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Alabama Combines High-Tech Images with Valuable Data

By Mikel Chavers

After Hurricane Katrina hit the Alabama coastline in 2005, the state couldn't get its hands on imagery that showed what the coast looked like before the storm. Without the necessary images to compare and assess the damage, Alabama was in a tight spot.

"And so the governor said, 'hey look, time out, you know we've got a lot of counties that pay a lot of money to fly and collect imagery...but then when we have a big event like a Katrina and need to see that imagery—we can't get it. We've got to do better than that,'" said Jim Walker, director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security.

So Gov. Bob Riley charged Walker and his department with solving the problem.

The images were out there, they were just scattered among the many state and local agencies. Walker set out to convince state and local groups to share their costly images. But in order to share that valuable information, Walker needed a program that was accessible and easy to use—something everyone could agree on and benefit from.

That answer came in August 2006 with the first phase of the new statewide program known as **Virtual Alabama**. The state bought an inexpensive license with Google Earth and with the Google platform, launched a way to allow every state official access to images of the entire state. The program is one of eight national winners of a CSG Innovations Award.

The images Alabama was stockpiling in the program are similar to satellite images found on Google Earth—only much better. Because most counties and regions pay to have aircraft fly over the area with special

high-tech cameras, the images on Virtual Alabama are sharp and more detailed, boasting a higher resolution.

"For instance with a satellite, you may be able to determine that that's a building. But if you fly over in an aircraft you may be able to see a truck beside that building and you may be able to see a tire inside the back of the truck," said Norven Goddard, assistant director of science and technology for the state, on loan from the U.S. Army's Space and Missile Defense Command in Huntsville, Ala.

Virtual Alabama not only gives access to high-technology images, the program also stockpiles layers of useful data from just about every state and local agency.

By typing an address in Virtual Alabama, users can compile separate layers of information on top of a house or building. They can route power lines, water lines and gas lines. They can locate sex offenders in the area, the churches and median housing income to name a few, Walker said. All those layers of information are shared by the corresponding state or local agency that collects them and are all available on Virtual Alabama.

"And so you start thinking of ways to make government more efficient, because you populate some of this data and with a click of a button it's accessible to you," Walker said. "In state government oftentimes it would take hours, days, weeks of work to go find a piece of information. But once it's been loaded, it's there for you very quickly—so you're starting to make government more efficient."

And the information is powerful. When tornadoes passed



A Virtual Alabama image shows Athens State University.

through Alabama in February, the state instructed the civil air patrol to fly the path of the tornado to take pictures of all the damage, Walker said.

Those images are compared to the shots already available on Virtual Alabama. "It's irrefutable what happened in our state," Walker said. "It took all the guesswork out of disaster declarations."

That's because the state's revenue commissioners are popu-

lating land parcel information on top of the image—who owns the house and how much it appraised for—so the damage toll can be taken.

"You think of a layer of information that would be useful to you and it would probably be useful to somebody else—so what we've done in Alabama is we've now gone beyond homeland security and we've reached out to every cabinet agency," Walker said.

FAST FACTS

- With Virtual Alabama, the state avoided paying more than \$40 million for brand-new imagery, according to Jim Walker, director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security. Instead, collecting all the state and local images already available proved a cheaper alternative—the Google Earth program license cost just less than \$150,000.
- The program has vans equipped with special radios that can communicate across department lines as well as special cameras and the latest connectivity equipment to communicate and send information to the Virtual Alabama database.
- As of May, the program had more than 3,000 state government users and imagery from all 67 state regions in the program.

Georgia Hotline Brings All-Hours Help to Mental Health

By Mikel Chavers

A call came into the 24 hours a day, seven days a week **Georgia Crisis and Access Line** and Jana Pruett, a licensed clinician, answered.

On the line was a woman who was very depressed. She had her entire supply of psychiatric medication with her. Her husband and child were out at the pool and she was alone and feeling suicidal.

Pruett could hear the desperation in the woman's voice. While talking with the woman, trying various methods to help her, Pruett looked up the woman's address in the white pages. At some point the woman hung up and Pruett called right back. The woman had taken all her pills; she had overdosed.

Pruett immediately dispatched emergency services to the woman and stayed with her on the phone. "I stayed and tried to keep her as awake as I could," she said.

The paramedics got there just as the woman was beginning to lose consciousness—but they got there just in time to save her life, Pruett said.

