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Employment and Training Institute Community Engagement Report: 2013-2016

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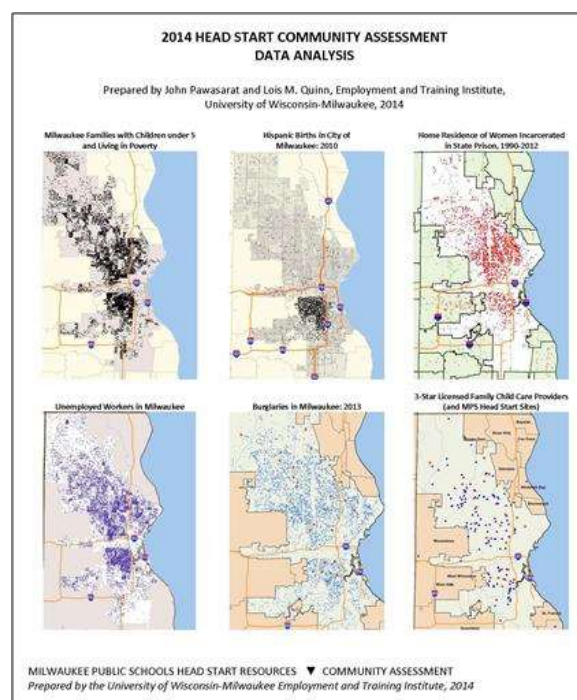
Employment and Training Institute Community Engagement Report: 2013-2016

Prepared by the Employment and Training Institute, School of Continuing Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute was established in 1978 to address the workforce and education needs of low-income and unemployed workers and their families through applied research, policy development, community education, and technical assistance. ETI's research is framed by the Wisconsin Idea, which has been the basis for the Employment and Training Institute work since its creation, and ETI is one of the mostly highly recognized university departments committed to UWM's community engagement priority. The ETI is located in the School of Continuing Education and has two staff: John Pawasarat (Director and Senior Scientist) and Lois Quinn (Senior Scientist). The ETI work in recent years has tackled employment, education, race and poverty issues facing the city and state, including mass incarceration of black males, prison and jail barriers to employment, driver's license needs of workers and teens, poverty and limited job opportunities impacting central city families, apprenticeship opportunities for persons of color, race discrimination, and income inequities.

I. Identifying Strengths and Needs of Milwaukee Children and Families

As part of a long-standing partnership with **Milwaukee Public Schools** ETI prepared a Head Start Community Needs Assessment in 2014 with a detailed study of conditions impacting schools, families and children in the neighborhoods served by Head Start programs. The ETI researchers provided MPS with a 155-page report and PowerPoint presentations of the data. This project work utilized large data bases and local, state and federal data sources in order to map and interpret interrelationships relating to family income, housing stability, mortgages and foreclosures, traffic accidents, crime levels and locations, concentrations of children in poverty, availability of government-supported child care, birth characteristics, and levels of state incarceration by gender and neighborhood. The federal Head Start program requires a community needs assessment study every three years. ETI is currently preparing an updated report for 2017.



ETI also prepared a Head Start Community Needs Assessment for **Centro Hispano of Milwaukee**, with a detailed study of conditions impacting schools, families and children in the neighborhoods in the southside target area served by the agency and collecting information on the special needs of Latino youth populations in Milwaukee County. The data are used to improve the planning for and delivery of education and social services to children living in poverty. Pawasarat and Quinn further worked with Centro Hispano to identify national data bases with information on the assets, challenges, and needs of documented and

undocumented Latinos (of all ages) in Milwaukee and Wisconsin. The neighborhoods served by Centro Hispano are among the most densely populated of Milwaukee County. Data from 59 public and private schools in the area showed less than a fifth of three-year-olds from low-income families enrolled in early kindergarten and preschool programs.

II. Addressing Driver's License Barriers to Employment

For the last two decades ETI has been providing critical research for addressing driver's license barriers to employment facing adult and teen workers. Major advances were made on these concerns in 2013-2016.

Milwaukee Public Schools Superintendent Darienne Driver and her staff used research materials from ETI to assist with planning and promotional work for restoration of driver's education in MPS high schools. Pilot programs served 250 students in four MPS high schools in the 2015-16 spring semester and 1,300 students at nine sites in the 2016-17 school year with plans to extend the program to 10,000 MPS students over the next five years. The Superintendent has made Universal Drivers Education (called "MPS DRIVE") a key initiative for preparing teens for the world of work. Promotion of driver's education and licensing of youth is seen as an asset for employment, preparation for adulthood, and a means for reducing potentially negative interactions between Milwaukee police and boys of color in the city.



Universal Driver Education Benefits

- **Increase** the number of Milwaukee teens obtaining their probationary **driver's licenses**
- Promote the **upward social mobility** of city youth: access to employment and educational opportunities
- **Improve** traffic **safety** in city neighborhoods
- **Lessen early conflicts** between teens of color and the police
- **Reverse** the growing culture of **unlicensed driving**
- **Reduce racial disparities** that exist in Milwaukee County around access to driver education and the ability to obtain a valid driver's license




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United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County funded the Employment and Training Institute to conduct a baseline research analysis and a process evaluation of the MPS Universal Drivers Education pilot project. The ETI research studies are used to help solicit state, federal and foundation support for the MPS DRIVE program, inform implementation decisions related to reaching the concentrations and characteristics of youth most in need of targeting, provide on-the-ground data and outcome experience from the pilot year, and collect pre-program baseline data use in subsequent evaluation studies. Two ETI studies were issued in 2016:

The DMV Class of 2016: Readiness of Milwaukee 18-Year-Olds for Employment, Citizenship, and Adulthood (2016)

Milwaukee Public Schools Universal Driver Education Pilot Program Evaluation (2016)

The **City of Milwaukee** adopted the goals of restoring free driver's education classes in Milwaukee Public Schools and expanded support for driver's license recovery efforts as key to its economic development strategies. The city identified the Employment and Training Institute as a major partner in this effort.



GROWING PROSPERITY | WORK PLAN

STRATEGY 5.2

Expand efforts to assist the hardest to employ.

ACTION ITEM

5.2.3 - In partnership with the superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools, spearhead a private fundraising effort to restore free driver's education classes in MPS and expand support for driver's license recovery efforts.

PARTNERS

Mayor of Milwaukee
Milwaukee Common Council
Superintendent, Milwaukee Public Schools
Milwaukee Board of School Directors
Local foundations
UW-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute

RESOURCES REQUIRED

- 1) Funding to commission research regarding the costs and benefits of restoring driver's education classes.
- 2) Funding sufficient to pay the costs of driver's education classes in Milwaukee public high schools
- 3) Cooperation of City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee Public Schools to mount a significant fund-raising effort
- 4) Maintain funding for driver's license recovery efforts provided by organizations such as Justice Point.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- 1) Commission research from the UW-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute to determine the costs and benefits of restoring driver's education.
- 2) Identify local foundations whose missions are aligned with the restoration of driver's education classes and/or the expansion of access to employment for Milwaukee residents.
- 3) Develop a City/MPS joint grant application strategy to pursue necessary funding.
- 4) Implement driver's education classes in MPS high schools.

PRIORITY

Long term, medium priority

REASON FOR ACTION

Lack of a driver's license and automobile severely limits access to job opportunities throughout the M7 region. Because public transportation does not adequately serve the entire region, increasing the number of licensed drivers in Milwaukee will remove a significant barrier to employment for thousands of central city residents.

DESIRED OUTCOME

MPS high school students will have access to driver's education, resulting in an increase in the number of legally licensed drivers in Milwaukee.



The Wisconsin Community Services Center for Driver's License Recovery & Employability entered a competition sponsored by **Greater Together**, a coalition of design professionals encouraging initiatives to address racial segregation and racial inequities in Milwaukee. At a community-wide meeting, the driver's education proposal, presented by Nicole Yunk Todd of the CDLRE, was voted the winning Greater Together proposal – out of more than 130 submitted. As a result, the coalition committed its design and marketing talents to promoting universal driver's education in Milwaukee.

U.S. Congresswoman Gwen Moore introduced an amendment to the Highway Safety Act -- which passed and was signed by President Obama in 2015 -- that allows current teen traffic safety funding to be used to support school-based driver's education classes that promote safe driving and help meet the state's graduated driving license requirements. Moore also introduced federal legislation to support pilot programs targeted to low-income teens to help them secure their driver's licenses and regain licenses suspended for reasons of income.

These programs are modeled on the driver's license initiatives ETI has been working on with Wisconsin Community Services and MPS. Since the 1990s Moore and Pawasarat have been collaborating on driver's license policies to positively support job skills of African American youth and adult workers.

Moore Introduces Young Adults Safety Act

September 10, 2015

Washington, D.C. – Upon the introduction of the Young Adults Safety Act, Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI-04) released the following statement:

"We're seeing a growing pattern by cities across the country to use driver's license suspensions as a means to punish those who fail to pay a municipal debt. Often, these penalties have nothing to do with traffic infractions or poor driving behavior and are imposed against those who have yet to even reach the legal driving age. These suspensions disproportionately impact minorities, including young African American males. According to one report, in 2011, African Americans received 69% of failure-to-pay suspensions in Milwaukee County. For young people, one of the dire consequences of such additional barriers to having a driver's license is that, at a key part in their life, it can limit education opportunities, job opportunities and the ability to gain critical work experience.

