



City Council Public Safety, Housing, Education & Homelessness Committee Presentation

Wednesday, April 23,
10:30-11:15 am



TOGETHER COLORADO

MEMBER OF FAITH IN ACTION

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF PEOPLE



BEFORE THE BLUE AND BEYOND THE BADGE

Building Community Trust from Day One





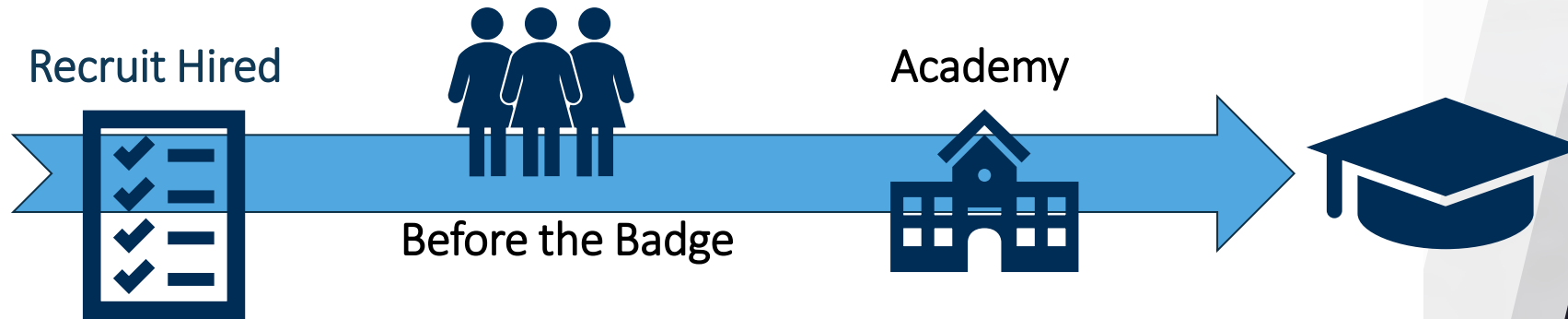
Before the Blue and Beyond the Badge

Community-Led, Immersive Training for Recruits:

- Emphasizes building community relationships before tactical skills
- Deepens understanding of the complex and often challenging realities of law enforcement
- Features powerful first-hand stories from community members

Before the Blue and Beyond the Badge

- Two-week, 80-hour
- Introduced at the start of the academy to offer a cultural awareness **lens** for all future instruction
- Establishes a strong **foundation** of empathy to guide recruits throughout their careers as Police Officers





Program Impact:

- Launch Date: May 2023
- Completed Recruit Classes: 8
- Total Recruits Trained: 263



Mission Statement

Before the Blue and Beyond the Badge is an experiential training program designed to provide new recruits with a comprehensive understanding of the community they serve, through an immersive dialogue with community leaders, public officials, faith-based organizations, and community advocates. It provides recruits with foundational knowledge to succeed as partners in the community, as well as uphold the privilege of earning and maintaining public trust.





Program Objectives:

- **Build Trust**: Establish connections with residents through authentic conversations that honor diverse cultures, histories, and needs.
- **Deepen Community Understanding**: Strengthen awareness of Denver's varied districts and resources.
- **Challenge Biases**: Encourage recruits to reflect on and broaden their perspectives of the community they serve.
- **Foster Empathy**: Inspire empathy through firsthand accounts from formerly incarcerated individuals and other community members.
- **Reinforce Responsibility**: Emphasize the importance of recruits' roles as representatives of the Denver Police Department, upholding high standards and respecting the legacy of those who served before them.

