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Mayor Fulop to Host Second Annual Prisoner Reentry Conference: ‘The Prisoner’s Story’; Speakers Include U.S. Attorney Paul Fishman, Former NYPD Commissioner Bernard Kerik and Former Heavyweight Boxing Champion Mike Tyson

Jersey City Prisoner Reentry Program is National Model; In Second Year, Conference to Draw 600 Attendees

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop will host the **Second Annual Prisoner Reentry Conference: The Prisoner’s Story** from **9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2015** at Saint Peter’s University, featuring a distinguished list of speakers that includes **U.S. Attorney Paul Fishman**, former **New York City Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik** and **former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson**, as well as numerous elected officials, academics, and reentry experts.

Jersey City’s prisoner reentry program - launched by Mayor Fulop in 2013 - has become a national model, with leaders around the country looking to Jersey City as an example of how reintegration can be successfully replicated in other cities. Several mayors from around New Jersey, as well as law enforcement officials such as Baltimore Police Commissioner Anthony Batts, medical professionals and leaders from the faith-based community are part of the conference, which is expected to draw upwards of 600 attendees, building on last year’s successful event.

“We know too many Americans have not had a real opportunity to succeed, and it’s our responsibility to provide them the tools to build healthy, productive lives,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Our prisoner reentry center is a home of second chances where positive transformations are taking place every day, and we are seeing the impact our program is having on so many lives.”

In an effort to expand opportunities for all Jersey City residents, Mayor Fulop created the Jersey City prisoner reentry program – the first of its kind in New Jersey. Known as Martin’s Place – the program coordinates and streamlines a myriad of reintegration tools to provide clients with addiction treatment, sober housing, and employment training. The center assists the unemployed and ex-offenders with addiction recovery, and transitional housing, as well as job training and employment. In its first year, 178 residents have been enrolled, with 115 already gaining employment.

Of the re-entry clients served in 2014, 82 percent have successfully avoided new interactions with law enforcement, which is significantly better than the national recidivism rate of 56.7 percent reported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

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In addition to Fishman, Kerik, and Tyson, the conference – sponsored by Jersey City Employment and Training Program, Saint Peter’s University, the Jersey City Medical Center and Integrity House – will feature former New York Times reporter and minister Christopher Hedges and Hudson County Director of Corrections Oscar Aviles, among other reentry leaders.

“Mayor Fulop has provided national leadership on one of the most difficult yet pressing public policy issues of our lifetime,” said **Governor James McGreevey, executive director of the Jersey City Employment and Training Program**. “On Thursday, the focus is on ‘the prisoners story,’ which will underscore the challenges and opportunities of assisting formerly incarcerated persons as they return to healthy productive living.”

The goal of the conference is to establish best practices for reentry to improve the success of ex-offenders returning to society. The conference will focus on the trauma, stress, medical and behavioral challenges of an inmate’s journey from childhood to prison to reentry, and provide a platform to discuss better local and regional reentry efforts by analyzing these challenges.

Each panel of the conference will look deeper into the challenging journey of an inmate’s life. The first panel will explore early childhood stressors of the inmate such as substance abuse, social stress and life changes when they were young. The second panel will discuss the stress and impact of prison upon an inmate affecting their mental and physical health, and the last panel will discuss the challenges of an inmate’s reentry into work. Each panel discussion will provide attendees with an opportunity to contribute thoughts and ideas to achieve better overall reentry practices.

Anyone who cannot attend the conference but would like to watch the event, can view a live stream at <http://live.jcetp.org>

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////

Jersey City Prisoner Reentry Conference Panels & Speakers

Panel 1: Childhood (10am)

Exploring the early childhood stressor of the inmate

Eric Arauz MLER (Moderator)

President, Trauma Institute of New Jersey Adjunct Faculty

Instructor: Psychiatry Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Heather Forkey, M.D.

Clinical Director, Foster Care Evaluation Service,

UMass Memorial Medical Center Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Frank Mazza

Director of Reentry, JCETP and Hudson County Department of Corrections

Tracey Shors, Ph.D

Behavioral Neuroscientist and Professor, Rutgers University

Rev. Gloria Walton

Executive Director, Most Excellent Way of Life Center, Jersey City

Helena Muhammad

Deputy Manager, Reentry Services, JCETP

Panel 2: Incarceration (11am)

Exploring the stress and impact of prison upon the inmate

Joe Hayden (Moderator)

Attorney, Walder Hayden

Robert Fullilove
Associate Dean and Professor, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

Angelo Lutz
Mob Chef

Bernard Kerik
Former New York City Police Commissioner

Sister Elizabeth Gnam
Chaplain, New Jersey State Prison, Trenton

Father Martin McGeough
Coordinator, Diocese of Trenton Jail and Prison Ministry

Imam Rasoul Suluki
Supervisor, New Jersey State Prison, Trenton

Sharpe James
Former Mayor of Newark

Keynote Address: (12pm)

Introduction:
Mayor Steven Fulop

Mike Tyson
Heavyweight Champion, Author

Paul J. Fishman
US Attorney, District of New Jersey

Panel 3: Post Prison (1pm)
Reentry at Work

John Koufos (Moderator)
Reentry Director, JCETP

David Keene
Past President, National Rifle Association

Anthony Batts
Police Commissioner, Baltimore

Francine LeFrak
Philanthropist, President, SameSky Inc.

Jaelyn Cherubini
Director, Hoboken Shelter

Mayor Ras Baraka
City of Newark

Mayor Jose Torres
City of Patterson

Mayor Eric Jackson
City of Trenton

The Honorable Robert Kirsch
Superior Court Judge