"This alarming trend inspired me to introduce the Young Adults Safety Act, which would provide the capacity to help develop model programs to help low-resource teens and young adults acquire a driver's license or regain their license after a suspension. Make no mistake: Those with a flagrant disregard for public safety don't belong behind the wheel. This bill aims to develop and implement strategies to address the many barriers that low-income youth encounter in their efforts to obtain a license and drive legally.

"I can tell you firsthand that a valid driver's license can be a means — and in some cases the only means given service cuts experienced by public transit systems in Milwaukee and nationwide — to find gainful employment and thrive. I ask my congressional colleagues to pass this piece of legislation to help make our local roads and highways safer while empowering our constituents to build a brighter economic future for themselves and their families."

The **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction** funded John Pawasarat to analyze state driver's license files in order to assess the number of Wisconsin youth reaching adulthood with a driver's license. Pawasarat's report on **Licensing Student Drivers in Wisconsin: Building Assets for Employment and Adulthood** (2016) offered baseline data on current licensing rates and concentrations of unlicensed youth for the 72 Wisconsin counties and 12 Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) districts. The data aided DPI in considering whether expanded state financial support and programming for driver education and licensing of school-age youth could increase the skills of Wisconsin youth as they enter the labor force and pursue post-secondary education.

Since the 1990s Pawasarat has conducted research on employment barriers resulting from court-ordered removal of driving privileges for low-income residents in Milwaukee County and Wisconsin as a "tool" for spurring payments of municipal fines, forfeitures and fees (including charges for violations unrelated to dangerous driving). Pawasarat issued an updated report on **Wisconsin Use of Driver's License Suspensions for Failure-to-Pay-Forfeitures** (2014) based on data the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Division of Motor Vehicles, the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, and Branch A of the Milwaukee Municipal Court (i.e., handling municipal cases incarcerated in county jail). Police and court actions taken in Ferguson, Missouri, have brought national attention to one municipality's routine use of traffic stops, arrest warrants, debtors' jail, and racial targeting. This study considered race, class and criminal justice consequences of suspending driver's licenses as a debt collection tool in Wisconsin where the barring of driving privileges based on FPF/FPJ ("failure to pay forfeitures" and "failure to pay forfeitures-juveniles") suspensions falls most heavily on men and boys of color and residents in lower-income Milwaukee zipcodes.

The ETI researchers were keynote speakers at the biennial meeting of the Center for Driver's License Recovery & Employability at **Milwaukee Area Technical College** in September 2014. The event was attended by state legislators from both political parties, county supervisors, DMV staff, criminal justice staff, civil rights advocates, and city staff. It focused on changing license suspension practices and restoring free driver's education in the high schools. The CDLRE, housed at MATC, is a successful collaborative between Wisconsin Community Services, Legal Action of Wisconsin, MATC, and over 50 community agencies.

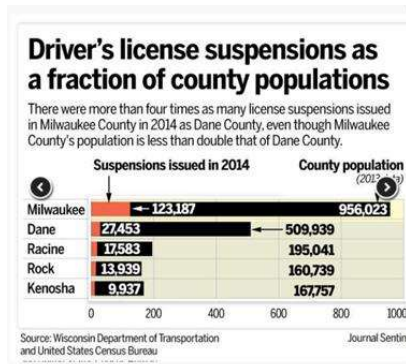
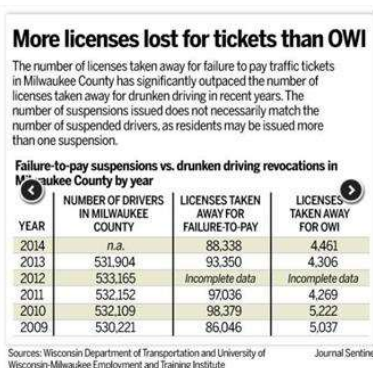


Lois Quinn & John Pawasarat of the UWM Employment and Training Institute present startling statistics about the interrelationship of poverty, race, mass incarceration, & Failure to Pay Forfeiture (FPF) license suspensions.

[from the Wisconsin Community Services website]

Media Coverage of ETI Driver's License Research

Vivian Wang, a Yale University student with an internship at the **Milwaukee Journal Sentinel** worked with Pawasarat in preparing a detailed review of driver's license issues in Milwaukee. The summer-long collaboration resulted in a 3,200-word feature article in August 15, 2015 by Wang on "*Ticket to Nowhere: The Hidden Cost of Driver's License Suspension*," summarizing ETI research studies, with interviews with Pawasarat and Quinn, and including original research work by Wang and the MJS staff.



The news feature was followed by a **Milwaukee Journal Sentinel editorial** detailing recommendations for improving licensing and court practices and drawing on ETI research. The **Washington Post** quoted from the MJS story at length in its August 26, 2015 online newspaper.

Find better way to deal with suspensions



Mike De Sisti
April Williams walks to the bus stop with two of her children, Solomon Blunt (front), 4, and Donovan Williams, 6, near their home on N. 39th St. in Milwaukee this month. Williams' driver's license was suspended last year for failure to pay tickets.

Aug. 18, 2015

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Milwaukee municipal court officials insist they are doing everything they can within the system to help drivers who face [suspension of their driver's licenses](#). They also insist that any more leniency in suspending licenses would fail to hold violators accountable for their unpaid fines. Fair points, but they fail to address the fact that the system appears to be broken, and that some kind of fundamental reform may be necessary.

The Washington Post

The Watch | Opinion

The continuing criminalization of poverty: Milwaukee driver's license suspension policy sows despair

By Radley Balko August 26, 2015

The problem gets even worse when states start suspending licenses for offenses that have nothing to do with driving. And then there's the disparate impact of these policies.

In 2011, African-Americans received 69% of failure-to-pay suspensions in Milwaukee County despite making up only 19% of the county's licensed drivers, according to Pawasarat's research at UWM. Department of Transportation officials said they do not keep records by city.

In 2012, Pawasarat and fellow researcher Lois Quinn mapped license suspensions in the city by reason of conviction. People whose licenses were taken away for drunken driving were evenly distributed throughout Milwaukee. But failure-to-pay suspensions were densely packed into the city's six poorest ZIP codes, which contain overwhelmingly African-American populations.

Wisconsin Public Radio consulted with Pawasarat for background research for the Kathleen Dunn Show for its August 26, 2015 coverage of *"The High Cost of Driver's License Suspensions"* and its November 16, 2015 coverage on *"Criminal Justice Group Launches Initiative to Reduce Prison Population: WISDOM Looks to Get More Inmates Eligible for Parole Out of Prison."*

The Atlantic

No Driver's License, No Job

For years, conservative policymakers have urged those in need to get work. But for those without driver's licenses—who are by and large people of color—that's not such an easy task.

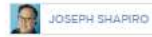


Alana Samuels of **The Atlantic** prepared a June 2016 article on the interplay between driver's licensing and residents' income based on the Milwaukee experience. Samuels interviewed staff from the ACLU, Milwaukee Police Department, Center for Driver's License Recovery & Employability, and the county sheriff about the ETI research findings.

National Public Radio investigative journalist **Joseph Shapiro** came to Milwaukee to meet with Pawasarat to discuss ETI's research work on driver's licensing and city and circuit court practices impacting low-income residents. Shapiro developed an NPR "Guilty and Charged" news special on the use of driver's license suspensions as a fee collection tool by the courts with negative impacts on employment of African American men, with the story running on over 900 NPR stations. The feature, which included links to the UWM-ETI research, generated over 1,500 comments in its first two days.

How Driver's License Suspensions Unfairly Target The Poor

JANUARY 05, 2015 3:30 AM ET





Listen to the Story
Morning Edition

 7 min 2 sec

[Playlist](#)
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This is the second of two stories. Read the first story [here](#).

If you get caught drinking and driving in Wisconsin, and it's your first offense, you lose your license for nine months. For a hit-and-run, the punishment is suspension for one year.

But if you don't pay a ticket for a minor driving offense, such as driving with a broken tail light, you can lose your license for two years.

"It's an incredible policy," says John Pawasarat of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. It's "a policy of punishing people who can't pay their fines."

The practice — repeated in states across the country — is mostly affecting the poor and creating a spiral of bad consequences.



John Pawasarat of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, studies the city's poor neighborhoods.
Joseph Shapiro/NPR

NPR's recent "[Guilty and Charged](#)" investigation found that rising court fines and fees — reaching hundreds or even thousands of dollars per person — often hurt poor people the most.

Pawasarat, who runs the university's Employment and Training Institute and [studies Milwaukee's poor neighborhoods](#), says one of the biggest barriers to getting a job is not having a driver's license.

SHARE



 Comment

SUGGEST A TOPIC OR STORY

PAWASARAT

The **State of California** adopted legislation in 2015 directing the courts in each of its 58 counties to implement an 18-month amnesty program for residents issued driver's license suspensions for non-driving reasons (i.e., failure to pay child support, failure/inability to pay court fines, truancy, non-moving violations) and to develop reduced payment plans for those with poverty-level incomes. This initiative is expected to impact up to four million California residents and is based in large part on research conducted by ETI in Wisconsin.