Day 1 – Classroom Training

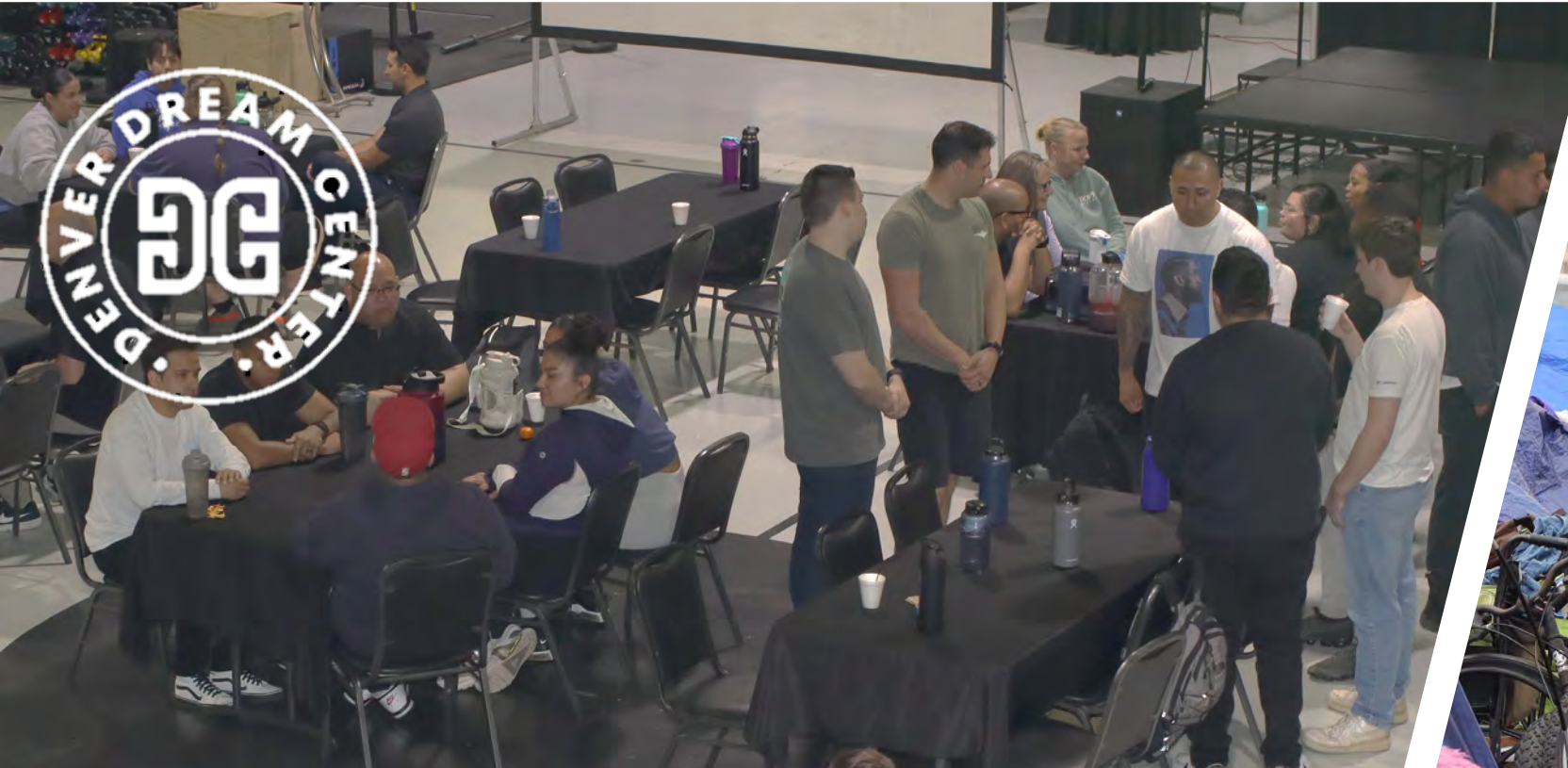
- Academy Overview & Tour
- Human Resources Onboarding
- History of the Denver Police Department – led by the Denver Police Museum
- History of Policing – facilitated by Together Colorado
- Daily Debrief & Reflection Time





District Visits

The next eight days are spent traveling around Denver, visiting all the districts to learn firsthand the make up of Denver and the individual cultures and challenges of each neighborhood.



Final Day - Denver Dream Center

The program concludes with a visit to the Denver Dream Center, where recruits connect with individuals who have faced significant life challenges and are often underserved or marginalized. This experience offers a powerful perspective on resilience and community connection.

