healthy outcomes.

With this wealth of experience, Geoffrea was given the task of implementing and advancing a clear and actionable women gender responsive pathway for justice involved cis and trans women and non-binary individuals.

With the support of San Francisco Adult Probation Department's Reentry Division Director, Lauren Bell, and the guidance of Chief Adult Probation Officer, Karen Fletcher, and extensive partner and community input, Geoffrea created San Francisco's first Women's Justice Reform Initiative (WJRI).

## **Stakeholders**

To produce the San Francisco Women's Justice Reform Initiative (WJRI), Ms. Morris coordinated a multitude of meetings, and workshops, met with countless stakeholders, and completed a literature review. WJRI was strengthened through input from the following:

- 2017 Bay Area Summit on Children of Incarcerated Parents
- 2017 17<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Association for Justice Involved Females and Organizations in Santa Clara County, California
- 2017 Breaking the Cycle: Improving Outcomes for California's High Need, High Cost Population
- Alex Weil, MFT and Director- UCSF/ Citywide Forensics Probation Team/ CASC
- Alison Riker, Director of Programs, San Francisco Sheriff's Department
- Andrea Shorter, Commissioner on Department on the Status of Women
- Andy Dulay, Rehabilitation Services Coordinator, San Francisco Sheriff's Department
- Aria Sa'id, LGBT Policy Advisor for San Francisco Human Rights Commission
- Community Corrections Partnership Meeting
- San Francisco Adult Probation Officers and support staff
- Destiny Pletsch, Reentry Coordinator
- Diamond, CASC participant
- District Attorney's Pre-Sentence Planners
- Donna Guillory, Family Court Manager
- Dr. Emily Murase, Executive Director of the Department on the Status of Women
- Emily Cohen, Department of Homelessness
- Erin Glassman, Department of Public Health Clinician
- Freda Randolph, San Francisco Child Support Department Manager
- Felicia Houston, Program Director, Community Awareness and Treatment Services, Inc.
- Ian Harriman, Checkr's Account Executive
- Ida McCray, Women's Resource Center Director, San Francisco Sheriff's Department
- Imo Momoh, Director, Mental Health Services Act Director for Public Health
- Jacqueline Gordon, Five Keys Charter case manager for women
- Jana Taylor, Chief Deputy of Adult Probation
- Jessica Li, Former Safe House Executive Director
- Jessica Nolan, Executive Director of Women's Freedom Center
- Julio Escobar, Restorative Justice Director of San Francisco Archdiocese
- Karen Fletcher, Chief Adult Probation Officer
- Karen Shain, Former Reentry Policy Coordinator and Community Activist
- Kate Monico Klein, Community Activist
- Kathy Garcia, T.R.N.S Project Outreach Specialist
- Lauren Bell, Reentry Director

- Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
- Leslie Levitas, Retired Sheriff's Department Program Analyst
- Lynette Schwindt, Program Coordinator of Sisters Program in SF County Jail
- Magali Rivera-Davis, Community West Transitional Aged Youth Case Manager
- Marcella Espino, Sheriff's Department Program Director of Sisters Pod
- Marilyn Jones, Executive Director, Because Black is Still Beautiful
- Mary Penn, Department of Public Health Clinician
- Mary "Phoebe" Vanderhorst, Director of Waypass at City College
- Nikki Camas, TransThrive Program Director
- Pastor Ronnie Muniz, Executive Director, Saved by Grace Re-Entry
- Rachel Kinnon, San Francisco Public Library's Jails & Reentry Services Librarian
- Reentry Council of the City and County of San Francisco
- Reentry Council Direct Services Subcommittee
- Reentry Council Policy Subcommittee
- Reverend Glenda Hope, Founder of SF SafeHouse
- Roma Guy, Community Advocate and former Commissioner, SF Department of Public Health
- San Francisco County Jail A-Pod Transgender, Gender Variant and Intersexual Focus group (November 14, 2017)
- San Francisco County Jail B-Pod Women's Focus Group
- San Francisco Inter-Faith Council Meeting
- San Francisco Public Defender Social Worker Focus group
- Shannon Wise, Solutions for Women
- Shelly Wynne, Program Director, Women's Hope
- Shirley Lamar, Retired Executive Director of Cameo House a program with the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice
- Sonia Crites, Director, FOTEP, HealthRight 360
- Steve Adami, APD Reentry Services Manager
- Stephanie Garcia, First Lady of City View Church and Faith Based Reentry Advocate
- Suzanne Adams, PhD, Clinical Program Coordinator for A Woman's Place
- TGI Justice Project
- Traci Watson, Founder, Sisters Circle
- Toni Erby, SF Safe House and Community Activist for Victims of Sex Trafficking
- UCSF- Center of Excellence for Transgender Health Center
- Victoria Westbrook, a member of Reentry Council's Direct Service Subcommittee
- Women of B-Pod Intake Focus group (November 14, 2017)
- Work Group to Re-envision the Jail Replacement Project – Final Report
- Yolanda Robinson, Program Director, Sheriff's Department Religious Services
- Zach Whelan, Executive Director, Project Avary

## **Executive Summary**

### *Past Efforts*

In 2012, the City and County of San Francisco’s Adult Probation and Sheriff’s Departments launched a gender responsive initiative to assess needs, gap[s], and strategies to meet [the] needs of women and transgender people in San Francisco’s criminal justice system. With support from the Zellerbach Family Foundation and Van Loben Sels/RembeRock Foundation”<sup>1</sup> San Francisco County brought together acclaimed social scientists Barbara Bloom, PhD and Barbara Owen, PhD along with city agencies and community partners to work on developing a comprehensive gender-responsive plan that would more effectively address the needs of women in San Francisco’s criminal justice system.

In a 2003 report, *Gender –Responsive Strategies: Research, Practice and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders*; “gender-responsive” was defined as follows:

Creating an environment through site selection, staff selection, program development, content, and material that reflects an understanding of the realities of women’s lives and addresses the issues of the participants. Gender-responsive approaches are multidimensional and are based on theoretical perspectives that acknowledge women’s pathways into the criminal justice system. These approaches address social (e.g., poverty, race, and class and gender inequality) and cultural factors, as well as therapeutic interventions. These interventions address issues such as abuse, violence, family relationships, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders. They provide a strength-based approach to treatment and skill building [with an] emphasis on self-efficacy.<sup>2</sup>

Informed by this body of work, and guided by Drs. Bloom and Owen, San Francisco County published the *Women’s Community Justice Reform Blueprint* (herein, the Blueprint) in April of 2013.<sup>3</sup>

The Blueprint was created to more deeply integrate gender-responsive, and family-focused strategies into local criminal and community justice systems. The Blueprint offered several recommendations and strategies that aligned with San Francisco’s policy of “locally self-reliant incarceration”<sup>4</sup> and indicated that the majority of female offenders could be more “effectively managed in community settings that provided women-centered and gender responsive services and programs.”<sup>5</sup> In addition, the Blueprint further qualified the geography and demographics of San Francisco’s “justice-involved woman.” The researchers found that women were disproportionately African American and under the age of forty residing in the Western Addition, South of Market, Tenderloin and Bayview Hunter’s Point communities.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> San Francisco Adult Probation Department: Strategic Plan 2012-2017 (page 15).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 15, 18.