The **San Francisco's Office of Economic & Workforce Development** is using the state mandate and drawing extensively on ETI's driver's license research and evaluation work in developing a new city/county/state initiative addressing driver's license suspension problems and lack of licensing among lower-income residents.



I. The Importance of a Driver's License in the World of Work

- Employer requirements as a precondition to employment
- In combination with a vehicle, increased access to jobs
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee:
Mothers with young children on welfare and in subsidized child care are twice as likely to find sustained employment if they had a driver's license. For this population, having a driver's license is more important for finding steady work than a high school diploma.

2

III. The National Growing Movement to Reduce Driver's License Suspensions

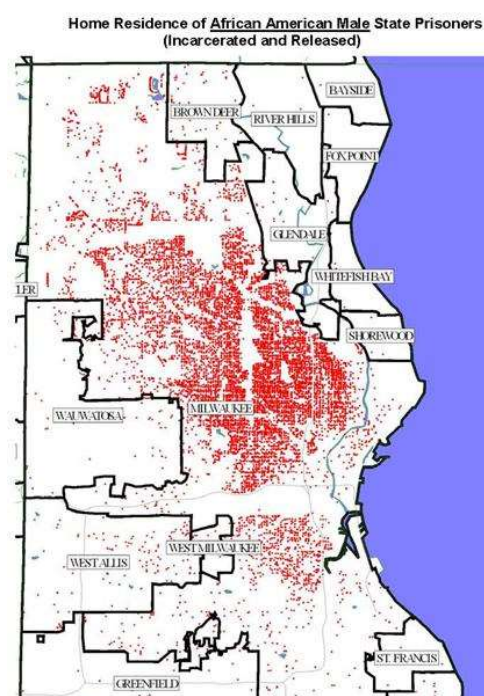
- 1998 Milwaukee, Wisconsin Study:
 - 58% of Milwaukee County adults (and 93% of teens) with suspension orders on file were suspended solely for non-payment of fines and civil forfeitures
 - More central city males ages 15-55 had suspension orders on file than had a valid driver's license
 - Single parents with a valid driver's license were much more likely to leave welfare
- Milwaukee Center for Driver's License Recovery and Employability (CDLRE) established in 2007:
 - Public-private partnership that includes Wisconsin Community Services, Legal Action of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Area Technical College, and the City of Milwaukee Municipal Court
 - Direct case management, legal aid services, and advocacy

IV. Current Activities

- California 18-month Amnesty Program
 - Effective October 1, 2015
 - For unpaid traffic and non-infracton tickets
 - Provides for driver's license reinstatement and, under certain circumstances, a reduction of unpaid bail/fines/fees of up to 80%
- City Inter-Departmental Working Group
 - DMV Data: Over 10,000 FTA suspensions of San Francisco drivers, March 2012-March 2015
 - Prep for Amnesty Program: (1) Provider survey (2) Coordination with Judicial Council and Superior Court (3) Case Mgmt/Funding
 - Long-Term: San Francisco Driver's License Recovery Program
 - Long-Term: State legislative action to reduce the use of suspensions as a penalty for non-driver safety violations

III. Addressing Mass Incarceration and Prison Barriers to Employment

As an extension of their research beginning in 2007 on the extremely high rates of incarceration for working age African American men in Milwaukee, Pawasarat and Quinn prepared two ground-breaking research reports. A report on **Wisconsin's Mass Incarceration of African American Males: Workforce Challenges for 2013** used two decades of state Department of Corrections and Department of Transportation files to assess employment and training barriers facing African American men with a history of DOC offenses and DOT violations. The report focused on 26,222 African American males from Milwaukee County incarcerated in state correctional facilities from 1990 to 2012 (including a third with only non-violent crimes) and another 27,874 men with DOT violations preventing them from legally driving (many for failures to pay fines and civil forfeitures). The prison population in Wisconsin more than tripled since 1990, and the 2010 U.S. Census data showed Wisconsin having the highest



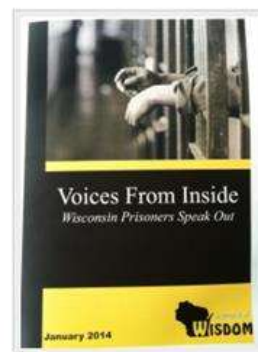
black male incarceration rate in the nation. In Milwaukee County over half of African American men in their 30s have served time in state prison.

A follow-up study on **Statewide Imprisonment of Black Men in Wisconsin** (2014) examined African American male incarceration for the state of Wisconsin at the request of the NAACP Wisconsin Conference of Branches. For most ex-offenders, prison records remain public and impediments to employment for the rest of their lives. Consequently, unlike studies reporting point-in-time levels of incarceration or average daily inmate populations, this report identified the total populations of African American men who had been incarcerated in adult state correctional facilities from 1990 to 2012 using Wisconsin Department of Corrections public inmate records. State DOC records showed incarceration rates for African American men at epidemic levels throughout Wisconsin. The Wisconsin population of voting-age is 86% white non-Hispanic, thus placing decisions about increasingly minority prison populations in the hands of a substantial white majority.

In Milwaukee and throughout Wisconsin faith communities have been providing leadership on prison and criminal justice issues for a number of years and identifying public policies and practices that contribute to the criminalization of much of the citizenry. The 2013 and 2014 ETI studies documenting the levels of incarceration in Milwaukee and Wisconsin and identifying possible changes to address barriers to employment for ex-offenders and boys and men of color have been used in particular by **MICAH** (Milwaukee Inner-city Congregations Allied for Hope) and **WISDOM**, a statewide coalition of faith groups with an “11x15 Campaign” to reform the criminal justice system (including congregations from Milwaukee County, Racine County, Kenosha County, Waukesha County, Green Bay, the Fox Valley, Eau Claire, Beloit, Janesville, LaCrosse, Wausau and North Central Wisconsin). WISDOM has used ETI’s research to help inform its “fact sheets,” video and PowerPoint presentations, and its new 2015 initiative on “Restoring Our Communities, Beyond 11x15,” addressing criminal justice policies and practices in the state. MICAH created a **53206 Initiative** to address imprisonment, reentry, and employment issues for ex-offenders in the 53206 Milwaukee zip code where ETI neighborhood indicator reports have shown tremendous need.

ETI staff assisted WISDOM in preparing background material for ***Voices from Inside: Wisconsin Prisoners Speak Out***, a publication sharing insights of inmates and their families, part of Wisdom’s efforts to humanize the disenfranchised and imprisoned. Among the legislative concerns raised by religious and community leaders are prison conditions, lack of opportunities for education and training (for ex-offenders and for non-offenders), state sentencing laws, lack of treatment alternatives to incarceration, parole practices, limitations on expungement of prison and court records, restrictive driver’s license policies, and post-release employment discrimination.

“Voices From Inside: Wisconsin Prisoners Speak Out” is now available. The book contains excerpts from some of the hundreds of letters WISDOM has received from inmates since the start of the 11x15 campaign. The letters touch upon a variety of themes, and each of them reminds us that prisoners are human beings with hopes, dreams, regrets and questions. The letters are accompanied by reflections from judges, bishops, pastors and others, as well as important facts about the criminal justice system.



After the ETI study on mass incarceration was released in 2013, the **Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee** and the **Social Development Commission** organized a community-wide seminar for agency staff, community professionals, religious leaders and community activists to address concerns identified in the 2013 ETI report on mass incarceration. The forum focused on how to prepare for and increase readiness to stop epidemic levels of imprisonment of men of color and to provide services that positively impact individuals, families and communities.



npc Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee
Strengthening Nonprofits -- Building Community

Membership Services Training Consulting Events Resources

Guest Blog: Addressing Black Male Incarceration

7/29/2014

0 Comments

By Lois Quinn, Sr. Scientist, UW-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute



Lois Quinn

In my forty plus years of conducting research no study has been more serious and disturbing to me than the analysis that John Pawasarat and I at the UW-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute conducted on state incarceration levels for African American men. Our findings confirmed on paper what the black community already knew – that Wisconsin had locked up over half of Milwaukee's young African American men in state correctional facilities and that thousands of men in the community have state prison records, most posted permanently on the Internet, that limit their access to jobs and housing and their ability to support their families.

Wisconsin is "Ground Zero"

We had initially described Milwaukee zipcode 53206 as "ground zero" for mass incarceration given the extreme concentrations of men imprisoned. A study we prepared last month for the Wisconsin NAACP showed, however, that African American men throughout the state have levels of incarceration that are shocking by worldwide standards. Consider that half of all African American men in their 30s in Wisconsin have been incarcerated by the state (1990-2012). And while African Americans make up only 7% of Wisconsin men in their 20s, they comprise 46% of the men in their 20s who are in state prison or have previously been incarcerated.

The Nonprofit Center continues to work on these issues with its 350 member organizations, and in October 2014 organized a conference on "Strengthening Our Collective Resolve to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Men of Color." The ETI staff prepared a guest blog as a prelude to the conference.

