

NEWSLETTER

Q&A with David Johnson

Policy and Research Liaison at Grassroots Leadership, Reentry Peer Specialist, Peer Support Recovery Specialist, Mental Health Care Specialist

You have completed Via Hope's reentry peer support certification. How have you leveraged the reentry peer specialist certification in your work, and what does your role entail?

I have leveraged and sharpened the skills I gained through the Via Hope reentry peer specialist certification program in my day-to-day work at Grassroots Leadership. Grassroots Leadership operates the Texas Advocates for Justice (TAJ) program for individuals in the community who have been incarcerated. TAJ's mission is to unite formerly incarcerated individuals and others to organize for change. The goal is to transform the carceral system and build safe and healthy communities. Out of this, we developed the Participatory Defense project, which provides services to loved ones of people who are incarcerated. The project helps families with any aspect of the legal system, including immigration or criminal issues. The main principle of Participatory Defense is to empower a designated loved one of the person who is incarcerated and provide the best chance at mitigating the harms that are associated with contact with the carceral system. Participatory Defense empowers both the incarcerated person and their designated loved one to self-advocate as effectively as possible in collaboration with their representing attorneys.

[Keep Reading](#)

Forward Training Center: Helping People Build a Life of Purpose through Career Development

Forward Training Center: Helping People Build a Life of Purpose through Career Development

Hood County's Forward Training Center, a faith-based job readiness center in Central Texas, helps community members from all backgrounds find their purpose through educational programming, career support, and connections to community resources. The Center has programming for youth ages 13–18 and adults 18 and older; there is no faith affiliation requirement for participation. The program focuses on helping participants gain self-sufficiency: the skills needed to succeed at work and the self-confidence to apply those skills in getting and keeping a job as a long-term solution to many of their life challenges. All Forward Training Center's programming is free, and childcare services are available to participants.

[Read More](#)

A Closer Look at SAMHSA's GAINS Center's Sequential Intercept Model Mapping Workshop 2022 Awardees

A Closer Look at SAMHSA's GAINS Center's Sequential Intercept Model Mapping Workshop 2022 Awardees

SAMHSA's GAINS Center has provided fully funded Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) Mapping Workshops to select communities and jurisdictions since 2012. SIM Mapping Workshops bring together cross-systems stakeholders to identify strategies to divert people with mental and substance use disorders away from the justice system into treatment.

[See Full Article](#)

GAINS Center Flashback on Holistic, Mindfulness, and Wellness-Based Strategies to Improve Services for Adults Involved with the Criminal Legal System

Planting Justice Programs: Sowing Seeds of System Transformation and Community Growth

[Planting Justice Programs: System Transformation and Community Growth](#) | March 2022

PRISON YOGA PROJECT: CREATING ACCESS TO HEALING AND RECOVERY

[Prison Yoga Project: Creating Access to Healing and Recovery](#) | April 2021

HEAT
AN AFROCENTRIC, HOLISTIC APPROACH TO RECOVERY

[HEAT: An Afrocentric, Holistic Approach to Recovery](#) | May 2020

SAMHSA's Eight Guiding Principles for Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice

Presenters: Jennie M. Simpson, PhD, George M. Owens, Kara Ahearn, LCSW, Melissa Zhiss, MA, LPA

March 28, 2019 3:00-4:30pm ET Hosted by SAMHSA's GAINS Center

[SAMHSA's Eight Guiding Principles for Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice](#) | March 2019