

The Bridgeport Reentry Collaborative is a unique voluntary association of state, federal, and local agencies, business, community service providers, former offenders and others impacted by offender reentry in the greater Bridgeport area. The Collaborative's mission is to serve the needs of former offenders by identifying and reducing barriers to reentry through the sharing of information and resources, educating the community, and influencing public policy.

Begun in May 2007, the Bridgeport Reentry Collaborative has met monthly. Meetings are open to all those interested in advancing effective reentry practices and contributing to a safer and more equitable Bridgeport community.

Since its inception, the Bridgeport Reentry Collaborative has:

- 1) Met every month since its inception in May 2007 (Ninth Anniversary, May 2016)
- 2) Helped to create six other reentry "roundtables" in New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, Windham County/Willimantic, and New London/Norwich, New Britain
- 3) Hosted meetings with the CT Commissioners of the Departments of Correction, Labor, and Children and Families
- 4) Received two federal grants in 2008 from U.S. Departments of Justice and Labor to create a collaborative effort focused on employment for former offenders
- 5) Published four editions of a pocket reentry resource guide for returning offenders
- 6) Successfully enacted a "Ban the Box" ordinance for the City of Bridgeport in 2009 with the help of Rosa J. Correa from the Bridgeport Civil Service Commission and Nadine Nevins from Nadine Nevins of CT Legal Services
- 7) Produced two offender-specific job fairs in 2008/2009 and purchased advertising on an I-95 billboard for the 2009 event
- 8) Developed two statewide reentry conferences with the other state "roundtables" and the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy which were held at Central CT State University in January 2010 and 2016 drawing over 700 participants
- 9) Created two videos with underwriting help from Malta Prison Volunteers. "The Prodigal Project" 2010, won several national awards and focused on hiring former offenders; "Our Opportunity" 2012 focused on the high cost of mass incarceration
- 10) Produced an annual reentry awards event (2012 – 2016) recognizing a total of more than 300 individuals from the offender community, business, advocates, and local service agencies for their personal achievements and support for effective reentry practices

Career Resources' Director of Community and Business Relations, Dan Braccio, has provided leadership to this association serving as convener and co-chair of the collaborative since August 2007.