In June 2015 the **Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors** unanimously voted to create an Office of African-American Affairs, to address disparities in education, incarceration, employment and opportunities between African Americans and whites. The ETI research on prison rates was cited in the adopting resolution. According to Supervisor Khalif Rainey, the bill's sponsor, the office will focus its work "on issues that have crippled the African American community" in Milwaukee and promote equal opportunities for black Americans." "This is the issue of our time," said Rainey. "The entire county is watching us."

As a response to ETI's research and discussions following it, the chief judge of the **Milwaukee County circuit courts** shut down the entire court system for a day (October 17, 2014) so that 300 Milwaukee County judges, district attorney staff, police, defense attorneys, and others could spend the day discussing racial disparities in the criminal justice system. These one-day all-court conferences have continued annually.

Milwaukee courthouse virtually closed for racial disparity discussion

By [Bruce Vielmetti](#) of the Journal Sentinel
Oct. 17, 2014

Things will be extremely quiet around Milwaukee County courts on Friday.

More than 300 judges and commissioners, prosecutors, defense lawyers, probation officers, police and others will be gathered across the freeway to talk about racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

The ambitious day-long event at Marquette University's Varsity Theater was the brainchild of Chief Judge Jeffrey Kremers. He said it is really just meant to be a large conversation among people across the different channels of criminal justice operations. It was prompted in part by a [University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee study](#) that found the state jails the highest proportion of its African American men than any other.

"There's lots of interest in this," he said a few weeks back. "Big public interest. Some think it's racist. Is it? If so, what part? Is it implicit? Explicit? Is it a perception problem, or something in between? Where do we go from here?"

[Seattle criminal defense lawyer Jeff Robinson](#), who has led similar discussions around the country, has agreed to act as a facilitator, Kremers said, and help bring the larger audience into discussions first generated among panelists.

Though attendance is not strictly required, some participants feel some pressure and are likely to come with some reluctance.

District Attorney John Chisholm is not one of them, but he understands how various players in the criminal justice system may feel accused of something when the community discusses racial disparities in outcomes, but that's not the point of Friday's session.

"It's just an opportunity to look at what we all do from a broad perspective," Chisholm said.

Chisholm said support staff from his office, not just prosecutors, will be attending.

"Some of them are minorities. They have their own valuable insights, and from working with victims and people in the system, like customer service."

National Republican conservative **Grover Norquist** is supporting the efforts of new **statewide coalitions** addressing problems in the criminal justice system. According to Norquist, "[A] diverse collection of legislators and groups – urban, conservative, rural, liberal, progressive and free-market – are coming together to develop strategies based on facts, not slogans. Thanks to the leadership of Rep. Rob Hutton (R-Brookfield), Sen. Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee), Sen. Jerry Petrowski (R-Stettin), Rep. Evan Goyke (D-Milw.), and Rep. Mandela Barnes (D-Milw.), the Second Chance Legislation is now being debated in Wisconsin. The measures would ensure that 17-year-old first-time offenders charged with minor crimes are prosecuted in the juvenile system." ("Norquist: Conservatives Should Embrace Prison Reforms," *Wausau Daily Herald*, May 11, 2015)

Both political parties are using ETI research to help develop their policy initiatives. Leadership from the **Joint Finance Committee** (Senator Alberta Darling, R-River Hills, and Representative Dale Kooyenga, R-Brookfield) used the ETI prison research in preparing their public policy initiative on "New Opportunities for Milwaukee." Two **bipartisan Wisconsin legislative committees** (2014 Legislative Council Study Committee on Problem-Solving Courts, Alternatives, and Diversions; 2015 Assembly Committee on Corrections) were established to deal with the problems of incarceration in response to the ETI studies and advocacy of the faith communities.

The **Helen Bader Foundation** (now **Bader Philanthropies**)

sponsored a series of three forums addressing incarceration and its impact on education, family life, and employment in 2014. ETI assisted the planning committee and HBF staff with background information on the broad and drilldown dimensions of the issues and served as panelists for two of the three forums. The HBF staff explained that, "While there have been other public and private forums on the impact of the incarceration issue in recent months, we'd like to pull the lens back and explore the connection that incarceration has with education, families and employment opportunities. Incarceration not only drives those factors after the sentence ends, but those factors also play a key role in why too many young African American men in Milwaukee find themselves entangled in the criminal justice system." The Helen Bader Foundation forums were held before capacity lunch audiences of 100+ invited guests, with a majority of the panelists African Americans and all panels including ex-offenders, whose insights proved valuable in suggesting practical steps forward.



The Helen Bader Foundation sponsored a presentation on "Incarceration, Opportunity, and the Future of Milwaukee" by law professor **Michelle Alexander** before a diverse audience of 1,800 at Milwaukee Area Technical College on September 26, 2014. A panel discussion with Alexander followed, and included Judge Carl Ashley, Milwaukee County Circuit court; Dr. Darienne Driver, Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools; Andre Lee Ellis, community activist/organizer of "We Got This;" Torre Johnson, Holton Youth & Family Center site manager for Wisconsin Community Services; Jenna Loyd of the UWM School of Public Health; and Quinn of ETI. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel columnist/writer James Causey moderated the event. The audience at MATC was deeply engaged in the presentation and the discussion following. Another 600 people assembled to hear Alexander, author of **The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness**, at the NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner in the evening.



The "team" for the Michelle Alexander event



Alexander at MATC



Alexander called the audience "on fire for justice."

Media Coverage of ETI Mass Incarceration Research

Shortly after release of its 2013 mass incarceration study ETI was contacted by Franz Strasser, a reporter for the **BBC**, who had studied the ETI research and planned a trip to Wisconsin to investigate the ETI findings and implications of the state's high rates of incarceration of black males. Strasser videotaped an interview

with Quinn on the UWM campus and visited the central city Milwaukee neighborhoods where the ETI research showed the highest concentrations of returning ex-offenders and limited numbers of jobs accessible by public transportation. While in Milwaukee Strasser interviewed Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn as well as staff and clients of Project Return, an agency serving released inmates. The resulting news magazine presentation aired on September 18, 2013. On September 19th, the BBC news presentation on ETI's research was the 8th most watched video on the BBC's English-language website. The BBC video continues to be featured when issues related to U.S. incarceration levels are aired.



During the **Democratic Party presidential debate** held at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in February 2016, NPR moderator Gwen Ifill asked candidates Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders about the UWM mass incarceration study and how they would address the problems identified regarding high prison rates for black men.



The **Milwaukee Journal Sentinel** wrote over 20 articles using ETI research to explore dimensions of the incarceration and employment problems facing African Americans and others in Milwaukee.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Coverage of Mass Incarceration Research Issues

- MJS editorial: Next attorney general should focus on Afr. Amer. male incarceration (Oct. 25, 2014)
- Milwaukee courthouse virtually closed for racial disparity discussion (Bruce Vielmetti, Oct. 17, 2014)
- Facing grim infant death rates, Milwaukee focuses on black fathers (Sarah Maslin, Oct. 11, 2014)
- Group calls for limits on use of solitary confinement in state prison (Gina Barton, Sept. 30, 2014)
- Second chances? Not for black men with criminal records (James Causey, Sept. 29, 2014)
- Author Michelle Alexander urges crowd to end mass incarceration (Gina Barton, Sept. 26, 2014)
- Milwaukee groups call on politicians to focus on causes of violence (Ashley Luthern, Sept. 16, 2014)
- Thousands of parolees go back to prison for technical reasons (Sarah Maslin, Aug. 20, 2014)
- Life expectancy gap: Again, Wisconsin blacks are near the bottom (James Causey, Aug. 16, 2014)

- A Wisconsin epidemic: Imprisoning black men (James Causey, July 12, 2014)
- A new public health crisis (James Causey, June 24, 2014)
- A retired police officer's nightmare (James Causey, May 16, 2014)
- Sentencing disparities (James Causey, May 16, 2014)
- The fear of driving while black (James Causey, May 13, 2014)
- Minority impact bill addresses mass incarceration (James Causey, Jan. 14, 2014)
- Try drug treatment, not prison (James Causey, Dec. 7, 2013)
- A troubling tendency to lock up blacks (James Causey, Nov. 16, 2013)
- An epidemic of life sentences (James Causey, Sept. 28, 2013)
- Justice, the Eric Holder way (James Causey, Aug. 13, 2013)
- Is Milwaukee set up like a plantation? (James Causey, June 25, 2013)
- Trauma is very common among prison inmates (James Causey, May 25, 2013)
- Over half of black men in their 30s in Milwaukee County have been incarcerated (Causey, Apr. 18, 2013)

 James E. Causey | In My Opinion [E-mail](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)

A Wisconsin epidemic: imprisoning black men



James E. Causey
The Rev. Willie Brisco, president of MICA, the coalition of Milwaukee innercity religious congregations, said the religious community needs to be the voice of those who are not being heard. He called the black male prison crisis deplorable.

July 12, 2014

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Wisconsin black male incarceration

African-American men are being incarcerated at epidemic levels throughout the state and not just in Milwaukee County. About 43% of black men between the ages

More than 40% of black men in Wisconsin between the ages of 30 and 44 have served time in a state prison or are currently incarcerated, a new study from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee researchers shows.