That's just one miracle of the Georgia Crisis and Access Line, the special hotline created by Georgia's Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases. It serves Georgia's mental health customers and helps a stigmatized audience navigate the complicated world of getting help. The service is one of eight national winners of a CSG Innovations Award.

Before the statewide hotline came along, those looking for mental health help had to wade through layers of bureaucracy and agency lingo. People had to know what community service board served their

area and had to call one of 25 phone numbers to access help. That was not an easy task, said Gwendolyn Skinner, director of the division that runs the hotline.

"And so what happens as a result of that is that people were going into crisis and the only place that they would show up would be in emergency rooms or local law enforcement would be called because you would have some domestic issues," she said.

But crisis intervention is a real-time business.

Those 25 phone numbers were often unreliable, said David Covington, CEO and partner of Behavioral Health Link, the company that Georgia contracts with for the special hotline.

"You had a lot of difficulty having 24/7 reliable access," he said. "During business hours you could probably reach someone, but again it wasn't going to be a clinician answering the phone in most of the areas of the state. And after hours there was extreme variability in being able to reach anyone."

But what's more, once a customer reached the right person, the wait times for an appointment were often frustrating—patients could wait anywhere from three weeks to three months in some areas, Covington said.

The new hotline changed all that. And not without some high-tech tools—this isn't the typical call center.

Counselors and clinicians have the ability to schedule real-time appointments for callers—callers are never put on hold. That's because the crisis line works with the state's mental health providers



A worker with the Georgia Crisis and Access Line is busy answering calls.

to allot appointment slots just for callers.

Workers like Pruett can easily access all the providers available to each caller through a database—and those are listed in order of closest, fastest and best quality. That information pops up on Pruett's computer screen.

"It makes it really easy to sit

on the phone and really connect with that person when you've got all that stuff already taken care of and it's on the screen easy to navigate," Pruett said. Then I can focus on really connecting with that person and collaborate with them and not just seem like I'm going through a list of 20 questions."

FAST FACTS

- Three out of four callers are seeking help for themselves or for a loved one. One in four callers are professionals such as law enforcement officers, schools, community mental health providers and faith-based leaders.
- A typical call lasts on average seven minutes—however, a mental health emergency call just "takes as long as it takes," said David Covington, CEO and partner of Behavioral Health Link. Those types of calls can take anywhere from 30 minutes to three hours, he said.
- The Georgia Crisis and Access Line saved the state \$12.5 million by referring callers to appropriate community resources, which helped to avoid unnecessary hospital emergency room trips.

Arizona Training Program Ensures Consistency, Cuts Costs

By Mary Branham Dusenberry

Facing a \$2 billion budget shortfall, Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano was looking for changes to make state government more efficient.

One area where state officials found savings was **Arizona Government University**, which was established in 2003 but underwent changes in 2005 to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of state employee training.

When Joellyn Pollock became director of AZGU—as it's known in Arizona—all nine large state agencies each had a designated training leader and all had previously agreed to a specific curriculum for classes, many of which were duplicative across agencies. A uniform curriculum didn't happen.

So Napolitano signed an executive order establishing a governing board for AZGU that developed plans for services, for centralizing the training system and for funding the program, according to Pollock. The revamped AZGU, which is one of eight national winners of CSG Innovations Awards, started with 19 classes, which replaced the duplicated training offered in individual agencies. It has grown to include classes that all agencies might need.

Eliminating training duplication wasn't the only goal of AZGU; Pollock said the training was in desperate need of an update.

"The training was not structurally sound. Some of it was old," she said. "Everything had to be redone, updated, so that's what we spent 2005 doing." AZGU also conducted a needs analysis of leadership development in state agencies.

Of course, some training remains with individual agencies

and departments. Technical training germane to a specific agency is still taught by an expert in that agency.

"We always focus in whatever we're doing on 'are there people in every agency that need something like this?'" Pollock said.

Sometimes, the push for classes begins in one agency and could offer benefits to others, she said. For instance, a workflow change in the registrar of contractors revealed a need for a keyboarding class. AZGU found that several agencies could also use such a class.

"That's always a marker: 'Will it improve the performance of employees across the enterprise and is it cost-efficient?' because we're all about efficiencies," Pollock said.

In addition to creating more efficiency, larger classes create a better learning environment.

"A lot of times we don't have the volumes that create a good learning environment," she said. "If two or three people are in the class you don't get the same energy or input and ideas and sharing as you do when you have 10 or 12."

