

# Correctional Programming and Research Design:

## What the Project Greenlight Evaluation Can Tell Us

James Wilson  
Fordham University

# Project Greenlight

- Partnership between
  - NYS Dept. of Correctional Services
  - NYS Division of Parole
  - Vera Institute of Justice
- Eight weeks of intensive prison-based pre-release programming
- Evaluation funded by Jeht Foundation and NIJ
- Designed as 3-year evaluation
- Program terminated after one year due to funding issues.

# Project Greenlight Overview

- Eight weeks of intensive programming (9 am -5 pm, 5 days a week) including:
  - Cognitive Behavioral Skills Training (R & R)
  - Housing
  - Job Readiness
  - Practical Skills
  - Substance Abuse Awareness & Relapse Prevention
  - Building Network of Community Supports
  - Family Reintegration Sessions (at night)
  - Parole Conditions
  - Individual release planning sessions with a case manager

# Mixed Research Design

- Three Groups
  - Greenlight—Intervention group (N=349)
  - TSP—Comparison group (N=276)
  - Upstate—Comparison group (N=114)

## Relationships with DOCS and Parole

- *Sequential Haphazard Assignment* – first 5 months
- *Trickle-Process Randomized* design – final 5 months

# Interim Outcomes (3 months after release)

- *Parole Knowledge*—GL more familiar with and more positive about parole.
- *Service Referrals and Contacts*—GL received more service referrals and reported more contacts with community services.
- *Housing*—No difference.
- *Employment*—No difference.
- *Family Relationships*—No difference.
- *Adhere to Parole Conditions*—No difference.

# Initial Findings: Arrests, Felony Arrests, Revocations at 12 months\*

	<b>Greenlight</b>	<b>TSP</b>	<b>Upstate</b>
<b>Arrests</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Fel Arrests</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Revocations</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>13%</b>

\*Wilson, James. 2007. Habilitation or Harm: Project Greenlight and the Potential Consequences of Correctional Programming. *NIJ Journal* No. 257. NCJ 218257. Washington, DC: USDOJ.

# Comparing ReArrests (%) at 12 and 36 Months

	<b>Greenlight</b>	<b>TSP</b>	<b>Upstate</b>
<b>12 Months</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>36 Months</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>43%</b>

# Percentage ReArrested, by Risk Level, After 36 Months.

	<b>Greenlight</b>	<b>TSP</b>	<b>Upstate</b>
<b>Low</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>High</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>42%</b>

# Explaining The Results ???

- Implementation, Program Design and Risk Level of Study Participants
  - Indications that early negative effects associated with specific case managers
  - Design: 26 per class; 5 days a week; tutor training
  - Broad-based program serving everyone—no risk/needs assessment
  - High-risk or low-risk offenders

# For More Information about Greenlight or the Research:

James Wilson  
Department of Sociology  
Fordham University  
113 West 60<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10023  
212-636-6398  
[wilson@fordham.edu](mailto:wilson@fordham.edu)