The latest study on the mass incarceration of black males should shock everyone. We are not talking about the worst areas of Chicago, Detroit or Baltimore. These are men from Milwaukee, Racine, Green Bay and Kenosha — all in the prime of their lives.

Columnist James Causey interviewed Lois Quinn for a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel “Fourth and State” video addressing black male incarceration.



In November 2013 WUWM, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's public radio station, initiated a “Milwaukee Project” series on “Black Men in Prison,” inspired by the ETI research work on black male incarceration. The WUWM programs aired several times a week for over seven months, exploring topics related to the criminal justice and prison issues facing Milwaukee and Wisconsin men of color. This series has been critically important in raising public awareness and education regarding levels of imprisonment among men of color in Wisconsin and in identifying inequities in the criminal justice system. Along with the ETI prison research studies, the WUWM “Black Men in Prison” series has brought the needs of imprisoned African American men and their families to the forefront of public discussions after decades of neglect.


NPR News in Milwaukee

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Project Milwaukee: Black Men in Prison



BLACK MEN IN PRISON

WUWM 89.7 PROJECT MILWAUKEE

MILWAUKEE mptv PUBLIC TELEVISION

WUWM & MPTV Special Series
Why are so many Wisconsinites behind bars?
And, what are the costs?

In the 2010 Census, Wisconsin had the highest percentage of incarcerated black men in the nation. One out of every eight black men of working age is behind bars. In Milwaukee County, more than half of African American men in their thirties have served time in prison.

Over the course of six months, WUWM and MPTV explored Wisconsin's high rate of black male incarceration, through expert analysis and personal stories.

UWM scholars (including Pawasarat, Quinn, David Pate, and Stan Stojkovic) were interviewed for a number of the WUWM programs addressing the mass incarceration issues and provided background analysis for many more programs. The WUWM programs reached an estimated 95,000 listeners a week in the Milwaukee region and remain available online to many more residents throughout the state.

WUWM Public Radio “Black Men in Prison” Series

REDUCING INCARCERATION AND RECIDIVISM LEVELS

- Republican “high hopes”: Bipartisan legislative panels look at criminal justice reform (Jan. 5, 2015)
- Cutting Wisconsin’s high black male incarceration rate: Progress, but a long way to go. (Nov. 11, 2014)
- Faith-based network demands: Allow parole to ex-offenders who have served their time under pre-1999 laws (July 9, 2014)
- Two Milwaukee mothers speak of need for forgiveness (July 8, 2014)
- Bi-partisan call to revisit Wisconsin’s “truth-in-sentencing” amid swelling prison populations (June 9, 2014)
- Counselors say Wisconsin must invest more resources, time into helping offenders with mental illnesses (May 27, 2014)
- Community forum: Numerous changes needed, if Wisconsin is to reduce black male incarceration (May 23, 2014)
- Black men in prison, what we’ve learned so far (May 19, 2014)
- Essayist Paul Heinz: “We shouldn’t charge children as adults” (May 15, 2014)
- Innercity teens need “grit” – and so do state and local policymakers (May 14, 2014)
- Milwaukee’s drug treatment court keeps some men out of prison (May 8, 2014)
- Felmers Chaney Correctional Center Advisory Board members: ways to reduce Wisconsin’s \$1.2 billion corrections budget (May 6, 2014)
- Madison looks to close inequality gaps (May 6, 2014)
- Milwaukee community leaders hope job training in prison will bring down the numbers (May 5, 2014)
- Milwaukee father: My time in prison doesn’t define me (Apr. 29, 2014)
- A Milwaukee mother reflects on son’s life in and out of prison (Feb. 18, 2014)
- Felony records take toll on lives of black men (Feb. 11, 2014)
- Black men in prison: Stories behind the statistics (Dec. 9, 2013)
- Many of Wisconsin’s black male offenders go back to prison, struggle to stay out (Nov. 15, 2013)
- Reaction to UWM study: Young black men should focus on education and entrepreneurship (Apr. 22, 2013)

COMMUNITY IMPACTS OF MASS INCARCERATION

- Reports show extreme racial disparities in Wisconsin (Nov. 12, 2014)
- Inner-city Milwaukee teens reflect on life among crime, poverty (Apr. 22, 2014)

- Impact of high black male incarceration reaches across state (Apr. 4, 2014)
- Black male incarceration devastates Milwaukee 53206 neighborhood (Feb. 25, 2014)
- Caring adults help black youth steer clear of prison (Nov. 21, 2013)

POLICING AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

- Uneven enforcement of marijuana laws and racial disparity (Aug. 21, 2014)
- Milwaukee leaders call for “ceasefire” ahead of surge in summer violence (May 13, 2014)
- Police seek end to “get even” violence (Mar. 21, 2014)
- Police say “more traffic stops mean less crime” (Mar. 20, 2014)
- Derelict properties often havens for wrongdoers (Mar. 19, 2014)
- Chief Flynn says policing not the cause of high rate of black male incarceration (Dec. 20, 2013)
- The role driver’s licenses play in black male incarceration (Dec. 20, 2013)
- Nearly 100,000 driver’s licenses suspended each year in Milwaukee (Dec. 17, 2013)

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

- A life of caring, Mother Clara cultivates love and hope on her Milwaukee block (May 21, 2014)
- Milwaukee urban farmer hopes to train ex-convicts, build entrepreneurial skills. (May 16, 2014)
- Efforts to instill hope in children of incarcerated men (May 13, 2014)
[See Sesame Street “Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration” toolkit]
- Parents behind bars help fund scholarships for inmates’ kids (May 12, 2014)
- Milwaukee men get skilled on fatherhood (May 6, 2014)

WHY IS WISCONSIN’S INCARCERATION RATE SO HIGH?

- Rev. Brisco: Wisconsin’s rate of incarceration of black men an “undeclared state of emergency” (Mar. 14, 2014)
- The role poverty, violence and despair play in black male incarceration (Nov. 26, 2013)
- Drug policies from 1990s led to high numbers of incarceration (Nov. 25, 2013)##
- Why are so many black men in Wisconsin behind bars? (Nov. 15, 2013)
- Thousands of black men follow common path to prison (Nov. 13, 2013)
- Wisconsin’s high black male incarceration rate concerns community leaders (Nov. 11, 2013)
- Study: Wisconsin far and away leads nation in black male incarceration (Apr. 21, 2013)

NATIONAL RESEARCH

- Khalil Gibran Muhammad, author of *The Condemnation of Blackness*, on how crime statistics were used to condemn African Americans (May 2, 2014)
- Imani Perry, Princeton University professor, on “racial inequality still a strong American cultural reality” (Apr. 24, 2014)
- Marc Mauer of The Sentencing Project on Wis. following U.S. trends imprisoning higher rate of black men (Nov. 23, 2013)

In May 2014 **WUWM** and **MPTV**, Milwaukee’s public television station, organized a community forum to address the issues of mass incarceration. Over 400 residents assembled at the downtown library for the event. The town hall forum culminated with probing questions and suggestions from families of ex-offenders, community activists, and staff from the criminal justice system. As part of the event, WUWM and MPTV arranged for several dozen community agencies that offer services to ex-offenders and their families to set up booths to explain their work and arrange contacts for those seeking services. The Milwaukee Public Library staffed a table to register voters.

Forum: Numerous Changes Needed, if Wisconsin is to Reduce Black Male Incarceration

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By ANN-ELISE HENZL



Dozens of people shared suggestions this week, for how to reduce the state's high rate of African American incarceration.

Milwaukee Public Radio and Milwaukee Public Television held the event on May 20, in Centennial Hall of the Milwaukee



Moderators Mitch Teich and Joanne Williams with



A second community forum was sponsored by WUWM and MPTV at the **Wisconsin Black Historical Society and Museum** with presentations by Rev. Willie Brisco, Rev. Mark Evans, Torre Jackson, and E. Michael McCann. Panelists called Wisconsin's disproportionate incarceration of black males an "undeclared state of emergency." MPTV posted 1½ hour videotape of the program on its website.

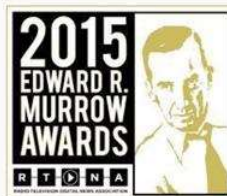


The WUWM "Black Men in Prison" series was awarded the prestigious Edward R. Murrow Award for the outstanding news series in large radio markets, and LaToya Dennis, one of the WUWM reporters instrumental in developing the series, was awarded regional and national NABJ awards for her radio feature on "*Milwaukee Man Starts Mentoring Program for Black Youth in 53206*," an inspiring story in the series.

WUWM Wins National Edward R. Murrow Award

By CHRISTINE LAMITINA • JUN 24, 2015

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The Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) has awarded WUWM the national Edward R. Murrow Award for outstanding News Series (large market radio) for *Project Milwaukee: Black Men in Prison*. This prestigious honor is one of the most respected in the broadcast industry, and represents WUWM's relentless pursuit of excellence in journalism.

Over more than seven months, beginning in November 2013, WUWM explored Wisconsin's high rate of black male incarceration, through expert analysis and personal stories.

The Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) has awarded WUWM the national Edward R. Murrow Award for outstanding News Series (large market radio) for *Project Milwaukee: Black Men in Prison*. This prestigious honor is one of the most respected in the broadcast industry, and represents WUWM's relentless pursuit of excellence in journalism.