But getting that many people in need of the same type of training together can sometimes be difficult, especially since 60 percent of state employees work in Phoenix, another 20 percent work in Tucson, and the rest are scattered around the state, according to Pollock.

AZGU addresses that problem by offering classes via I-link, where employees take the training via computer at their desk, according to Pollock. That cuts the travel cost for agencies with employees in far-flung areas of the state, but still provides interaction with the trainer and classmates.



Training for Arizona State Employees are offered through Arizona Government University.

"We're just thrilled that we're able to offer to people in outlying areas that we haven't been able to reach in the past," said Pollock.

But success didn't come without protest. While eliminating duplication obviously saved time and ensured conformity in training, some agencies were hesitant to endorse AZGU. That attitude is slowly changing, according to Pollock.

Employees who had participated in training, however, began to talk about how good and useful the training was. Now, any training program offered by AZGU is exclusive to the program. That eliminated "the most vicious and insidious costs," when an employee transferred to another agency, according to Pollock. Those employees didn't have to retake the same training

in the new agency.

Funding for AZGU comes from three sources:

- agency payments of \$8 per employee at the beginning of the fiscal year to develop curriculum and updates;
- training delivery fees starting at \$10.50 per hour for each employee who takes training; and
- money from the human resources arm of state government, which is required by law to fund training.

Pollock is pleased with the growth and success of AZGU, and said the program can be easily replicated in other states.

"We always have room for improvement and things continue to change," said Pollock. "But I can tell you that our training is structurally sound. It's updated. Things are consistent."

FAST FACTS

- The initial budget for AZGU in 2005 when the program was revamped was \$1.2 million.
- AZGU courses are developed in a competency-based structure, and trainees are asked to give feedback after taking courses.
- AZGU training is provided by experts in the field to ensure quality and consistency across curriculum.

Online Dashboard Adds Transparency to Washington Transportation Projects

By Mary Branham Dusenberry

Just a few years ago, Washington state Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen wanted to do away with the state's Transportation Improvement Board.

"There was a huge backlog of projects that never got completed, so they had all this money in essence just sitting there, not working," she said. "The money was given out without any accountability."

The Transportation Improvement Board, known as TIB in Washington, is a small state agency that funds and administers local transportation projects with cities and counties throughout the state. In 2001, it had 976 approved projects pending, but only enough funding for 550 of them.

"There was a lack of accountability. You couldn't really identify what the project would be," Haugen said. "The city would come in and say 'we have this wonderful project,' and there was no way to really track what the project was or how the money was spent."

So Haugen, chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, wanted to shut down TIB and absorb it into the state Transportation Cabinet.

A lot has changed since then. Haugen is now one of TIB's biggest supporters, and she attributes that to a new executive director, Stevan Gorcester, and a new **Dashboard Management System** that offers the transparency for not only project funding but also for project development. The system is one of eight national winners of CSG Innovations Awards.

Gorcester brought that innovation to the agency, which was fraught with problems when he arrived.

"There wasn't the kind of fi-

ancial control that's necessary in an agency that at the time was giving out about \$10 million a month," Gorcester said. "I found out on the fourth day we couldn't pay anybody for five months."

The performance management program he developed—the Dashboard—was aimed at not only helping the program recover but also to ensure problems wouldn't reoccur. Here's how it works: Information from the agency is fed into a data warehouse and is then instantly converted into easily read charts and posted to the TIB Web site at <http://www.tib.wa.gov/performance/Dashboard/>.

The Dashboard, which began internally, was initially about 25 Web pages deep, Gorcester said. It is used to develop performance and financial reports for the board, which can help board members make better policy decisions. The program went live externally in May, allowing public access.

Gorcester said every Washington resident won't need all the information on the Dashboard, but when it comes to projects that affect them, individuals are keenly interested.

"Our system is not something the average citizen would use every day," he said. Instead, Washington's cities and counties, as well as state legislators, may use it regularly. But, Gorcester added, "the average citizen would need it when they have an interest in a project one way or another and they want to find out what's going on."

The site includes a compendium of photos, maps, details and progress of each project.

"What we intended was to make sure that our board knew what was going on with the programs, projects and money



Stevan Gorcester, executive director for the Washington state Transportation Improvement Board, explained how the Dashboard Management System works to the Innovations Committee at the CSG-WEST annual meeting in July. Photo by Mary Dusenberry

so they would be empowered to make business decisions that were in turn sustainable and would strengthen the agency rather than overallocate the funds," he said. "It's gone so far beyond that."