Debrief & Capstone Project

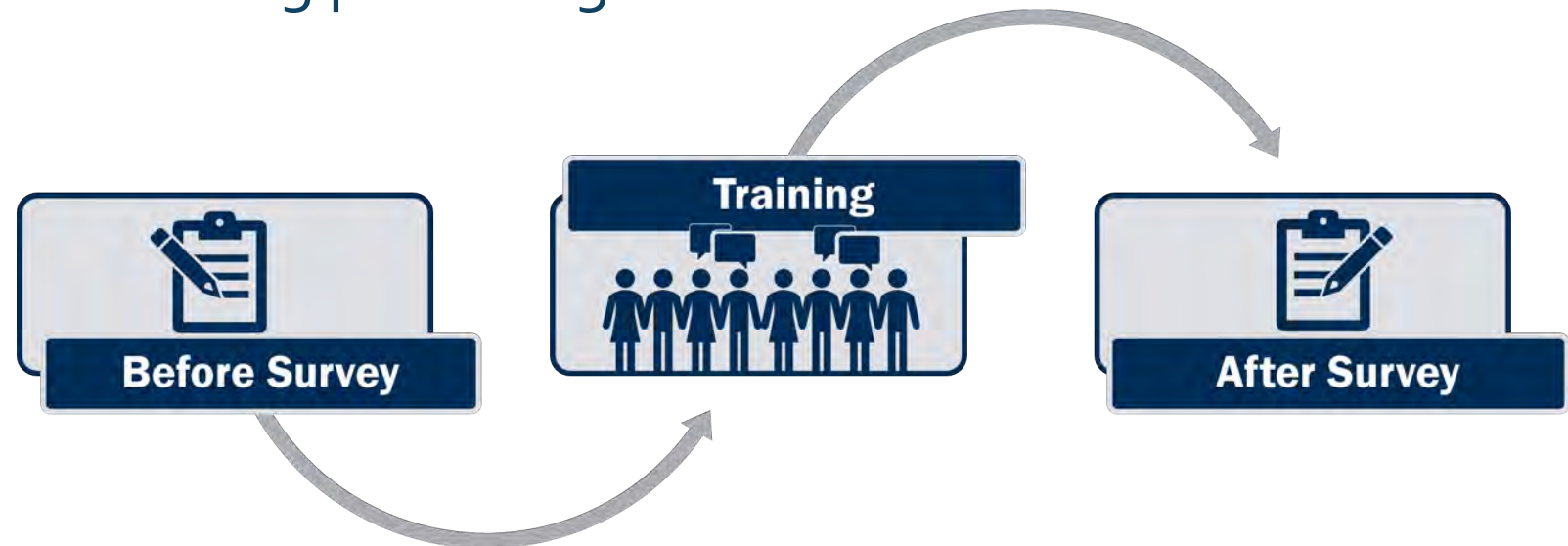
Following a group debrief to reflect on their experiences and give feedback on the program, recruits complete a capstone paper, exploring the concept of community, insights gained about themselves, and strategies for building and sustaining trust in the future.





Measuring short and long term impact

- Recruits take a survey at the beginning and end of the program
- The survey is administered and managed by the Mayor's Office of Social Equity and Innovation
- Evaluation of the program is continuously evolving but we are seeing promising results



Recruits have strong and unwavering beliefs

"I strongly agree or agree that ..."

96% Public trust is an essential part of policing.

97% It's important for officers to understand the community.



Open-ended questions provided deeper insights

“What motivates you to be a police officer?”



Motivators **Before** and **After** training:

Community service and impact

35% (+0%)

Personal fulfillment and purpose

29% (-3%)

Protection and safety

7% (-6%)

Role model and leadership

10% (+1%)

Community policing and trust building

14% (+6%)

Law enforcement as a calling

5%

Since the program began over 80 community partners have been involved, including:

The Center on Colfax
Matthew Shepard Foundation
Lionspride Fitness
Denver City Council Members
Montbello 20/20
Struggle of Love
Families Forward Centers
Boys & Girls Clubs
Urban Farm
Far East Center
Mi Casa
Denver Indian Center