For a follow-up project, WUWM was selected by the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting** as one of 15 proposals (out of more than 200) for funding for its “Precious Lives: Before the Gunshots” series. In January 2016 the CPB highlighted WUWM’s collaborative work and described ETI’s contribution to WUWM’s project.



Milwaukee Collaboration Provides Platforms for New Voices

January 2016

"This is Precious Lives ... Stories about kids, teens, guns — how we end the violence. Because we are precious."

CATEGORIES

Station Spotlight, Journalism, Radio

SPOTLIGHTS BY CATEGORY

• [American Archive](#) (2)

Recently, the Precious Lives collaborators received a CPB-sponsored [Localore: Finding America](#) grant from AIR, the Association of Independents in Radio. This new grant will help them launch a concurrent series, Precious Lives: Before the Gunshots, produced by Eric Von, which will examine the causes of gun violence in Milwaukee through storytelling and live events.

Both series trace their roots to [Project Milwaukee: Black Men in Prison](#), a six-month special report WUWM broadcast starting in 2013 based on work by University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee researchers John Pawasarat and Lois Quinn. Their [research](#) found that Wisconsin had the highest incarceration rate for black men in the country, and that by their 30s, more than half the African American men in Milwaukee County had spent time in prison. Town hall meetings held by WUWM and Milwaukee Public Television drew more than 500 people, and WUWM used taped interviews to create a Tumblr page called [More Than My Record](#), featuring men with criminal records sharing their experiences.

The WUWM reporting and community engagement raised public awareness of the black male incarceration rate in the community before the issue gained national attention.

Local Milwaukee television stations produced a number of half-hour and hour-long shows addressing ETI’s research on mass incarceration issues and employment needs of ex-offenders.

MPTV’s “Black Nouveau” hosted by Joanne William had a number of programs addressing incarceration issues, including a taping with Atty. R.L. McNeely of the NAACP, Lois Quinn, and Reverend Joe Ellwanger from MICAH (June 11, 2014). Five “Black Nouveau” segments focused on mass incarceration issues.

Andrea Williams, executive producer of **“Our Issues Milwaukee”** on **MVTV** channels 18 and 24, interviewed Wendel Hruska from Project Return, and Quinn about the high levels of incarceration among African American men and employment needs of ex-offenders (January 19, 2014).



The **MPTV Fourth Street Forum** organized a panel discussion and Q&A session on “Black Men in Prison: Exploring the Crisis, Changing the Outcome” with Denise Callaway (moderator) of Milwaukee Public Schools, LaToya Dennis of WUWM, Quinn from ETI, and Clem Richardson of Project Return (February 28, 2014).

WTMJ4 promoted a February 2015 Black History Month event to help residents who have been arrested or convicted address employment concerns. The program held at Villard Square Library attracted about 60 area residents interested in clearing criminal records for themselves or relatives.



John Pawasarat was interviewed for a 30 minute segment on **WisconsinEye** by Senior Producer Steve Walters in April 2013, discussing the newly-released ETI report on the number of African-American men incarcerated in Wisconsin prisons and employment challenges for ex-offenders.

On **Wisconsin Public Radio**, the **Kathleen Dunn Show** had an hour long segment interviewing Pawasarat and Rev. Willie Brisco, President of MICA, talking about labor force needs of ex-offenders and community alternatives to incarceration in September 2013.

Cheryl Corley of National Public Radio interviewed Pawasarat, District Attorney John Chisholm, a spokesperson for churches allied to reduce Wisconsin incarceration levels, and Milwaukee ex-offenders in her five minute audio exploration of why Wisconsin's black male prison rates are so far above other states.

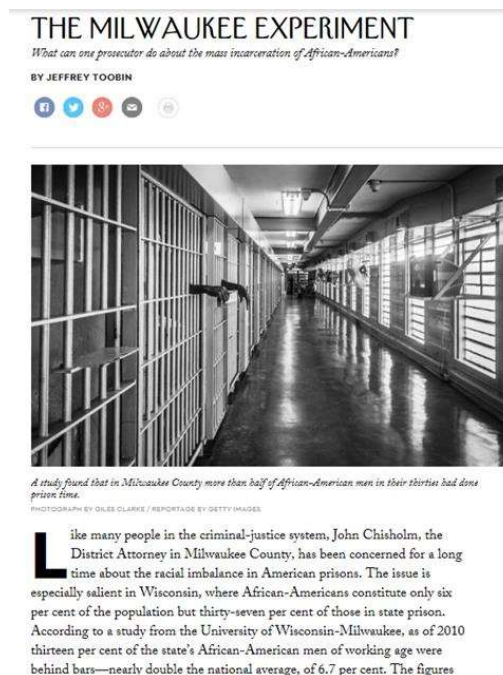
Gene Demby, the lead national blogger for **NPR's** “Code Switch: Frontiers of Race, Culture and Ethnicity” series interviewed staff from the Benedict Center about the ETI findings.

ETI worked with a **film crew from Baltimore** preparing a documentary on mass incarceration of African American men in the U.S. and examining re-entry policies for those released from state prison.



Another film crew prepared a documentary on mass incarceration in Milwaukee zipcode 53206, a subject of published research by the Employment and Training Institute since 2007.

The **New Yorker** highlighted UWM ETI's prison research in its May 11, 2015 cover story feature by Jeffrey Toobin on "*The Milwaukee Experiment: What Can One Prosecutor Do About the Mass Incarceration of African Americans.*"



IV. **Addressing Income Inequality in Milwaukee County**

ETI researchers responded to requests from the **Milwaukee Mayor's Office** to prepare two research papers, **The State of Milwaukee County "Working Poor" Families: An Economic Report Card (2015)** and **12 to 1 Income Inequality Among Working Families in Milwaukee: Workforce Challenges for 2014 (2014)**. These reports used state income tax filing data for tax filers with dependents to analyze family income by zipcode and family status. This collaborative work with the state Department of Revenue is focusing on employed single and married parents not earning enough to support their families in today's economy.

The ETI staff presented research data to the General Membership of the **NAACP-Milwaukee Branch** as part of their exploration of how the documented levels of mass incarceration impact voting rights, employment, criminal justice, education and community health issues being addressed by the NAACP committees and executive board. Four ETI studies prepared in collaboration with the NAACP focused on employment needs of African Americans and Latinos in Milwaukee:

Who's Training Milwaukee's Future Builders? Race/Ethnicity of Construction Trade Apprentices in the Milwaukee Area (2013). This report provided racial/ethnicity and gender data on apprentices by construction trade joint apprenticeship committee, based on data from the Wisconsin Department of

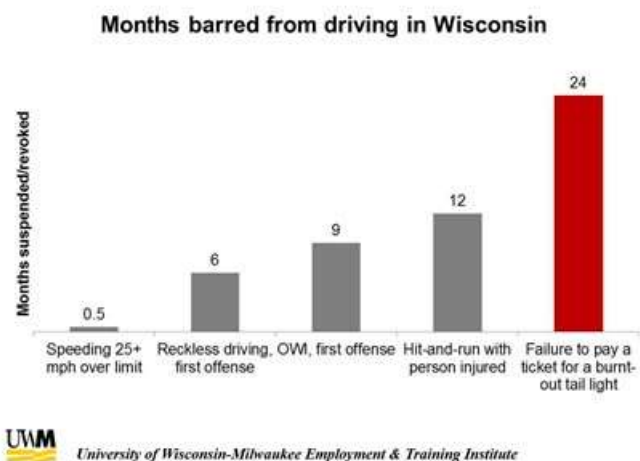
Workforce Development Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards. The report examined hiring patterns of 17 joint apprenticeship committees serving the Milwaukee area with report cards provided for 298 contractors with apprentices. The data are provided to assist the NAACP’s Labor and Industry Committee in its work promoting economic opportunities for African Americans and other minorities in Milwaukee.

Who’s Building Milwaukee? Race/Ethnicity of Employees in the Largest Construction Firms in the Milwaukee Area (2013). This study used U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission data submitted by private companies in the Milwaukee metropolitan area with 100 or more workers to measure the economic health of the construction industry as well as the commitment of the largest firms to hiring of African American, Hispanic and other minority workers.

Building on African American Assets: Resource Data for the ONE MKE Summit (2013). This paper, prepared for the NAACP Young Adult Committee and the African American Chamber of Commerce, detailed Census Bureau American Community Survey five-year estimates for 2011 by zip code and race to help describe concentrations of income for African Americans in central city Milwaukee. The paper also provided examples of stereotypes perpetuated by several of the largest data marketing firms that are denigrating the predominantly African American neighborhoods and ignoring the relative advantages of urban density for retail locations.

“Milwaukee Plan” for Construction Trade Apprenticeships? (2014). In 1970 the Labor Department called for a “Milwaukee Plan” that over five years would bring the number of African Americans employed in skilled construction jobs proportional to their percentage of the population (then 11-12% in the city of Milwaukee and 6-7% in the four-county area). Specific racial goals for employment of workers of color were deemed essential to the concept of the [unmet] 1970 DOL hiring plans with proposed timelines, sanctions for noncompliance, and committed funding for training. This paper assesses the components for a possible 2013 “Milwaukee Plan.” To ensure similar implementation outcome goals in 2013 the state Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards would need to be restructured into a more effective oversight agency charged with and held responsible for monitoring apprenticeship training, affirmative action compliance with state and federal contracts, and enforcement of non-discrimination in hiring and on-the-job activities.

