



Day 1

Thursday, February 6

9:30–9:55 AM **Check-In & Networking**

9:55–10:30 AM **Welcome Remarks**

Yaacov Delaney

Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of the Justice, Equity, & Opportunity Initiative,
Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Dr. Katrina E. Bell-Jordan

President, Northeastern Illinois University

Juliana Stratton

Lieutenant Governor of Illinois

Delrice Adams

Executive Director, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

10:30–10:55 AM **Higher Education in Prisons Task Force Report: Key Findings and the Road Ahead**

Orlando Mayorga

Chair of the Illinois Higher Education in Prison Task Force;
Program Officer, Polk Bros. Foundation

11:00–11:55 AM **From Classrooms to Communities: Voices of Students and Alumni in Higher Education in Prison Programs**

MODERATOR

Michelle Daniel Jones

Co-Founder and President, Constructing Our Future;
Co-Editor, *Who Would Believe a Prisoner? Indiana Women's Carceral Institutions, 1848–1920*;
Doctoral Student, American Studies Program at New York University

PANELISTS

Maria Garza

Student, Northwestern University

Michael Harrell

Alumni, Education Justice Project (University
of Illinois Urbana-Champaign);
Student, Northeastern Illinois University

Jose Verduri

Alumni, Lewis University

Tony Pizarro

Founder, Kintsugi LLC;
Program Manager, Envisioning Justice
(Illinois Humanities);
Doctoral Candidate, North Park University

Colette Payne

Director, Reclamation Project (Women's Justice
Institute)

12:00–12:55 PM Lunch & Networking

1:00–1:45 PM Breakout Session #1

Participants rotate through tracks – check your assigned rotation.

Tracks offered:

- Expanding In-Person and Digital Education Access
 - Opportunities and Challenges with Pell Grant Implementation
 - Recruiting New Higher Education in Prison Programs
 - Reentry Pathways to Campus
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1:45–2:00 PM Break

2:00–2:45 PM Lessons from the Field: Learning from Higher Education in Prison Programs Across the US

MODERATOR

Jacob Derrick

Policy Director, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

PANELISTS

Adam Bush

President, College Unbound

Vanessa Estimé

Assistant Director, Yale Prison Education Initiative

Jessica Neptune

Director of National Engagement, Bard Prison Initiative

Justin McDevitt

Program Director, Women's College Partnership (Marian University)

Allan Wachendorfer

Program Manager, Vera Institute of Justice

2:45–2:55 PM Break

3:00–3:45 PM Breakout Session #2

Participants rotate through tracks – check your assigned rotation.

3:45–4:00 PM Closing & Announcements

5:00–6:00 PM Film Screening: *Degrees of Freedom*

A short discussion with *Degrees of Freedom* Producer, Michelle Daniel Jones, will immediately follow the screening.

Degrees of Freedom (35 minutes) – Directed by Aisha X. Elliott, Cheryl Wilkins, Kathy Boudin, and Jake Ratner; Produced by Michelle Daniel Jones and Logan McBride

*In the tough-on-crime 1990s, harsh laws eliminated college programs in American prisons. Refusing to accept this injustice, women at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility determined to bring higher education back inside the prison walls. Their achievement became a widely emulated model, leading to thousands of incarcerated people earning diplomas. In *Degrees of Freedom*, the women narrate their powerful journey of organizing behind and through the bars of New York's only maximum-security prison for women to create a transformative community of care—reclaiming their futures and challenging the narrative of who they are and what they can achieve.*

Day 2

Friday, February 7

9:30–9:40 AM

Opening Remarks

Garien Gatewood

Deputy Mayor of Community Safety, City of Chicago

Delrice Adams

Executive Director, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

9:40–10:00 AM

Keynote Address

Michelle Daniel Jones

Co-Founder and President, Constructing Our Future;

Co-Editor, *Who Would Believe a Prisoner? Indiana Women's Carceral Institutions, 1848–1920*;

Doctoral Student, American Studies Program at New York University

10:05–10:45 AM

Breakout Session #3

Participants rotate through tracks – check your assigned rotation.

Tracks offered:

- Expanding In-Person and Digital Education Access
- Opportunities and Challenges with Pell Grant Implementation
- Recruiting New Higher Education in Prison Programs
- Reentry Pathways to Campus

10:50–11:45 AM

The Current Landscape of Higher Education in Illinois Prisons

MODERATOR

Delrice Adams

Executive Director, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

PANELISTS

Sandra Brown

Director of Training and Education,
Women's Justice Institute;
Educator, Logan Correctional Center

Flor Esquivel

Administrative Director, Illinois Coalition for
Higher Education in Prisons

Maria Miller

Office of Adult Education and Vocational Services,
Illinois Department of Corrections

Timothy Barnett

Professor of English and Women's/Gender/Sexuality
Studies, Northeastern Illinois University;
Steering Committee, Illinois Coalition for Higher
Education in Prison

Rebecca Ginsburg

Associate Professor, Department of Education Policy
at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign;
Director, Education Justice Project (University of
Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

11:50–12:25 PM Lunch & Networking

12:30–1:25 PM Navigating Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education in Prison Programs

MODERATOR

Angel Pantoja

Reentry Policy Coordinator, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

PANELISTS

Dr. Tresa Dunbar

Superintendent of Schools,
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice

Jennifer Foster

Executive Deputy Director, Illinois Community
College Board

Dr. Maléka Ingram

Executive Dean of the Online Campus,
Adler University

Jennifer Lackey

Wayne and Elizabeth Jones Professor
of Philosophy, Northwestern University;
Director, Northwestern Prison Education Program

Jennifer Parrack

Chief of Programs, Illinois Department
of Corrections

1:30–2:15 PM Breakout Session #4

Participants rotate through tracks – check your assigned rotation.

2:15–2:25 PM Break

2:30–3:30 PM The Path Forward: Setting Goals for Action and Impact

Visioning and goal setting exercise

MODERATOR

Willette Benford

Senior Advisor, Office of MK Pritzker

4:00 PM Adjournment