Gorcester said the dashboard system is easily transferable to other agencies and states. In fact, Washington state officials are looking at a statewide program based on the Dashboard, according to Gorcester, who has traveled around the country to explain the system.

His primary advice is that anyone looking to adopt a similar monitoring system should not overlook the need for good data.

"This type of work perfor-

mance management starts with good quality data that's accurate and warehoused well," he said. "People don't treat the data sometimes as a work effort in and of itself."

It's important to begin such a system with a data readiness assessment, determining the status of the data, where it's housed, whether it's accurate and whether it's sufficient for what is being monitored. Then an agency or state would need to decide on a single database that can be used to produce the dashboard system.

The system, Haugen said, addresses one key need: "Transparency is absolutely something we have to have in government today," she said.

FAST FACTS

- Washington's Dashboard Management System cost \$40,000 in new equipment and approximately 400 staff hours, including training, to become fully operational.
- Annual operational costs are less than \$50,000, depending on upgrades and the amount of time spent on new projects.
- The Transportation Improvement Board is funded by 3 cents per gallon portion of Washington's state gas tax; that revenue totaled \$185 million in 2007.

DelaWELL Keeps Delaware Budget, Employees in Good Shape

By Mary Branham Dusenberry

Susan Graham had been on every diet imaginable, but she was still packing nearly 200 pounds on her 5-foot-6-inch frame around this time last year.

"I'd have goals and I'd want to exercise when I got home, but time was just never there," said Graham, who works in the Delaware Economic Development Office, "because I put everyone else first."

Then came DelaWELL, an innovative Delaware program aimed at improving the health of the state's employees, retirees and their families. The program is one of eight winners of CSG's 2008 Innovations Awards.

"It's not rocket science," said Jennifer "JJ" Davis, director of the state's Office of Management and Budget, which runs the program. "It's a relatively straightforward way to implement wellness in your health care program that has tangible results.

Finding those tangible results—including saving money for the state while improving the health of its work force—was a challenge issued to Davis' office by Gov. Ruth Ann Minner. But DelaWELL answers the challenge by assessing health risks and providing personalized strategies to help Delaware state employees and their families address specific health care needs. DelaWELL also offers participants online resources and tips for health care.

What started as a small pilot project with only 100 participants, has quickly grown to nearly 68,000 participants as it has evolved with the needs of members, according to Davis.

"We really went on a grass-

roots campaign, talking to people and saying 'what would engage you in your health care?'" Davis said.

One answer they found most often was education. "(Participants) really needed to know about their own biometrics," Davis said.

And DelaWELL makes it easier for participants to learn that information about themselves. Biometric health screenings are done onsite at many state offices, and workers have the opportunity to participate in wellness activities. Last spring, Davis said, DelaWELL held a run/walk event and had to turn people away.

"We thought we wouldn't get more than 50 people to do the run/walk, and we had to shut down registration when we hit 600," she said.

Part of the reason for the success of the program may be the incentives offered by the program—those who participate in a health risk assessment and biometric screening receive a \$100 pre-tax bonus, for instance—but part of it may also be the motivation provided through e-mails and information about health care.

At least that was the case for Graham.

"I think to be successful, you have to have daily affirmations ... the daily reminders of what health really means, and you have to be accepting of it," said Graham, who has lost 59 pounds since she began the program last November.

And, Graham said, it doesn't hurt to be competitive, like with the Governor's Challenge and the Lieutenant Governor's Challenge. The competition in the run/walks, she said, was a source of motivation. "It was exciting to



DelaWELL participants race in one of the program's run/walk events.

say I ran my mile and a half today, or I ran my two miles today. I'm a very competitive person by nature, and that helped motivate me," she said.

She's not alone.

The DelaWELL Web site—www.delaWELL.delaware.gov—is filled with testimonials, and the results can be seen easily in how the program has grown.

Davis said DelaWELL promised that any savings in health care costs would be put back into the program. That promise was fulfilled, in one way, with the addition of Weight Watchers in February. Since that program was launched, participants have lost more than 7,000 pounds

collectively as of September, according to Davis.

Individual employees aren't the only winners. The state has kept health care costs flat for three years. And Davis said people are more engaged—they are absent less and are more productive.

She said the program has been replicated in the private sector, and could easily be adopted by other states.