John Pawasarat collaborated on a project with the **Justice Initiatives Institute** examining Branch A Milwaukee Municipal Court cases from 2008 to 2013 using records obtained from the Milwaukee Municipal Court and the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office and focusing on the population incarcerated for municipal ordinance violations. The resulting report on **Cited in Milwaukee: The Cost of Unpaid Municipal Citations** (2015) found that a majority of those jailed for failure to pay municipal judgments were not employed at the time of booking. Municipal courts often deny Wisconsin residents unable to pay or delinquent in paying court judgments for municipal citations their right



to drive for two years -- jeopardizing workers' employment options and placing them at risk in the criminal justice system if found "driving while suspended." Additionally, thousands of low-income Milwaukee teens of color failing to pay fines on municipal violations (even if unrelated to driving) are barred from getting their driver's license for two years. Several reforms resulted from the research.

The **Milwaukee Common Council** altered the city penalties for possession of low amounts of marijuana, decriminalizing most such offenses based in part on ETI research findings that a disproportionate number of African Americans are cited for marijuana offenses, are unable to pay the fines, and end up in jail.

The **Milwaukee Municipal Court** revised the notifications it provides to persons receiving municipal citations to help clarify conditions under which fines can be challenged by low-income residents and the implications for not appearing in court on possible warrant issues, in response to ETI research and the work of a consortium of agencies assembled by the Milwaukee Justice Initiatives Institute.

The **Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service** developed a 5,300 word "*Special Report on Milwaukee Municipal Court: Residents of Poor Neighborhoods See More Than Their Share of Costly Municipal Citations*," with reporter Brendan O'Brien using ETI research and additional data requested from John Pawasarat for this in-depth feature. The Milwaukee NNS frequently includes research findings from the Employment and Training Institute in its news coverage.



Residents of poor neighborhoods see more than their share of costly municipal citations

Despite the rampant poverty that grips Milwaukee's inner city, citations that carry a

The Milwaukee **Shepherd Express** prepared two in-depth features focusing on ETI research studies and highlighting recommendations: "*Is It Time to End Mass Incarceration: An Issue on Which Both Conservatives and Liberals Agree*" (April 28, 2015) and "*Is Being Poor a Crime? New Study Shows How Common It Is to Be Jailed for Failure to Pay Municipal Fines in Milwaukee*" (May 12, 2015), by Lisa Kaiser.

Milwaukee County secured a \$150,000 planning grant from the **MacArthur Foundation** (with a potential for up to \$2 million in additional funding) to address Wisconsin's highest incarceration rate for black men and the disparate poverty rates for blacks versus whites as factors impacting disparate jailing rates in the county.

Citing ETI research to document need, the **Medical College of Wisconsin** funded a two-year \$395,749 initiative in zipcode 53206 for a "Safe Surrender Policy" to reduce the number of fugitives in Milwaukee. The project is in collaboration with the courts, district attorney, U.S. Marshall, Public Defender, WISDOM, 9to5, Project Return, ACLU, Voces de la Frontera, Justice League, Justice Point, Amani, and Wisconsin Jobs Now.

Citing ETI's mass incarceration research as a factor in its rationale for the urgency of action, the **Greater Milwaukee Foundation** launched a new funding initiative targeted at "Promoting Racial Equity and Inclusion in Milwaukee." The first round of grants to Milwaukee nonprofits and governmental agencies totaled \$1,036,100.

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Racial Equity and Inclusion

Promoting racial equity and inclusion



The Greater Milwaukee Foundation is fully committed to leading and supporting all aspects of inclusion and diversity in our communities and in addressing disparities based on race. An active and intentional dedication to racial equity and inclusion is essential to developing a vibrant 21st century community, reflects the realities of our region and our country, and is important to future economic development and sustainability. We will continue to promote the benefits of a multi-faceted approach to supporting and enhancing equity and inclusion throughout our communities.

Recent Grants

Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee: \$25,000 to support coordination of a training curriculum and a professional development series that will help nonprofits build their capacity to better serve boys and men of color.

9to5 Wisconsin: \$37,000 to support "Ban the Box," a grassroots campaign designed to persuade the city of Milwaukee to remove the box on its job application form that asks if individuals have ever been convicted of a crime.

African American Chamber of Commerce: \$80,000 (over two years) for a project, in partnership with Milwaukee Black Business LLC, which will provide marketing tools, resources and other technical assistance to African American-owned businesses in Milwaukee to help them grow.

Artists Working in Education: \$60,000 (over three years) for Five x Three, a youth-led community design project that will engage more than 500 youth and culminate in 15 large-scale art installations throughout the Clarke Square, Harambee, Layton Boulevard West, Lindsey Heights and Washington Park neighborhoods.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee: \$100,000 (over three years) toward development of a pilot program for elementary and middle school boys of color ages 9 to 12 called "At Promise," which will strengthen their social and emotional learning skills.

Cardinal Stritch University: \$80,000 to create an alumni program for its African American Leadership Program, a 9-month program which builds the leadership skills and potential of African American professionals from multiple sectors within the community. The grant will also help support creation of a long-term plan for the program's future.

Cross Lutheran Church: \$86,100 (over three years) to develop training and educational opportunities for men of color to help them strengthen their leadership skills.

Grandesco Solutions: \$20,000 to enable Prism Technical Management and Marketing Services to create a program for at-risk boys of color that would introduce them to careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Milwaukee Academy of Science: \$75,000 (over three years) for an after-school program called Project Empower Nova, which will educate students on the historical roots of racial and economic disparities and empower them to respond to and redress those issues in their community.

Medical College of Wisconsin: \$60,000 to support an in-depth study that will seek to understand the reasons for the substantial cancer health disparities among Milwaukee's African American population, particularly with breast cancer.

MICAH Wisconsin: \$50,000 to support the position of a full-time young adult organizer who will work with young adults and participating congregations in the 53206 area to help reduce mass incarceration.

Public Policy Forum: \$28,500 to support a research project that would look at how city government uses its tools to link the investment of public dollars to job opportunities for unemployed low-income city residents.

Reformation Lutheran Church: \$9,500 to teach 80 people of color about internalized racial oppression and how to address it.

Southeast Asian Educational Development: \$80,000 (over two years) to conduct an environmental scan of the Hmong community and create a leadership training program that will increase the community and civic engagement of Hmong refugees in Milwaukee.

Voces de la Frontera: \$80,000 (over two years) to support an immigration coordinator position that will help the agency's efforts toward organizing, conducting outreach and providing assistance to immigrants with deferred action and citizenship applications.

Wisconsin Black Historical Society: \$70,000 (over two years) to conduct an analysis of the nonprofit social services providers that have served central city residents on Milwaukee's north side and examine their impact on the African American community.

YWCA of Southeast Wisconsin: \$80,000 to cover the costs of a community readiness assessment that will identify new solutions for Milwaukee's business community to employ low or unskilled job seekers.

Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion: \$35,000 toward the facilitation of listening sessions between law enforcement and residents in Milwaukee's Harambee, Metcalfe Park and Amani neighborhoods that would address the issue of racial profiling.

In June 2015 Wisconsin Community Services awarded Quinn and Pawasarat its **Friend of the Friendless Award** for their research work addressing issues of racial and criminal justice and poverty in Milwaukee. This WCS award is given annually “to recognize persons and/or agencies that have shown a long-term commitment to meeting the needs of those considered ostracized from the mainstream of the community.”

Lois Quinn and John Pawasarat receive Friend of the Friendless Award

JUNE 19, 2015 BY WISCONSIN COMMUNITY SERVICES — [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

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As researchers and leaders at the Employment and Training Institute (ETI) of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Lois Quinn and John Pawasarat have been key voices about some of the most pressing social dilemmas Milwaukee faces. In recognition of their extensive contributions to the community's understanding of issues such as mass incarceration and employment barriers for African American males, Wisconsin Community Services, Inc. (WCS) presented each with a "2015 Friend of the Friendless Award."

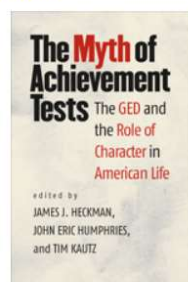
"John and Lois have worked tirelessly to bring issues of injustice, and inequality to the forefront," said WCS Associate Executive Director Clarence Johnson. "The extensive and thoughtful research they have provided over the years has served and will continue to serve as a foundation for improving public policy for those in our community whose voices are not always heard or acknowledged."

V. **Collaboration with Other Universities and Colleges**

Since the 1990s Pawasarat and Quinn have collaborated with James Heckman, an economist at the **University of Chicago**, on research related to the GED, soft skills needed for employment, and preparation of adults for postsecondary education. In 2000 Heckman was awarded the Nobel Prize in economics for his work using microeconometrics, with much of that research focusing on the GED credential, utilizing employment, earnings, and behavioral data sets on GED recipients. In 2014 the University of Chicago Press published an edited work on **"The Myth of Achievement Tests: The GED and the Role of Character in American Life"** that includes Quinn's history of the GED test along with summaries of Heckman's considerable body of statistical research related to the use of the GED for credentialing high school non-completers.

