

## SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE

### JOSE A. EGURBIDE

Office of the City Attorney  
Supervising Attorney  
Neighborhood Justice Program

Jose A. Egurbide is the supervising attorney of the Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP) at the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. Mr. Egurbide has been a prosecutor at the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office for 21 years. He started out prosecuting misdemeanors as a line deputy in San Fernando Valley before supervising a number of initiatives including the Narcotics Enforcement Program, the Neighborhood Prosecutor Program, the School Safety Program, and several multi-agency crime reduction/community revitalization efforts throughout Los Angeles, including the Skid Row Safer City Initiative. Mr. Egurbide also spent five years protecting consumers and competitors from illegal, fraudulent and unfair business practices under California's Unfair Competition Law.

As lead City Prosecutor for the Skid Row Safer City Initiative from 2006-2009, Mr. Egurbide experienced firsthand the futility and expense associated with repeatedly prosecuting people charged with misdemeanors, while the root cause for their re-offending in the first place, such as drug addiction and/or mental health issues, remains largely untreated. As a result, Mr. Egurbide spearheaded an unprecedented collaboration with LAPD, local service providers, and the Public Defender's



**CJJ NJP Team Photo:** (From left to right back row): Michael Evans, Administrative Coordinator (AC), Will Sheffie (AC), Mary Clare Molidor (Chief, LACA's Criminal Branch), Maribel Jimenez (AC), Camilo Cruz (Director, LACA's Community Justice Initiatives), Jose Egurbide (Supervising Atty, NJP), and in the front row: Rodrigo Recabarren (AC), Sevitha Konda (USC Intern), Ofelia Oropeza (AC), Rosa Contreras (AC)

Office to develop Project HALO (Homeless Alternatives to Living on the Street), a pre-filing diversion program designed to intercept chronically homeless people repeatedly arrested for committing petty misdemeanor offenses at the pre-filing stage, in order to steer eligible offenders towards housing/treatment options in lieu of incarceration.

In 2014, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer tasked Mr. Egurbide with developing and implementing a misdemeanor pre-filing alternative prosecution program. The program allowed participants with no prior criminal records to avoid the negative consequences associated

with a criminal conviction, while using restorative justice principles to hold participants accountable for the harm caused to the victim and the community. The resulting Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP) not only accomplishes the above goals, but it is also voluntary and confidential, and helps address the root causes behind participants' criminal behavior through the use of an evidence-based risk needs assessment specifically developed by the Center for Court Innovation for people charged with misdemeanors. This allows NJP staff to direct program participants to a wide variety of necessary services, further impacting recidivism rates.

# SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE CONT.

Initial challenges to implementing NJP included being able to develop a robust database capable of interfacing with the City Attorney's existing Criminal Case Management System (CCMS) while maintaining participants' confidential information. Luckily, Mr. Egurbide was able to recruit Dan Jeffries, head of Strategic Data Systems for the office, and IT guru Yosu Armendia, who helped Mr. Egurbide develop a dedicated database within the existing CCMS database. The NJP database has built-in reporting capabilities for all cases referred, initiated and successfully completed, as well as tracking participant demographic information, post-panel obligations and outcomes such as 6, 12, 18 and 24-month recidivism rates. Another initial challenge was being able to hire the right case managers for the job. Mr. Egurbide believes that the success of any diversion strategy is heavily contingent upon the quality of the case managers, or the "boots on the ground." They are the ones that initiate contact with each participant and assist them through the process and Mr. Egurbide believes he "struck gold" with his six Administrative Coordinators: Rosa Contreras, Michael Evans, Maribel Jimenez, Ofelia Oropeza, Rodrigo Recabarren and Will Sheffie. Thanks in large part to each of them, the following was accomplished in the first 18 months in operation:

1,644 total referrals to NJP;

The program expanded its original list of 8 eligible offenses to include all misdemeanor crimes with the exception of the following: family violence, sexual abuse, crime of violence involving an injury or

weapon, vehicular or driving offense, drug crime, gang crime, forgery and any crime against the police;

828 initiated cases; 766 successfully resolved as of June 1;

178 Community members currently trained as NJP panelists;

9 NJP Community Panel locations currently available citywide;

295 Community Panels conducted to-date (3 participants per panel);

12 NJP Community Panels offered as monolingual (Spanish only) panels;

The NJP panel process has been made available in over 9 different languages to-date through the use of interpreter services;

7,334 total community service hours have been completed by participants as part of repairing the harm caused by offense commission;

2% 6-month recidivism rate: only 8 of 347 participants were rearrested six-months after their panel;

3% 1-year recidivism rate: only 3 of 99 participants were rearrested 1 year after their panel.

Mr. Egurbide and his staff are also fortunate enough to count on the technical assistance of both Justice and Security Strategies (JSS) and the Center for Court Innovation (CCI). Craig Uchida and his JSS team are assisting the Los Angeles City Attorney's Smart Prosecution program by analyzing relevant misdemeanor arrest and prosecution data. CCI provided the Misdemeanor Risk Needs

Assessment and Training which was necessary for Mr. Egurbide and his staff to be able to use it in conjunction with every panel participant. This helped to inform and guide the circle discussion between volunteer community panelists and participants as to what is the proper mix of needed services and obligations based upon individual circumstances.

