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**Burnout Risk for In-Prison Educators Could Jeopardize
Programs for Incarcerated Students**

*Innovative initiative will strengthen programs by training
California Community College faculty and staff on trauma and resilience*

BERKELEY, CALIF. (JANUARY 15, 2018) — Teaching in prison takes an unexpected toll on the health of college faculty and staff. And if educators don't have the tools and resources they need to counteract those impacts, the sustainability of their programs — and the fates of thousands of students — are put at risk.

The [McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research at New York University](#) and [Corrections to College](#) — a joint project of the Opportunity Institute and the Stanford Criminal Justice Center — are teaming up to address this challenge. They're partnering with faculty and staff from 17 community colleges for **Sustaining Futures: A Trauma-Informed and Resiliency-Based Community of Practice for California Community Colleges Teaching in Prison**, an innovative initiative that will help faculty and staff learn how to better navigate the high levels of trauma in in-prison classrooms by providing a contextual framework on trauma and resiliency and by offering a comprehensive set of tools.

“The burnout risk is very real for educators working in prisons,” said **Kellie Nadler**, Corrections to College deputy director. “Faculty and staff are passionate, but often unprepared for the very real impacts of serving people who have been dehumanized by the incarceration system. It's critical that faculty and staff get the support they need to continue serving the thousands of students who rely on them.”

California's community colleges are leading the nation in reaching incarcerated students, offering more than 270 full-credit degree-building college courses in 32 of our 35 state prisons and serving nearly 4,500 incarcerated students.

“We want to help faculty and staff understand and improve the ways they respond to the trauma of incarcerated students,” said **Andrew F. Cleek**, PsyD, chief program officer of the McSilver Institute. “We hope this will improve the performance of the students and likelihood that they will continue their education after release, but also improve retention rates of faculty and staff.”

The team of experts at NYU McSilver has 10 years of experience running Communities of Practice on trauma-informed care for social workers, health care providers, and large organizations. The

team has concrete strategies for reducing staff turnover, improving student engagement, integrating trauma-informed classroom strategies, and boosting faculty and staff well-being.

Research shows that higher education can reduce recidivism, change lives, and open pathways to living wage careers for people who have been incarcerated.

“If the community of practice created during the program succeeds in California, it can serve as a model to replicate in other states,” said **Michael A. Lindsey**, PhD, MSW, MPH, executive director of the McSilver Institute.

Sustaining Futures: A Trauma-Informed and Resiliency-Based Community of Practice for California Community Colleges Teaching in Prison will include in-person trainings in Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Sacramento and San Diego throughout 2019, concluding with a fall convening in November 2019.

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ABOUT THE MCSILVER INSTITUTE

The McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research at New York University is committed to creating new knowledge about the root causes of poverty, developing evidence-based interventions to address its consequences, and rapidly translating research findings into action through policy and best practices. Each year it holds the McSilver Awards, recognizing five extraordinary leaders transforming systems to tackle structural poverty and oppression. Learn more at mcsilver.nyu.edu and [sign up](#) for updates.

ABOUT CORRECTIONS TO COLLEGE

[Corrections to College](#) is part of Renewing Communities, a five-year initiative designed to transform the public higher education system so that the state’s colleges and universities serve incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students as part of their mission. It is a joint project of the [Opportunity Institute](#) and the [Stanford Criminal Justice Center](#).