Rose Andom Center
Colfax BID
Downtown Denver BID
Pain and Prison, then Peace –
Victim Advocates
The Other Side Academy
Lincoln/Broadway Safety
Coalition
Cherry Creek BID
Broadway Merchant Assoc.
Jewish Orthodox Church
Mexican Consulate

Muslim Community
Project Access Resource Center
Bayaud Enterprises
Servicios de la Raza
The Solutions Center
Wellpower
Office of Violence Interruption
The Tennyson Center for
Children
DPS Youth Violence Prevention
The Conflict Center
Denver Human Services Youth
Empowerment



Measuring impact ◀

Internal buy-in from DPD leadership:

Three districts have voluntarily created a continuation of B4B after graduation – requiring newly assigned recruits participate in neighborhood community engagement.

DPD
and Together Colorado
Partnership

Why Together Colorado?

Partnering with Together Colorado - a group that has often been critical of law enforcement - was strategic for several reasons:

- Centering diverse voices to encourage authenticity
- Building Trust Through Transparency
- Creating Space for Change
- Modeling Courageous Engagement



UNLOCKING THE POWER OF PEOPLE
Member of the PICO National Network

Transforming Justice Team's North Star

Our goal is an entirely non-violent justice system, particularly jails and prisons. Violence robs human beings of their dignity, is contrary to restoration and rehabilitation, and should have no place in a system of justice.

Everyone who is touched by the justice system—victims of crime; perpetrators of crime; people accused of, detained, arrested, and incarcerated for crime, regardless of guilt or innocence; law enforcement & corrections officers, and court officials; and the family members of all of these groups—are all part of the community.

Transforming Justice Team's North Star

We oppose the practice of state and federal governments handing responsibility for building and operating jails and prisons over to for-profit companies. It is wrong to profit from the pain of other human beings, that such profit incentives always lead to attacks on human dignity, and that they take our society down a path of moral debasement.

A true justice system must include a deeper awareness of how trauma affects us all and a commitment to supporting all people in the justice system in healing from trauma.