The Myth of Achievement Tests

THE GED AND THE ROLE OF CHARACTER IN AMERICAN LIFE



SHARE



EDITED BY JAMES J. HECKMAN, JOHN ERIC HUMPHRIES, AND TIM KAUTZ

464 pages | 153 line drawings, 34 tables | 6 x 9 | © 2014

Achievement tests play an important role in modern societies. They are used to evaluate schools, to assign students to tracks within schools, and to identify weaknesses in student knowledge. The GED is an achievement test used to grant the status of high school graduate to anyone who passes it. GED recipients currently account for 12 percent of all high school credentials issued each year in the United States. But do achievement tests predict success in life?

Contributors

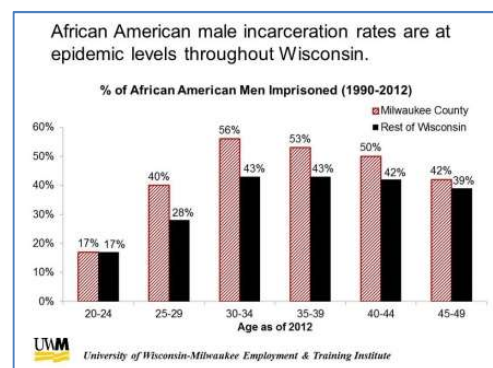
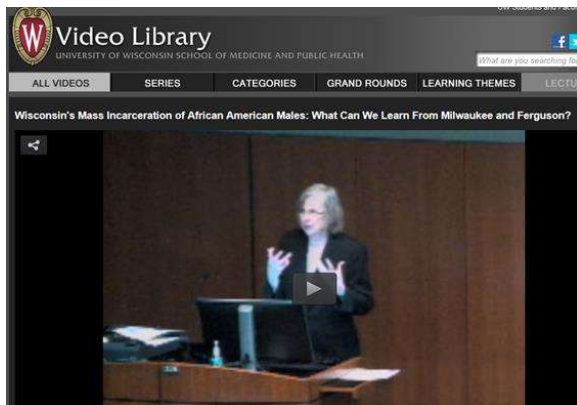
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Quinn was invited to the **Marquette University** Department of Psychology Fall 2013 Colloquium to speak on *“Mass Incarceration, Foreclosures, and Purchasing Power Assets in Inner City Milwaukee: Using Neighborhood Drilldowns to Get the Big Picture.”* Afterwards she met with students interested in pursuing research and careers in Milwaukee.

ETI participated in a panel discussion at **Beloit College** in March 2015 on “Institutional Racism and the Black Body,” one of a four-part series on #blacklivesmatterBeloit, organized by the African American faculty, administrators and students and religious groups at the college. Participants included Nicole Truesdell, director of the McNair Scholars Program and adjunct assistant professor of anthropology; Courtney Patterson, visiting professor and Ph.D. student at Northwestern University; Mark Smith, local anti-racism and incarceration justice activist; Devon Mccray, a Beloit College student; and Quinn from ETI. The session, focused on racial aggressions and racial privilege on campus and in the city of Beloit, was moving and insightful with a highly engaged audience. It remains available on the Beloit College website.



In 2015 Quinn was asked to present a lecture to the **University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health** on *“Wisconsin’s Mass Incarceration of African American Males: What Can We Learn from Milwaukee and Ferguson?”* The talk was live-streamed to faculty and students off-site and made available for public viewing. After the talk Quinn met with the Dane County District Attorney and UW faculty conducting research in Milwaukee to discuss mutual research interests related to Wisconsin prison and employment concerns.



The **UW-Madison Law School**, citing the ETI research on mass incarceration of African American males in Wisconsin, in October 2014 brought Bryan Stevenson to campus to speak about his work on criminal justice reform. In Fall of 2015 in an extraordinary application of the Wisconsin Idea, the University of Wisconsin-Madison expanded their collaboration with Stevenson through the campus “Big Read Program,” distributing 5,000 copies of Stevenson’s book on “Just Mercy” to freshmen and others, with 170 courses using the book to help engage in the issues of criminal justice in Wisconsin and the U.S.

VI. **The Wisconsin Idea – “The Boundaries of the University Are the Boundaries of the State”**

The research studies and technical assistance work of the Employment and Training Institute are used by communities throughout Wisconsin to address criminal and racial justice issues.


The **Dane County Executive’s Office** used the ETI research and consulted with Pawasarat for background information in formulating workforce, driver’s license, and criminal justice strategies to reduce racial disparities in law enforcement and opportunity in Madison and Dane County.

The **Kenosha Public Library** organized a “Big Read” with over 75 community events (book discussions, films, plays, panels, gatherings) focusing on issues of race and equality and using Harper Lee’s **To Kill a Mockingbird** and **Go Set a Watchman** as unifying discussion tools. For the session on “Racism in Wisconsin: Stories and Statistics,” Joyce Mallory of the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee, Andre Brown of Project Return, and Lois

Quinn from ETI presented statistics on criminal justice and racial inequities and participated in the community discussion moderated by Kenosha County Supervisor Dayvin Hallmon.



The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families Budget Project initiative draws on ETI research for its research and policy reports. The Project’s “Prison Price Tag: the High Cost of Wisconsin’s Corrections Policies” November 2015 monograph and video expanded on ETI recommendations for addressing mass incarceration.



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Wisconsin Budget Project

Video: Prison Price Tag

Wednesday, December 2, 2015 at 5:10 PM by Tamarine Cornelius

Prison price tag

**WISCONSIN LOCKS UP:
MORE AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN
& NATIVE AMERICAN MEN
THAN ANY
OTHER STATE**

after they are released, support their families, and make contributions to the state's economy.

One out of every eight African-American men in Wisconsin are behind bars, and Wisconsin locks up African-American men of working age at nearly twice the average rate nationally. Wisconsin also locks up a bigger share of Native American men than any other state.¹

The 12.8% of African-American men who are incarcerated in Wisconsin far exceeds the share locked up in any other state. For comparison, Wisconsin incarcerates more than twice as many African-American men than Minnesota does given the relative population sizes, more than 80% more African-American men than Michigan or Illinois, and 27% more than Iowa.

Individuals who have been incarcerated often have a hard time finding work, and the high rate of African-American incarceration in Wisconsin has contributed to a high unemployment rate among African-Americans. One out of five African-Americans in Wisconsin were out work and looking for a job in 2014, and the unemployment rate among African-Americans in Wisconsin was nearly five times as high as it was among whites.²

Wisconsin's incarceration of African-Americans is far out of line with rates in other states, and communities are dealing with the effects of having people who were formerly incarcerated struggle to find work.

HOW TO REDUCE INCARCERATION COSTS

The good news is that there are concrete steps Wisconsin can take to bring down the high monetary and community cost of its corrections policies.

By taking steps to cut the cost of corrections, Wisconsin would be following in the steps of other states like Kansas, South Carolina, and Texas that have considered alternative approaches to corrections. Texas, in particular, experienced significant cost savings from a series of reforms aimed at putting fewer people in prison.

From 2007 to 2011, Texas enacted laws that created drug treatment programs, offered non-prison sanctions for technical parole violations and expanded parole and probation eligibility...[Through fiscal year 2013], these

Wisconsin Imprisons a Larger Share of its Black Males than Any Other State

Share of African-American men age 18 to 64 incarcerated in state or local correctional facilities, based on the 2010 Census.

WI	12.8%
OK	9.7%
IA	9.4%
PA	9.1%
CA	8.8%
IL	8.2%
LA	8.1%
TX	7.7%
CO	7.7%
KS	7.7%
FL	7.7%
OR	7.4%
MO	7.2%
NE	7.2%
UT	7.2%
CH	7.1%
MI	7.1%
KY	7.0%
ID	6.9%
VA	6.9%
AR	6.9%
IL	6.8%
AR	6.8%
AZ	6.8%
WY	6.7%
US	6.5%
NV	6.4%
MT	6.2%
GA	6.2%
TN	6.2%
SD	5.9%
NR	5.9%
SC	5.9%
VT	5.9%
WA	5.9%
HJ	5.9%
AL	5.4%
NY	5.3%
MS	5.2%
PI	5.2%
DE	5.2%
NC	5.0%
NA	5.0%
MD	4.6%
NM	4.5%
MA	4.5%
ME	4.5%
WV	4.0%
ND	3.7%
AK	2.6%
H4	1.8%

Source: Employment and Training Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison
WISCONSIN BUDGET PROJECT



The **COULEECAP** community action program serving La Crosse, Monroe, Crawford, and Vernon counties used ETI's research to help inform its efforts addressing poverty and incarceration. The agency released a policy report and video on "*Racial Disparity in the U.S. Criminal Justice System*" in June 2015 and is recommending a series of changes in incarceration policies for juveniles.

Pawasarat was asked by the **U.S. Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs** to prepare background materials for the OFCCP's work overseeing affirmative action compliance in federally-supported construction project. Pawasarat participated in a roundtable discussion on "Employment over Recidivism: Overcoming Ex-Offender Employment Barriers" sponsored by the OFCCP for government and community agencies.