

## NEWSLETTER



# Q&A WITH MANUEL GOMEZ

**VETERAN PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST,  
COMMUNITY VETERANS JUSTICE PROJECT**



## Q&A with Manuel Gomez, Veteran Peer Support Specialist, Community Veterans Justice Project

*You are a Veteran and currently work with the Community Veteran Justice Project (CVJP). Tell us about CVJP and how you became a Veteran Peer Support Specialist.*

From 2005 to 2011, I served in the U.S. Navy. I loved the Navy; however, due to unexpected medical and mental health issues resulting from multiple deployments, I was separated from the Navy unexpectedly and abruptly. The focus was on the mission rather than the sailor and overlooked crucial mental health concerns. I received no adequate transition services when I was released. This left me feeling hopeless and lonely, turning to maladaptive coping skills. I began using illicit substances to cope with the trauma and pain, leading to 18 months of criminal behavior to support my substance use and eventual incarceration. Despite these hardships, I learned invaluable lessons about resilience and redemption while in prison. After holding myself accountable, I could focus on healing and personal growth.



## The Petey Greene Program:

Supporting the Reentry of Incarcerated Individuals Through Educational Advancement

Courtesy of Petey Green Rhode Island

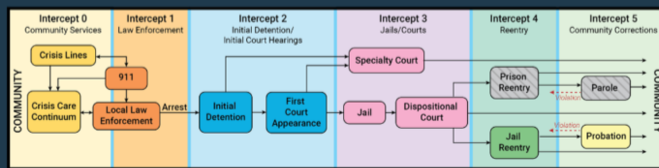
## The Petey Greene Program: Supporting the Reentry of Incarcerated Individuals Through Educational Advancement

There is ample evidence of the benefits of education for people who are incarcerated, such as reducing recidivism and improving other outcomes. For instance, research shows a 43 percent reduction in recidivism among people who participate in prison-based education programs and as low as 0 percent recidivism when higher levels of education are achieved. Additionally, increasing one's education leads to better and more secure employment post-incarceration, another known factor for helping formerly incarcerated individuals successfully reintegrate into their communities. Other benefits of carceral education programs include increased hope for participants and improved relationships between correctional staff and residents.

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# SAMHSA'S GAINS CENTER DELIVERS FIRST SEQUENTIAL INTERCEPT MODEL MAPPING WORKSHOP IN SPANISH



## SAMHSA's GAINS Center Delivers First Sequential Intercept Model Mapping Workshop in Spanish

*Expanding Access for Spanish-Speaking Communities*

This summer, SAMHSA's GAINS Center provided its first-ever Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) Mapping Workshop fully in Spanish to a team of justice and behavioral health professionals in Puerto Rico. This work builds upon the GAINS Center's approach to supporting culturally and linguistically responsive services for criminal justice and behavioral health programs.

"The GAINS Center is committed to making its training and technical assistance services broadly available and accessible to all citizens of the United States," says SAMHSA's GAINS Center Director Chanson Noether.

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## Resource Spotlight

### Webinar: Best Practices for Successful Reentry From Criminal Justice Settings for People Living With Mental Health Conditions and/or Substance Use Disorders

*September 7, 2023, 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET*

This webinar will highlight findings from SAMHSA's guide titled, *Best Practices for Successful Reentry From Criminal Justice Settings for People Living With Mental*

*Health Conditions and/or Substance Use Disorders* which explores evidence-based strategies and promising practices to address community reentry from jail or prison. Following an overview of the goals of SAMHSA's Evidence-Based Resource Guide Series by SAMHSA's Joe Bullock; Angel Sanchez, Bureau of Justice Assistance, from the guide's technical expert panel, will discuss this guide's development. Stephanie Fahy, Abt Associates, will provide an overview of the framing of the guide, describing factors impacting reentry, and relevant evidence-based strategies for successful reentry. Representatives from organizations featured in the guide's case studies will discuss the development of their policies or programs to address reentry for individuals living with mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders. The webinar will close with information about how to access the guide.

**Register Today**

## Partner Feature

The [Bureau of Justice Assistance's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program \(COSSUP\)](#) produced a 5-episode podcast series about medication-assisted treatment (MAT) in rural jails:

- [MAT in Rural Jails Episode 1: A Jail Medical Staff Administrator's Perspective](#)
- [MAT in Rural Jails Episode 2: A Peer Specialist's Perspective](#)
- [MAT in Rural Jails Episode 3: A Community-based Medical Provider's Perspective](#)
- [MAT in Rural Jails Episode 4: A MAT Program Coordinator's Perspective](#)
- [MAT in Rural Jails Episode 5: A Jail Administrator's Perspective](#)

## Flashback on Law Enforcement Perspectives



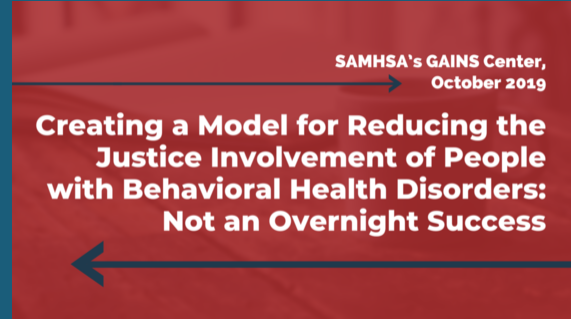
*[Designing a Law Enforcement-Friendly Crisis Service](#) | April 2020*



*[CIT ECHO: Sustained Mental Health Training and Consultation to Law Enforcement, First Responders, & Behavioral Health Partners](#)*



[Q&A with Mark Restivo](#) | August 2021



[Creating a Model for Reducing the Justice Involvement of People with Behavioral Health Disorders: Not an Overnight Success](#) | October 2019



SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

### SAMHSA

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