"Investing in health care before you really need it seems like an unusual investment, particularly in tight budget times," Davis said. "For us, it just makes sense and now we can demonstrate how it makes sense."

FAST FACTS

- Delaware state employees receive a \$100 pre-tax incentive paycheck bonus when they attend a biometric screening and complete a health risk assessment through DelaWELL.
- DelaWELL offers employees the opportunity to monitor their health online; the agency contracts with an outside vendor to provide those services.
- DelaWELL is funded by the State Employee Benefits Committee, which approved a \$1.4 million budget, plus \$500,000 for incentives, over a two-year period.

Research Model Provides Objective Data for Pennsylvania Corrections

By Mary Branham Dusenberry

Pennsylvania corrections officials wanted to know if the drug treatment programs in state prisons were working.

So they teamed up with Wayne Welsh of Temple University to find out. The results: The state's therapeutic communities, which then operated at seven facilities, were successful. So successful, in fact, that the state added 20 more such programs.

"Right now, we're in a position where we'll have a therapeutic community in every institution," said Kathy Gnull, deputy secretary for re-entry and specialized programs in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. "That's a direct result of the research findings that showed we were making a marked difference in terms of outcomes.

"Had it not been for that study, I don't know that we would be in a position where we could have requested expansion," she said.

It was that empirical evidence that showed the need for program expansion. The research was considered even more objective because it came from an independent researcher, Gnull said.

The way Pennsylvania's corrections department handles research ensures extra objectivity, according to Gary Zajac, chief of research and evaluation for the department.

"When an agency evaluates its own programs, it can be open to criticism that it was trying to make its own program look good," said Zajac. "By working with an external partner, particularly when that partner is independently funded by a third party, that promotes the credibility of the research because

that partner is not beholden to us for money.

"They've got the expertise and objectivity to come in and basically tell it to us like it is."

The state's **Program Evaluation Research System**—one of eight national winners of a CSG Innovations Award—brings together university-based researchers and third-party funders to conduct studies needed by the corrections department, according to Zajac. Pennsylvania, unlike many states, has a fairly large research staff, but it still can't conduct all the evaluations the department needs.

Here's how it works: The department identifies its needs for program evaluation, then identifies an outside expert to conduct the evaluation. After forming a research partnership, the department works with that partner to develop an evaluation plan. The research partner applies for a grant from a third-party funder to conduct the evaluation. The department typically uses the results to make decisions about the program.

For some, like the drug treatment program, the department's work is lauded and the program is expanded. Others, such as a long-distance dads program for inmates, are discontinued after researchers determined the program was ineffective.

Research at state agencies isn't new, but this strategy is very different than the traditional formula. Under that formula, researchers submit a proposal and ask for support from the corrections department, Welsh, of Temple, said. The proposal is then submitted for funding, and if funding is obtained, researchers ask the department for access to subjects.

"Typically, that kind of for-



mat addresses the needs of the researchers much more than the needs of departments," Welsh said. "In the more traditional model, the department really has little say in what kind of research needs to get done and what kinds of studies get done."

Working cooperatively from the beginning, the needs of both the researchers and departments are met. "I think it benefits both parties because we do research that is relevant," Welsh said. "If it's relevant to the department, it's probably relevant to other researchers and professionals who work in the field as well."

And the department gets information on its programs to determine how best to spend its state allocations.

"In these tougher and tougher economic times, it becomes more and more important to be able to justify your budget expenditures and requests based on hard evidence," Gnull said.

"Government is about making choices," she said. If you want to be in the mix to have your needs funded, you have to have hard evidence that they work."

Zajac and Gnull said the research model used in Pennsylvania could be easily replicated across departments and in other states. But, Zajac said, it's important to make sure the agency is open to the research and making changes.

"There isn't any reason that most agencies can't do it," he said. "The real thing is wanting to do it."

FAST FACTS

- Pennsylvania's research model—Program Evaluation Research System—provides external expertise at little cost to the state agency.
- Findings from evaluations conducted through the program influence program planning, policymaking and decision-making.
- The program received nearly \$3 million in research money from third-party funders, and several new grants are being prepared.

Expert Witnesses in Michigan's Courtroom Go High-Tech

By Mikel Chavers

Two toxicologists were waiting in line in early October to give their expert testimony for one court, which is about eight hours away from their home-base state crime lab in Lansing, Mich.

Instead of driving there, waiting at the courthouse, giving their short testimony then driving the eight hours back, the expert witnesses simply waited their turn right in their office and prepared to testify in court via video conference.

