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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 most 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.

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.

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.

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.

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’ 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.
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.
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.
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.

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.

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.

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)

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.
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)
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.
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.
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.

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 Pwasarat 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 Pwasarat and Rev. Willie Brisco, President of MICAH, talking about labor force needs of ex-offenders and community alternatives to incarceration in September 2013.

Cheryl Corley of National Public Radio interviewed Pwasarat, 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 52306, a subject of published research by the Employment and Training Institute since 2007.

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.

Employment and Training Institute research and outreach work has provided a valuable community catalyst for attracting funding to Milwaukee central city neighborhoods and for increasing projects aimed at addressing the needs of underserved and disadvantaged populations, the target groups identified for service through the University of Wisconsin-Extension tax dollars provided to UWM.
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.
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**

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.
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.
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.