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**Attach the form to all entries.** Entrants must complete all sections for the entry to be considered complete. A copy of this official entry is available electronically at [www.pacounties.org](http://www.pacounties.org).

County Name ALLEGHENY COUNTY County Class \_\_\_\_\_  
Address 7150 HIGHLAND DRIVE City PITTSBURGH Zip 15206  
Contact Name RAYMOND ROBINSON Title SOCIAL SERVICES MANAGER  
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### PROJECT INFORMATION

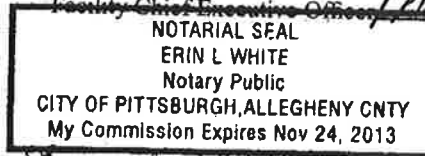
Title LIVING FORWARD Start Date 1/12

Each application must be submitted with two signatures. Place appropriate signatures on two of the lines below:

Roslynne Wilson / c.f.  
Chair of the Board of County Commissioners

[Signature]  
Facility Chief Executive Officer

Oversight Board (where applicable)



### PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Attach a separate program narrative document to the form that addresses each of the following subject areas, and does so in the order presented below. *Entries must be typed in a Word-document, Times New Roman, 10-point type.*

**A separate program narrative document must be attached to this form that addresses each of the following subject areas, and does so in the order presented below.**

- A description of the identified need and the background including what programs were in place before the current project, if any, and how it led to this effort.
- A description of the project, including any evidenced-based approaches to divert individuals from further penetration into the juvenile or adult justice system, community involvement strategies, formation of stakeholder groups, county-wide planning strategies, etc.
- A description of expectations and measurable goals, including supporting data.
- A brief description of how the project was evaluated and any lessons learned.
- A brief description of the community, including a description of key stakeholders, organizations, and county departments that were involved in the project.
- A description of how the activities described in a project started in the past were altered or will be continued based on experience, including plans for leveraging additional resources.
- A description of any costs associated with the project and how it was funded; cost savings, if any, and any change in community acceptance, reductions in insurance costs, or inspection improvements that resulted from the program.

### DATA ELEMENTS

Award submissions will receive consideration for outcomes or best practices supported by data. Please attach any supporting data to demonstrate the impact of the project in cost or population outcomes, or other data to demonstrate the considerations utilized in determining the scope or design of the project. Scoring will be based on factors including the applicants description of the problem, the soundness of the approach, and success in meeting goals and objectives.

Please attach supporting documents, forms or other information that support the award entry. Entries must be typed in a Word-document, Times New Roman, 10-point type. Entries must be received by close of business on February 22, 2013. Winners will be announced during the CCAP Spring Conference, March 17 - 19, 2013.

**More information: Brinda Carroll Penyak, [bpenyak@pacounties.org](mailto:bpenyak@pacounties.org)**

**Living Forward: Understanding & Overcoming Trauma**  
**A program of Shuman Juvenile Detention Center**  
 In collaboration with the *Center for Victims*, Staff: Patti Ghubril, Cornell Jones  
 Submitted by: Raymond Robinson, Social Services Manager, 412.665.4139

A high percentage of youth in the juvenile justice system have significant histories of trauma. In most cases, this history is not acknowledged or explored with these youth. This history of trauma contributes to an increased likelihood of future trauma. Learned responses of 'fight, flight or freeze' may lead to patterns of responding to trauma triggers with unhealthy, or even dangerous, ways of coping. In a detention center setting, it is likely that many traumatized youth are being re-stressed on a continuous basis and this contributes to acts of aggression and other behavior problems. Prior to this program, we had no system in place to identify or work with youth who have histories of trauma. When issues arose, our crisis clinician would typically be called upon to deal with kids experiencing issues related to trauma. Unfortunately, this would only occur if the youth's behavior warranted the crisis clinician being contacted.

Additionally, there was a need to develop appropriate staff responses to the behavioral challenges presented by youth who have been exposed to significant violence and trauma. In many detention settings, staff are not adequately trained to recognize and deal with youth who have significant histories of trauma.

Trauma recovery includes restoring a sense of safety, restoring a sense of healthy control, exploring remembrance and mourning of losses and reconnecting with others in healthy ways. These overarching goals are always in mind as we work with residents at Shuman.

This pilot project at Shuman Detention Center uses a trauma-informed *psychoeducation* approach with residents identified as having a history of trauma (using the MAYSI-2 tool completed by residents at admission). We also began meeting with all first-time residents of Shuman, as a preventative measure. The project is called *Living Forward*, a name given to our program by Ms. George, a staff person at Shuman.

Two trauma specialists were contracted from a The Center for Victims, a local community-based victim support agency. The trauma specialists gather small groups of single-gender residents into a neutral space at Shuman (away from the units) to introduce the topic of 'trauma' and to explain the ways traumatic events impact brain, body and behavior. We share tools for identifying trauma triggers and coping with stressors. Residents receive a small journal for processing trauma memories and coping with the difficulties of being detained.

In addition to information on trauma, each session includes an exploration of residents' innate strengths and a brief discussion of *resiliency*, which is the ability to *bounce back* after trauma. We often use expressive arts processes with the residents in exploring strengths and resiliency. Art processes are helpful in building group support, encouraging problem solving, lowering stress levels, mourning losses, aiding in trauma recovery and promoting strengths.

Following this initial one hour session, residents have the option to return, on a subsequent evening, for further discussion or to discuss any personal issues. Many residents return for second visits and a few even have additional sessions with the *Living Forward* team. Students with serious or critical issues are referred to the Case Manager or to CACTIS, the crisis unit at Shuman.

*Living Forward* is not intended to be therapy but the approach is intentionally therapeutic. In other words, residents are listened to with compassion and respect. The meeting space is intentionally 'safe' with residents' confidentiality protected; other than in situations during with mandated reporting must occur.

*We have found it very important to maintain a respectful, non-shaming, non-punitive approach to this work with residents.* Residents are understandably guarded and defensive about any confrontational conversations. One of the hallmarks of trauma-informed care is that the conversation changes from 'what's wrong with you?' to 'what happened to you?' This paradigm shift allows for the possibility of an honest exploration of residents' life choices to begin.

In addition to the work with youth, staff from The Center for Victims also provided training to all staff and administrators. This training will be continued in 2013 to help foster a safe environment with trauma-informed staff.

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The *Living Forward* program was created with funding from a Department of Justice, Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), which was awarded to Allegheny County. Nearly \$30,000 was awarded to Shuman Center, which was used to pay two part-time staff members from The Center for Victims.

Shuman Center had 1,447 unduplicated youth admitted in 2012. The *Living Forward* program saw 275 of those youth, or roughly 20 percent. With many of the youth coming back for the second session, the program had 502 total contacts with youth in 2012. While it is disconcerting to find the 1 in 5 youth admitted to Shuman Center have significant histories of trauma, it is encouraging that Shuman Center has taken steps to identify those youth and begin the healing process.

We also saw a reduction in the number of serious rule violations, but we also had a reduction in population as well. For year two of the program, we are looking to see if there was specifically a reduction in incidents for youth involved with the *Living Forward* program.