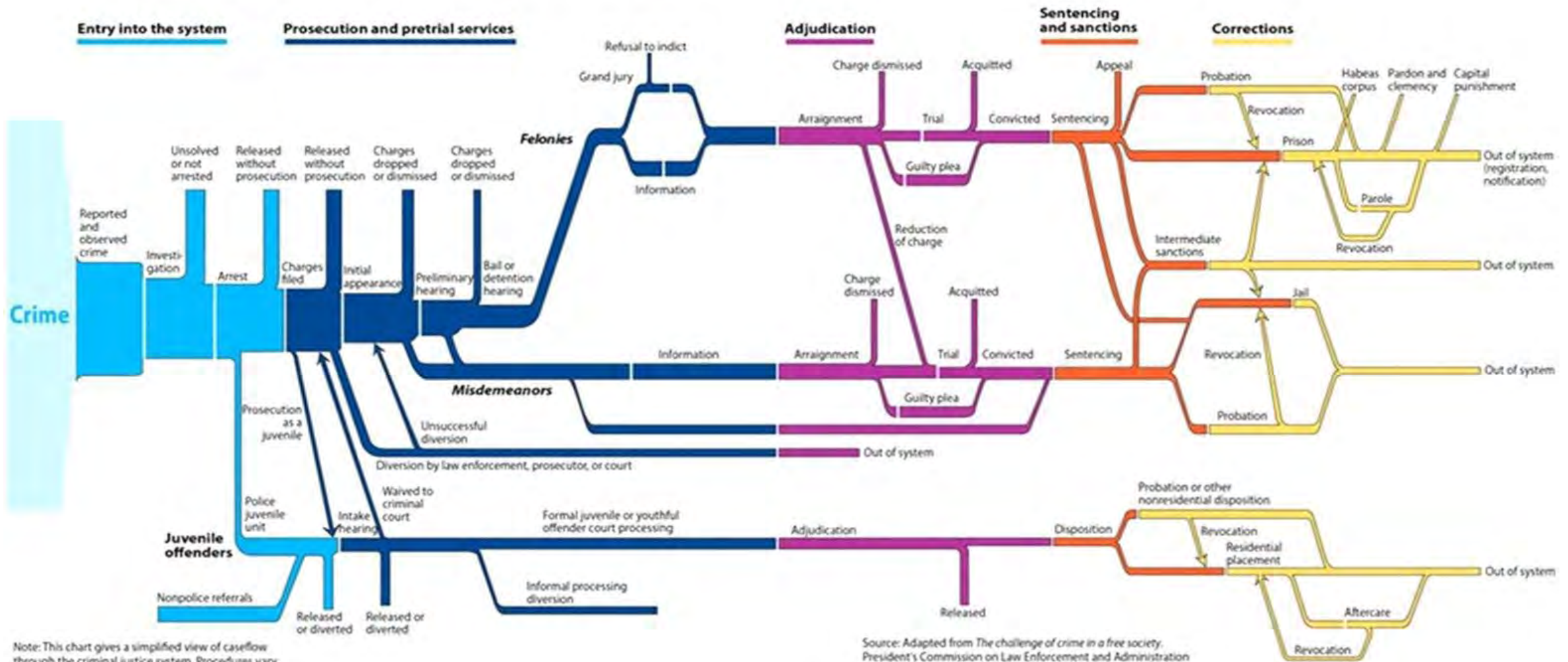


The Big Picture

- American CJS Maze
- Mass Incarceration Chart
- Meaningful Reduction Is At The Front End
- More Than 80% Of All Arrests Are For Low-Level, Nonviolent Offenses And Conduct Related To Poverty
- School to Juvenile Justice System
- Birth Of A Nation 1915 Movie
- KKK Denver Involvement
- Drug Wars designed To Incarcerate Black People
- Presumption Of Guilt For Black/Brown People
- Mandatory Minimum Sentencing Laws
- Policing Facts

America's Criminal "Justice" System

What is the sequence of events in the criminal justice system?



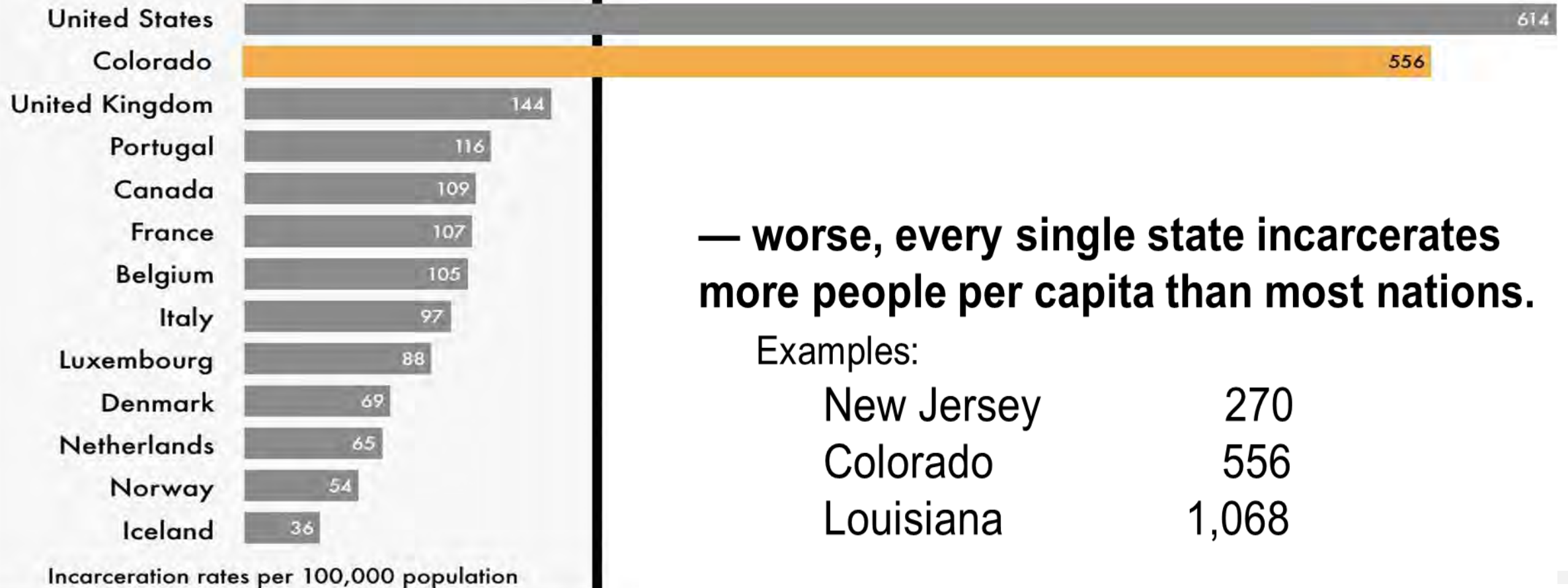
Note: This chart gives a simplified view of caseload through the criminal justice system. Procedures vary among jurisdictions. The weights of the lines are not intended to show actual size of caseloads.