While creating the Blueprint, the authors incorporated six guiding principles (known in San Francisco County as the GERSSC Principles), gender, environment, relationships, services and supervision, socioeconomic status, and community into their work.<sup>7</sup>

As well, Dr. Bloom and Dr. Owens outlined five strategies that they believed could accelerate San Francisco towards the goals of further decreasing reliance on the criminal justice system while reinvesting in communities and breaking intergenerational cycles of incarceration, reducing system costs and improving criminal justice system outcomes with women.<sup>8</sup> The five Blueprint strategies were as follows:

1. Integrating criminal justice and community services and programs through a collaborative leadership structure that plans, coordinates and oversees the development of an evolving women-centered multi-agency system. This process should be jointly led by Adult Probation and Sheriff's Departments, and overseen by the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP).
2. Developing sentencing and pretrial alternatives by expanding non-custodial and community alternatives including mother-child alternative sentencing programs.
3. Creating an intensive and coordinated case management system that follows women through every phase of the criminal justice process and into the community.
4. Expanding and enhancing programming that creates a continuum across custodial, residential, and non-residential settings that combine criminal justice and community services and programs that support women during and after successful discharge from criminal justice supervision.
5. Designing an integrated data collection, evaluation, and oversight process to monitor and improve system wide supervision and interventions.<sup>9</sup>

*New Effort – Women's Justice Reform Initiative (WJRI)*

The WJRI will mobilize collaborative action in the following three Blueprint recommended areas:

1. Integrating criminal justice and community services and programs through a collaborative leadership structure that plans, coordinates and oversees the development of an evolving women-centered multi-agency system. This process should be jointly led by the Adult Probation and Sheriff Departments and overseen by the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP).
  - a. *The WJRI acknowledges a long history of women's gender responsive work in San Francisco, honors the commitment and expertise of front lines and City*

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<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 20

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 8.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 9.

*stakeholders, and seeks to be a part of an even more focused momentum to streamline services connecting points for the benefit of women.*

2. Creating an intensive and coordinated case management system that follows women through every phase of the criminal justice process and into the community.
3. Expanding and enhancing programming that creates a continuum across custodial, residential and non-residential settings that combines criminal justice and community services and programs that support women during and after successful discharge from criminal justice supervision.

The WJRI embraces an inclusive definition of women meaning that approaches, services and efforts, while tailored to unique needs, are intended to improve the outcomes for justice-involved cis,<sup>10</sup> and trans women,<sup>11</sup> and non-binary individuals.<sup>12</sup>

The WJRI seeks to achieve implementation goals during the period of January 1, 2018 to January 1, 2021.

### **Why Are Women's Gender Responsive Services needed in San Francisco County?**

San Francisco has always had a history of providing funds and services to vulnerable populations including those members of the community who were formerly incarcerated. However, San Francisco's plethora of reentry services has been both a springboard and unfulfilled promise to formerly incarcerated women. In April 2013, the Blueprint found that:

“While San Francisco is a service-rich locale where many effective programs and services are available to women involved in the San Francisco criminal justice system, [the researchers'] analysis found that disconnections and lack of integration between programs and services create and sustain a fragmented system for women. [The researchers] found evidence of excellent programs and models, but the continuum itself [was] incomplete [and the] fragmentation impede[d] the development of a comprehensive and integrated system of services for women from arrest and pre-trial through re-entry and community supervision. Although a commitment to this goal exists throughout the City and County of San Francisco, [the researchers] observed a critical need for coordinated leadership, collaboration and service delivery that integrates standalone programs, services and agencies.<sup>13</sup>

The Blueprint found services duplication and fragmentation had an impact on how women accessed reentry services. The Blueprint recommended that APD and the SFSD formally collaborate in their oversight of women's services in San Francisco.<sup>14</sup> The Blueprint recognized that the two departments had excellent working relationships; however, the departments needed

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<sup>10</sup> Cis is abbreviation for cisgender which is a term for people whose gender identity matches the sex that they were assigned at birth.

<sup>11</sup> Transgender describes a person whose sense of personal identity does not correspond with their birth sex.

<sup>12</sup> Non-binary gender describes any gender identity which does not fit the male and female binary.

<sup>13</sup> *Blueprint* at 26.

<sup>14</sup> *Blueprint* at 26.



to create a “clearly defined mission and comprehensive approach to the development and oversight of women’s services in San Francisco”<sup>15</sup> County.