And those 16 hours driving time they saved were precious. Instead of spending time away from the office where caseloads continuously pile up, the toxicologists were able to continue working right up to the time they needed to testify.

That's the beauty of the **Video Testimony Project**, which allows Michigan's forensic experts to testify in court using video conferencing technology. The project involves experts in all seven of the state's forensic labs to use the technology in partnership with more than 50 courts in the state. The project is one of eight national winners of a CSG Innovations Award.

The project started in December 2005 because courtroom testimony obligations were really taking a toll on forensic analysts' productivity. They'd make the drive to the court—often a long drive, especially if the court was in the northern peninsula of Michigan—and sit and wait to give their expert testimony. What's worse is that sometimes after the travel and the waiting, the court proceeding would get delayed or cancelled and the analyst either didn't testify or had to come back on a later date to testify, according to Greg Michaud, the project manager.

The hardest-hit for court testimonies is the state's toxicology division. That unit handles all drunken driving cases in Michigan and, on average, toxicologists from the state crime lab give expert testimony nearly 250 times a year, according to the Innovations Award application. That's quite a caseload on these forensic experts, Michaud said. He estimated on a heavy day, they handle 85 to 100 blood alcohol tests coming in the lab's front doors.

Michaud also estimates that 20 percent to 25 percent of all the drunken drivers in the state each day or night get their blood drawn—and that blood goes directly to the lab for testing.

So the more these experts are away, the more their caseload piles up. The toxicology unit typically has a four-month backlog, Michaud said.

And that is precisely the reason the program first started with the toxicology unit, Michaud said.

"This is a really heavy burdens unit when it comes to doing analysis work when you're talking about the entire state of Michigan and all the law enforcement agencies submitting their blood alcohols," he said. "They get called to court an awful lot."

A few years ago after Michigan's blood alcohol limit decreased from 0.1 to 0.08, the caseloads started to balloon. "We had to find some way to become more efficient—try to cut the costs somehow," he said.

So in January 2006, state law was amended to allow for video testimony for expert forensic witnesses. And even though the pilot phase began with just the Lansing lab and about a dozen courts, this summer all seven of



A Michigan toxicologist waits to testify in court via video conference in October.

the state's crime labs were outfitted with video conferencing capabilities.

The project has been slow-going so far due in part to the time it took to test the technology as well as work out all the kinks. But the other reason for the lag is due in part to the stipulation by law that both defense and prosecuting attorneys have to agree to use the video conferencing capabilities for testimonies from state expert witnesses.

"We've got to get over that hurdle," Michaud said.

The hope is to amend the stipulations so that just one attorney can call for an expert witness video testimony.

But even with those supposed hurdles, courts in the upper peninsula of the state see the real benefits of the program.

"They can see the bigger picture," Michaud said. "What they see is a quicker turnaround time on other cases waiting back at the lab."

FAST FACTS

- Initial startup costs for the program were \$28,661, including a brand new mobile plasma video conferencing system and two desktop video conferencing system for the Lansing, Mich., laboratory. Remaining equipment cost \$150,000.
- The state received two grants to fund the program—one from the Office of Highway and Safety Planning and a grant for \$150,000 from the National Institute of Justice Coverdell Grant program.
- So far, the program has 15 to 20 video conference testimonies under its belt, saving the state time and money.

South Dakota DUI Offenders Get Sober

By Mikel Chavers

In South Dakota, locking up repeat DUI offenders was the only way the state could keep them sober—but that just wasn't working.

In the state, three DUIs accumulated over a 10-year period is a felony.

That offender will probably get arrested five or six times before he or she gets the third DUI charge, said South Dakota Attorney General Larry Long. These people most likely have been on probation a few times and have been sent to treatment a few times, he said.

“And finally the judge is going to get sick of him after the third offense or perhaps the fourth offense, and send him to the penitentiary,” Long said.

It was the same story for drug offenses. By and large, these people end up doing short prison sentences and even shorter spasms of treatment, Long said.

Last year, 87 percent of men and 91 percent of women who entered the South Dakota Department of Corrections had a diagnosed alcohol or drug addiction, Long said. On any given day, 15 percent of the people behind bars in the state are there on felony drunken driving charges, according to Long.

“Alcohol addiction and drug addiction drives the criminal justice system,” Long said. “The one that is most consistent and most popular is alcohol.”