Source: Adapted from *The challenge of crime in a free society*. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967. This revision, a result of the Symposium on the 30th Anniversary of the President's Commission, was prepared by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 1997.

The United States Leads the World in Mass Incarceration!

INCARCERATION RATES

COMPARING COLORADO
AND FOUNDING NATO COUNTRIES



The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate
of any independent democracy on earth.

— worse, every single state incarcerates
more people per capita than most nations.

Examples:

New Jersey	270
Colorado	556
Louisiana	1,068



Does locking more people up
make us safer than other places in the world?

**Are
We
More
Evil?**



“Unless you believe that the United States and Coloradans are more evil than people in other parts of the world, then there is something fundamentally wrong with our criminal justice system.”

former Colorado Senator Pete Lee

“Any meaningful reduction in incarceration will require changing the front end of the process, before people are even put in prison.”

former Colorado Senator Pete Lee



More than 80% of all arrests are for low-level, nonviolent offenses and conduct related to poverty.

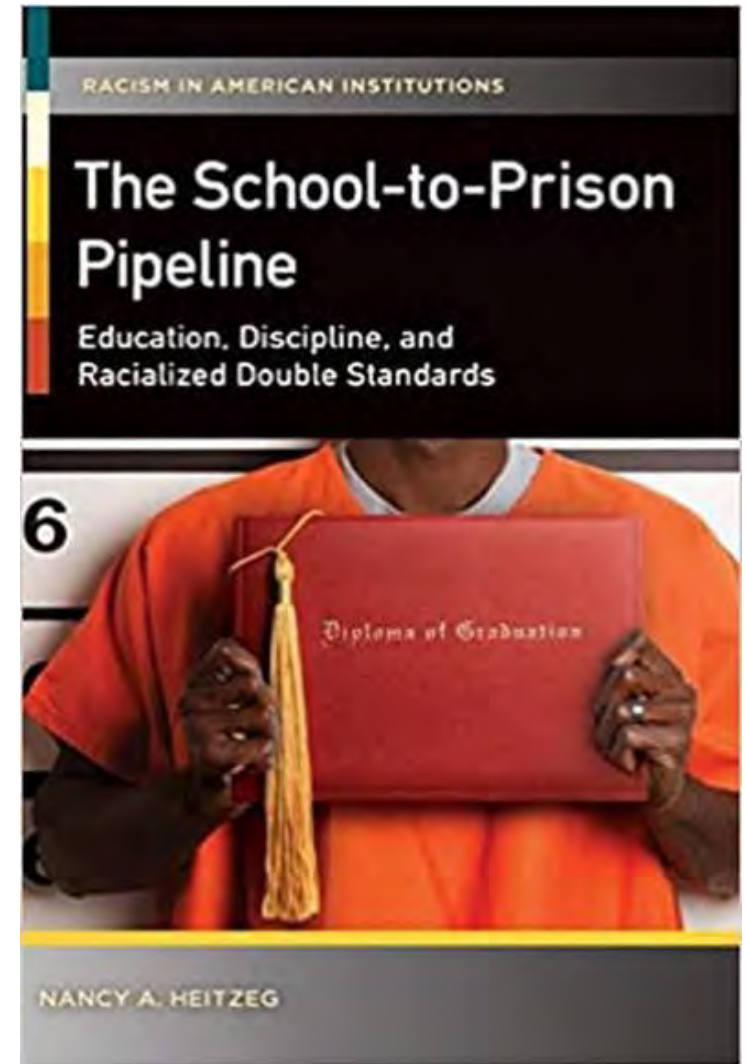
School to Juvenile Justice System

Over 30% of people in state prisons were first arrested before their 16th birthday.