This recommendation for collaboration was also echoed in the final report of the Work Group to Re-envision the Jail Replacement Project which called for consolidation of reentry and social services and resources for at-risk, justice-involved populations.

In the Spring 2012 during the beginning stages of the Blueprint analysis, nearly 1000 women were under APD probation supervision.<sup>16</sup> Most of these women probationers were residing in the “Tenderloin, South of Market, Western Addition and Bayview Hunter’s Point areas”<sup>17</sup> of San Francisco. Currently, there are more than 700 women on probation. While there has been a shift in the number of women probationers since the Blueprint was published, geographically women generally reside in the same neighborhoods with data showing more women probationers residing in the Outer Mission/Excelsior neighborhood.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the Blueprint findings in 2016, the W. Haywood Burns Institute for Justice Fairness and Equity published the San Francisco Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Racial and Ethnic Disparities Analysis for the Reentry Council of the City and County of San Francisco. In this analysis, the Burns Institute found, “Black adults in San Francisco [were] 11 times as likely as White adults to be booked into County Jail. This disparity [was] true for both Black men (11.4 times as likely) and Black Women (10.9 times as likely).”<sup>19</sup> They also found Latino adults were 1.5 times as likely to be booked as White adults. The Burns Institute also found “the top three residence zip codes of Black adults booked into County Jail were: 94102 (includes the Tenderloin), 94124 (Bayview Hunters Point) and 94103 (South of Market) while the study found the top three residence zip codes for Latino adults booked in county jail were: 94110 (Inner Mission/ Bernal Heights), 94102 (includes the Tenderloin), and 94112” (Ingleside-Excelsior/ Crocker Amazon).<sup>20</sup>

Despite “data indicating that San Francisco’s demographic make-up is changing; and that between 1994 and 2013, the number of Black adults decreased by 21 percent [while] at the same time, the number of Latino adults increased by 31 percent,”<sup>21</sup> African American women offenders over-representation in San Francisco’s criminal justice system remains unchanged.

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<sup>15</sup> Id

<sup>16</sup> *Blueprint* at 11.

<sup>17</sup> Id. at 18.

<sup>18</sup> Internal APD Stats that list a women’s zip code at the time of arrest.

<sup>19</sup> Beatty, Julia (1/26/2016) San Francisco Justice Reinvestment initiative: Racial and Ethnic Disparities Analysis for the Reentry Council, Summary of Key Findings

<https://www.burnsinstitute.org/publications/san-francisco-justice-reinvestment-initiative-racial-and-ethnic-disparities-analysis-for-the-re-entry-council/> visited on October 17, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Id.

<sup>21</sup> Beatty, Julia (1/26/2016) San Francisco Justice Reinvestment initiative: Racial and Ethnic Disparities Analysis for the Reentry Council, Summary of Key Findings

<https://www.burnsinstitute.org/publications/san-francisco-justice-reinvestment-initiative-racial-and-ethnic-disparities-analysis-for-the-re-entry-council/> visited on October 17, 2017.

Beyond race and geography, the Blueprint researchers identified eleven additional characteristics shared by justice involved women in San Francisco:

1. Disproportionally women of color
2. Women who were in their early to mid-thirties
3. Women who were most likely to have been convicted of a property or drug offense
4. Women who came from fragmented family histories with other family members in the criminal justice system
5. Women who were survivors of physical and/ or sexual abuse
6. Women who had significant substance abuse histories
7. Women with multiple physical and mental health problems
8. Single mothers of minor children
9. High school degree/ GED
10. Limited vocational training
11. Low income and sporadic work histories.<sup>22</sup>

The Blueprint concluded that a typical justice involved woman was disproportionately African American and that she was likely in the earlier stages of her criminal justice career with her earlier criminal offenses being in the areas of drug and/or property crime.<sup>23</sup>