But the state's **24/7 Sobriety Program**—one of eight national winners of a CSG Innovations Award—is changing business as usual in South Dakota. Now repeat DUI offenders, in order to satisfy parole requirements, must show up at their local jail every morning and every evening—7 a.m. and 7 p.m.—to blow into a breathalyzer.

They must stay sober or go to jail.

If they pass, they go about their normal day. If they fail, they go directly to jail, conveniently located right around the corner. If they don't show up for the breathalyzer test, law enforcement picks them up at home and takes them to jail. The enforcement mechanism that was missing was set in place.

“Our court system really grabbed a hold of it,” said Pennington County Sheriff Don Holloway. “It gives the court some confidence level that people are not drinking to the extent where there would be a DUI.”

But it's also keeping people sober for longer than they've ever been, Long said. A 30-year-old participated in the program at the beginning in February 2005 and had been arrested for his seventh DUI, Long said. So they tried him out on the new 24/7 Sobriety Program. The program was the only thing keeping the man from the penitentiary, according to Long.

“He drove a bicycle to and from the test site twice a day for 10 months,” Long said. “And then he went into treatment, got out of treatment and he is still sober to this day.”

Some people in the program are middle-aged and had been drinking since age 15. State officials could see physical changes in people after two or three months of sobriety. “Their color changes, their weight changes—they become different people,” Long said.

The program began in the mid-1980s in Bennett County, where Long was a local prosecutor. He was young and new on the job and eventually it dawned



on him—“we were prosecuting the same people time after time for a variety of sins but the one common denominator was it was all alcohol related,” Long said of those days.

“Whether it was drunk driving or spouse abuse or burglary or a theft or a forgery or rape

or (aggravated) assault—it was all alcohol related. There was virtually nothing that we prosecuted of any significance that was not alcohol related.”

The issue has always been how to keep these people sober.

So far, this new program has been working, Long said.

FAST FACTS

- A DUI offender pays \$1 each time he or she comes in to take the breathalyzer test. “It's cheaper for him to stay sober and pay us two bucks a day than any other scenario for him,” said South Dakota Attorney General Larry Long, adding that it's much cheaper for the state and the offender than going to jail.
- Urinalysis testing for drugs is administered twice a week with the same program and costs participants \$5 each visit.
- Half the counties in South Dakota don't have a jail. In those counties special battery operated bracelets work like a breathalyzer machine, transferring the offender's information to the parole officer or the sheriff.

INNOVATIONS AWARDS

Finalists by Region

EAST

- Delaware Employment Link (DEL)
- Delaware's DelaWELL
- Massachusetts' Community Based Housing Program
- Massachusetts' Enterprise Invoice and Service Management (EIM/ESM Service)
- New York's NY-ALERT
- Pennsylvania's Early Intervention Program
- Pennsylvania's Industry Partnership Development and Training
- Pennsylvania's Injury Reporting and Intervention System (PIRIS)
- Pennsylvania's Integrated Children's Services
- Pennsylvania's Program Evaluation Research System (PERS)
- Rhode Island's Immunize for Life Adult Influenza Immunization Initiative

SOUTH

- Alabama's Lease Search
- Virtual Alabama
- Florida Department of Health's County Health Department Performance Improvement Process
- Florida Medicaid Choice Counseling Program
- Florida's MyFloridaMarketPlace
- Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL)
- Kentucky's Social Worker Pilot Project
- Louisiana's LHFA Insurance Offset Program
- Maryland's Adopting a New Strategy for Ecological Targeting, Ranking and Implementation of Land Conservation
- North Carolina's Upgrade and Save: Heat Pumps in Manufactured Homes
- Oklahoma's Central District Community Corrections Diversion Project

MIDWEST

- Michigan's Building Operations and Energy Management Network (BOEMN)
- Michigan eLibrary Catalog (MeLCat)
- Michigan's Energy Purchasing Cooperative Program
- Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI)
- Michigan's Video Testimony Project
- Minnesota's Drive to Excellence
- Minnesota's Learning Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP)
- Minnesota's Long-Term Care Choices Navigator
- South Dakota's Dakota Roots
- South Dakota 24/7 Sobriety Program

WEST

- Arizona Government University (AZGU)
- Hawaii's Energy for Tomorrow
- Montana's Temporary Registration Permit Service
- Washington's Full Transparency in Government – TIB Dashboard Management System
- Washington's Unclaimed Property E-Claim System
- Wyoming's Helping Families Succeed

2008
innovations
award 