Practices in public schools directly cause students to drop out:

- Zero-tolerance policies
- Police in schools
- High-stakes testing

Dropping out leads to crime and arrest.

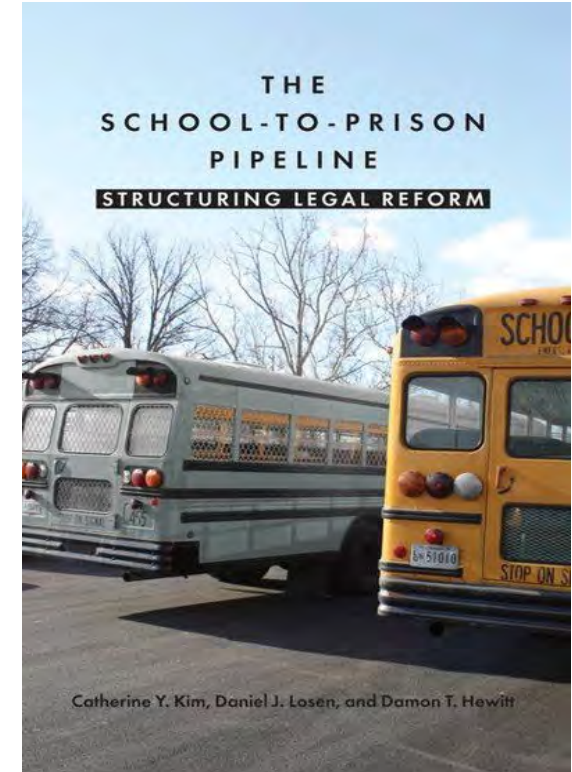


School to Juvenile Justice System

Children who attend schools with high suspension rates: substantially more likely to be arrested and jailed as adults.

Black and Hispanic students: far more likely than white students to be suspended or expelled.

Blacks and Hispanics: disproportionately represented in the nation's prisons.



We believe that Every child deserves to grow in a supportive environment that respects their humanity, upholds their dignity, and responds fairly to mistakes and missteps.

Contributing Factors

A Racist Movie

- 1915 silent movie
- First Hollywood blockbuster hit
- \$2.29/ticket (\$59 equivalent today)
- Full orchestra, intermission, souvenir program

Only surpassed by Avatar in 2009



BLACK
HISTORY

IN
TWO
MINUTES
JAN 201

THE BIRTH OF A NATION AND THE NAACP

BIRTH OF
A NATION
REVIVES
K.K.K.

NAACP

IMPACTS: Presumption of Guilt

Black and Brown people:

- often presumed dangerous, criminal, guilty
 - even when they have done nothing wrong



Conscious and Unconscious biases:

- Racial discrimination against people of color (POC) by law enforcement and the criminal justice system

Drug Wars: Designed to Incarcerate POC

“We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and Blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities.

We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news.

Did we know we were lying about the drugs?

Of course, we did.”



Result of the Drug Wars

People of Color (POC) arrested on suspicion of drug use at higher rates than whites

