Vera Institute of Justice

- Independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with offices in New York City, Washington, DC, Los Angeles, and New Orleans
- Partner with government and civil society to improve the systems people rely on for justice and safety
  - Conduct research and analysis
  - Develop and test solutions
  - Use publications and expertise to engage stakeholders and the public
Vera Institute of Justice

- Center on Sentencing and Corrections
- Center on Immigration and Justice
- Center on Youth Justice
- Center on Victimization and Safety
- Family Justice Program
- Substance Use and Mental Health Program
- Cost-Benefit Analysis Unit
The Safety & Justice Challenge

- Funded by the MacArthur Foundation, the Safety & Justice Challenge is a deep investment in local reform, research, experimentation, and communications aimed at changing the way America thinks about and uses jails.

- Milwaukee County is part of a nationwide network of selected local jurisdictions that, with technical and financial assistance, will identify ways to safely reduce incarceration, particularly the disproportionate incarceration of racial and ethnic minorities.
The Big Picture of Jails

How many people are locked up in the United States?

The United States locks up more people, per capita, than any other nation. But grappling with why requires us to first consider the many types of correctional facilities and the reasons that people are confined there.

Local Jails 721,654
State Prisons 1,362,028
Federal Prisons 216,362
Other 333,428
Public Order 142,500
Burglary 130,000
Assault 146,800
Murder 166,700
Rape 195,800
Drug 237,000
Serving a Jail Sentence 293,342
Awaiting Trial (not convicted) 428,312
Other 69,862
Immigration Offenses 22,100
Weapons 29,800

Sources and data notes: See http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie.html

Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The Big Picture of Jails

- Annual Admissions = 11,700,000
  - This is 19 times the number of admissions to prison (631,000)
- Jails hold both convicted and unconvicted inmates
  - 62% are unconvicted and presumed innocent
  - 38% are convicted and serving sentences generally less than 1 year
- Average lengths of stay have been increasing over the past 30 years
Mental Illness & Substance Use

- Jails have become the last resort for people with mental health issues
  - Serious mental illness affects men and women in jail at rates four to six times higher than in the general population
  - Sixty-eight percent have a history of abusing drugs, alcohol, or both
Racial & Ethnic Disparities

- Jails often hold minorities at much higher rates than whites
- Nationwide African Americans are jailed at almost four times the rate of white Americans
Consequences

- Compared to low-risk defendants held for no more than 24 hours, those held for 8-14 days were...

  - More likely to be rearrested before trial: 56%
  - More likely to recidivate after sentence completion: 51%
The Competition

- Phase 1: Planning
  - 20 sites, $150,000 each plus intensive technical assistance, 7 months
  - 4 site coordinator organizations, 5 sites each
- Phase 2: Implementation
  - 10 sites, up to $2 million annually plus technical assistance, 2 years with option to extend
The 20 Sites

1,000 or less:
- Mesa County, CO
- Lucas County, OH
- Pennington County, SD
- Spokane County, WA

1,001-3,000:
- Ada County, ID
- Saint Louis County, MO
- Multnomah County, OR
- Charleston County, SC
- Pima County, AZ
- New Orleans, LA
- Mecklenburg County, NC

3,001-5,000:
- Shelby County, TN
- Palm Beach County, FL
- Milwaukee County, WI
- Connecticut

5,001 and over:
- Harris County, TX
- Cook County, IL
- New York, NY
- Philadelphia, PA
- Los Angeles, CA
Phase I Timeline

- **Site Visit 1:** System mapping
- **Site Visit 2:** Conclude system mapping
- **Site Visit 3:** Prioritize decision points
- **Site Visit 4:** Develop logic model
- **Site Visit 5:** Optional

**MAY**

- **Phase 1: Getting Started**
  - May 11-29:
    - Site selection
    - All Sites Meeting #1
  - May 30-Jul 31:
    - Phase 2
      - Investigate and Understand the Facts
  - Aug 5-Oct 8:
    - Phase 3
      - Develop a Reform Response

**JANUARY**

- **Phase 4: Implementation Planning**
  - Oct 12-Dec 11
- **Phase 5: Application**
  - Dec 15-Jan 6

- **Proposals for second round funding due**
# Investigate & Understand

## Phase 1: Getting Started

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>May 11 - May 29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kick-off phone call with each site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Schedule site visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All Sites Meeting: kick-off with all 20 participating sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grantee products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Primary contact assigned; participants confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meeting schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Phase 2: Investigate and Understand the Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>May 30 – July 31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Site visits #1 and #2 (2 visits per site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interviews with key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grantee products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Background materials and data provided to site coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Draft system map and aggregate data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete system maps for all criminal justice decision points with data embedded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitation of system mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Memo for each site presenting the site coordinator’s reflections on the strongest areas for reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
System Mapping

- Mapping and analysis of 7 key decision points:
  1. Arrest
  2. Charge
  3. Assignment of defense counsel
  4. Pretrial release
  5. Case processing
  6. Disposition/sentencing
  7. Post-conviction process/supervision

- Data collection
Develop a Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 3: Develop a Reform Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grantee products</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordinator products</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
# Implementation Planning

## Phase 4: Implementation Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>October 12 – December 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site visit #4</td>
<td>(1 visit per site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative charters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grantee products</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed implementation plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final logic model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordinator products</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process benchmarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 5: Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Activities**       | • *Optional site visit #5*  
                       | • Iterative feedback on sites’ applications |
| **Grantee products** | • Application for second round funding; revised and finalized planning deliverables |
| **Coordinator products** | • Memo for Foundation on relative merits of each site |
Outcomes

- Local justice system leaders committed to analyzing key decision points and the local jail population, increasing racial and ethnic fairness, and tracking progress toward those goals.
- A clearly articulated plan for system change, with measurable goals and responsibility assigned for reaching them.
- Application to MacArthur for implementation funding.
Thank you!

Liz Swavola
Senior Program Associate
Center on Sentencing & Corrections
212-376-3034
eswavola@vera.org

Kaitlin Kall
Program Associate
Center on Sentencing & Corrections
212-376-3063
kkall@vera.org
Where has progress already been made in the local criminal justice system?

What improvements in the system would most benefit the community?

How can community voices be brought into this process?