In the five years since the Blueprint was created, the characteristics of a justice involved women are similar - African American women under the age of 46 still remain the largest group of women on adult probation<sup>24</sup> with the largest subset of that population being women between the ages of 26-35.<sup>25</sup> More broadly, African Americans are disproportionately represented in-custody and equaled nearly half of the jail's population during an August 2016 snapshot.<sup>26</sup>

To achieve the goals of the WJRI, APD looks forward to collaborating with the SFSD, and other city agencies like the Department of Public Health, Human Services Agency, Department of Child Support Services, Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, and the San Francisco Superior Court to better streamline services for women as they attempt to navigate complex governmental systems on their journey towards personal transformation and a permanent exit from the criminal justice system.

In the next sections, APD will outline WJRI implementation and strategies collaborations.

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<sup>22</sup> *Blueprint* at 18.

<sup>23</sup> *Blueprint* at 15

<sup>24</sup> APD internal stats conducted on 10/31/2017

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> Work Group to Re-Envision the Jail Replacement Project, final Report page 6

## **APD's 2018- 2019 Gender Responsive Implementation Strategies**

The WJRI seeks to make systematic and service improvements across several points on the criminal justice spectrum:

### **Probation Supervision Services**

- Re-evaluate and establish Women's Gender Responsive Caseloads
  - Continued training in best practices
- Multi-System Checklist
  - This checklist will capture women involved in multiple systems
  - Update intakes with comprehensive gender categories
  - Implement gender identity forms for clients to complete
- Gender Responsive Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Course
  - In April 2018, Sister's Circle Women Support Network
  - In September 2018, APD will be launching a Women's Empowerment course that will be led by Deputy Probation Officers

### **Post Release Reentry Services (For probationers and all released women)**

- Launch a Faith Based Initiative (Soft launch, this past March 2018)
  - Create a Faith Based Reentry Portal that catalogues community faith based services for the benefit of justice involved people
  - Create a Faith Based Reentry Advisory Collaborative to support individuals getting out of custody
- Strengthen impact of Women's Gender Responsive Approach across **City** Departments
- Strengthen **Community** Partnerships
- Comprehensive **Case Management** improvements
  - Collaborate with SFSD in-custody and community programs with a specific focus on strengthening collaborative efforts with the Discharge Planner at CJ2
  - Work with CASC/UCSF Citywide to expand women's gender responsive caseload
  - Create connections to medical clinics
  - Implement financial recovery, asset building and education services
- Fund Women's **Gender Responsive and Faith Based** Services
  - To support successful exits of cis and trans women and non-binary individuals
  - Dedicate funding for women's gender responsive and faith based services through a competitive bid process.

In January, 2019 APD will assess implementation goals, and challenges to date, and present a report that summarizes accomplishments and outstanding efforts.

### **Past and Present Collaborations**

- In February 2018, APD and the SFSD Religious Services collaborated in an SFSD sponsored Evening Dialog regarding Faith-Based Reentry Services
- In March 2018, APD reached out to Santa Clara County’s Adult Probation Department for consultation on how to expand a Faith-Based Reentry Initiative in San Francisco
  - In June 2018, APD met with Santa Clara County’s Faith Based Collaborative
- Monthly Cis and Trans Gender Responsive Meetings with the SFSD, and community partners
  - Led by the Young Women’s Freedom Center in partnership with APD, SFSD, and community partners, this meeting addresses issues of justice involved women
- In April 2018, APD and the Human Rights Commission collaborated to sponsor “A Tea Time Workshop Series” centered on Transgender Reentry Services.
  - Led by APD’s Women’s Gender Responsive Coordinator, Geoffrea Morris and Human Rights Commission’s LGBT Policy Advisor, Aria Sa’id

**For more information or to learn about partnership opportunities, please contact Ms. Geoffrea Morris at [Geoffrea.Morris@sfgov.org](mailto:Geoffrea.Morris@sfgov.org) or by phone at 415-241-4241.**