Led to rapid rise in incarcerations for nonviolent drug offenses

- 1980: 50,000

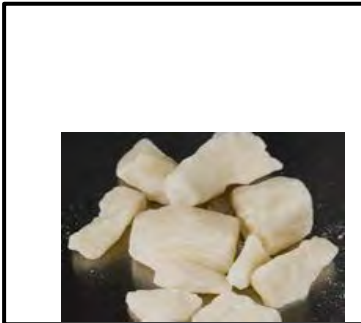
- 1997: 400,000



Mandatory Minimum Sentencing Laws

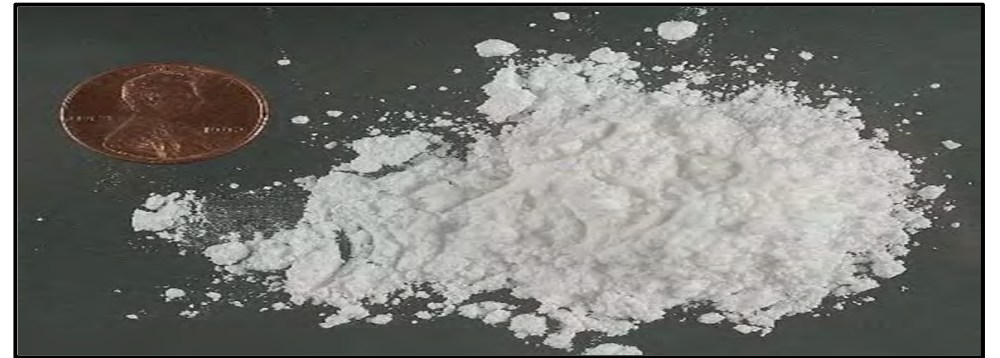
5-year sentence:

**5 grams of crack cocaine
(used more often by
Blacks)**



5-year sentence:

**500 grams of powder
cocaine (used more
often by Whites) (100
times as much!)**



Policing Facts

- (Again) most people in state prison - first arrested as youth
- Black people - disproportionately stopped on the street
- Black people - most frequently arrested



Policing Facts

- **Homicides with Black and Hispanic victims**
 - less likely to lead to arrest than homicides with white victims
- **Lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual people**
 - less likely to lead to arrest than homicides with white victims
 - much more likely to be arrested than straight people
- **People of Color (POC)**
 - disproportionately experience use of force
- **People with Disabilities**
 - disproportionately experience use of force



Policing Facts

People with multiple arrests - more likely to be

- poor, unemployed
- have less than a high school education
- have serious health needs



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U.S. police kill far more civilians annually than any other wealthy nation.



History of Policing in the United States

- Watchmen
- Constables
- Slave Patrols
- Texas Rangers
- Modern Police Force



History of Policing in Colorado

- Gold Rush
- Sand Creek Massacre
- Treatment of Indigenous People
- Ugly Law
- Italians as Immigrants
- KKK Involvement State and City Leadership
- Denver Police Department (DPD) Formation



Denver Metro: The Seamy Side

- Denver anti-Chinese Riot
- Over-policing Racial Minorities/Serving the Elite
- Preston Porter and 175 Known Lynchings
- Culture Wars
- Vagrancy Laws
- Five Points
- Years of Unrest, Spy Files
- Paul Childs, Jessica Hernandez, Paul Castaway killings
- “The Denver Way” - Hazing and Intimidation
- George Floyd’s Murder
- Other Denver Metro Area Law Enforcement Incidents



DPD: The Serving Side

- Providing Justice to Victims
- Positive Encounters with Community
- More Humane Treatment
- Prioritized Improving Police-community Relations
- Outreach Case Coordinators
- Shelby K-9 Dog
- LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion)
- STAR (Support Team Assisted Response)
- Growing Community Partnerships
- Eliminating Low-level Traffic Stops



DPD and Together Colorado Partnership

- 2017 Faith Community Event for Criminal Justice Reform
- Use of Force and Showups Legislation
- ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement)
- Before The Blue Beyond The Badge (B4B)
- Citizen's Oversight Board
- Office of Independent Monitor
- Denver City Council and City Budget Issues
- Ongoing Collaboration
- Changes At The State level

Breakout Session and Sharing

Has anything that
you have heard so
far surprised you?

Do you see any links
to the roots of
racism in policing
today?

Breakout Session and Sharing

What does the motto
Protect and Serve
mean to you?

How do you want to
describe your career
choice to your family
and friends?



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Multi Faith Community Meeting on Policing

**Shorter Community AME Church
3100 Richard Allen Court
Denver, CO 80205**

Tuesday, May 6, 7:00 - 9:00 pm.