

**Ash Institute Summer Fellowship in Innovation  
Project Description | 2009**

**Getting Ready: Keeping Communities Safe  
State of Arizona (Phoenix, AZ)  
2008 IAG Winner**

**Organization:**

The Arizona Department of Corrections' real world re-entry effort, Getting Ready, begins the day inmates are admitted and continues throughout their sentence. This system-wide reform measurably reduces relapse, revocations, and recidivism.

The Getting Ready Program has four facets. First, individual corrections plans are created for all inmates, based on a thorough assessment of security risk and skill development needs, which outline appropriate levels of supervision and recommend participation in programs that promote employability, sobriety, and literacy. Second, employment and educational opportunities are made available to inmates during the "workday," as well as self-improvement activities, such as Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and family and community-focused activities during leisure hours. Involvement in productive pursuits is incentivized, as confinement conditions improve with participation. Third, in the year prior to release, inmates prepare more intensively for discharge, focusing their efforts on obtaining a GED or job skills certificate and addressing public safety, health, and affordable housing concerns. Lastly, and in general, the entirety of Arizona's penal system operates according to real world standards. Only inmates with GED certificates qualify for coveted work assignments; disciplinary policy focuses on violations of law as opposed to prison rule, and it is the prerogative of prisoners to manage their own time and money. The success of the *Getting Ready: Keeping Communities Safe* reform effort is evident. Since the initiation of the program in 2004, prison violence is down, with inmate/inmate and inmate/staff assault dropping 37 percent and 51 percent respectively, with rates of sexual violence and suicide likewise decreasing, the former by 70 percent and the later by 33 percent. Recidivism for the cohort of 2,674 former inmates that participated in each of the program's four component parts is just 1.87 percent as of three years after release.

**Project Description and Duties:**

The Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) is requesting consideration for a Harvard Kennedy School Fellow to assist in gathering additional materials to be used in the Getting Ready replication process. This internship will focus on documenting and categorizing anecdotal experiences and direct observations of staff, inmates, and the public engaged in the individual facets of the Getting Ready program as well as the overall impact of the interactions between staff, inmates, and the public immersed in the Getting Ready environment.

Job duties will include documenting interviews, observations, and experiences at each of the ADC's ten prison complexes. The research provided shall assist the ADC in enhancing the effect and memorializing outcomes of the Getting Ready program and the impact it has those involved in the correctional system and communities.