To date, Mr. Egurbide and his staff have noted that the one-year recidivism rate of 1% within the Smart Prosecution target area is less than half the 3% recidivism rate his program is experiencing citywide, with the only difference in program methodology being the use of CCI's Risk Needs Assessment exclusively within the Smart Prosecution target area. While there is still additional data to be gathered to further evaluate the benefits of the Los Angeles City Attorney's pre-filing restorative justice diversion program versus the traditional criminal justice system for similar misdemeanor offenses, there is much to be excited about in terms of the preliminary findings, especially the cost savings associated with intercepting these cases at the pre-filing stage of the process and the low recidivism rates. Additionally, community members feel empowered by being able to participate in the process, and program participants feel the process is procedurally fair. In a recent survey, 100% of participants either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that the Los Angeles City Attorney's NJP staff was helpful and professional, that they were satisfied with the process, and that their panel outcome was a fair one.

# UPCOMING TRAINING/WEBINARS

A banner for a leadership training session. The background shows a desk with a laptop, a stack of books, and a pen. The text is overlaid on the top left. Logos for BJA and SMART PROSECUTION are at the bottom.

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING PART II**  
EXERCISING PRACTICAL WISDOM AND UPHOLDING ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS  
AUGUST 19<sup>TH</sup> | 3:00 PM

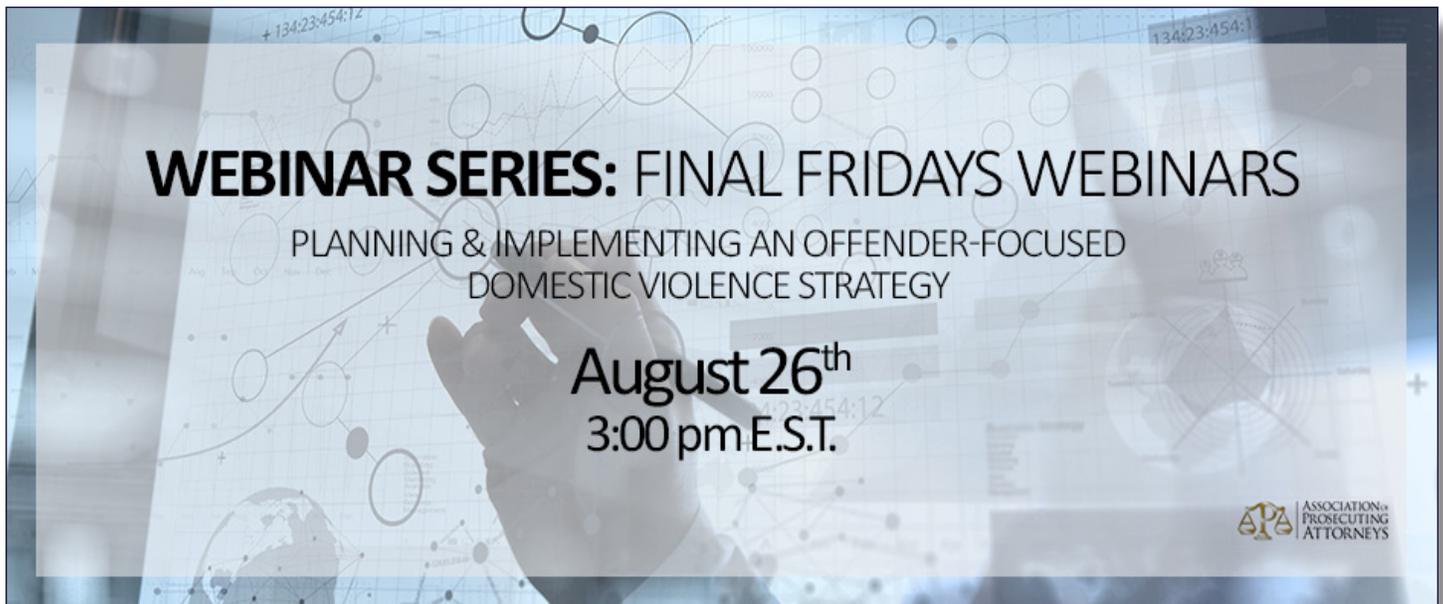
**PRESENTERS:**  
MICHELLE WAYMIRE, *CHIEF OF THE COMMUNITY PROSECUTION DIVISION*  
*MARION COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE*

KENNETH SHARPE, *PROFESSOR*  
*SWARTHMORE COLLEGE*

**BJA**  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
U.S. Department of Justice

**SMART**  
PROSECUTION

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW](#)

A banner for a webinar series. The background is a light blue grid with various icons like a globe, a hand holding a pen, and a smartphone. The text is centered. The logo for the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys is at the bottom right.

**WEBINAR SERIES: FINAL FRIDAYS WEBINARS**  
PLANNING & IMPLEMENTING AN OFFENDER-FOCUSED  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STRATEGY

**August 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**3:00 pm E.S.T.**

**APA** ASSOCIATION OF  
PROSECUTING  
ATTORNEYS

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW](#)

# SITE ACTIVITY

## Los Angeles

Weekly News: City Attorney Feuer Hails Governor and Legislature Making Shriver Civil Counsel Act Permanent

### [READ MORE](#)

Site Updates:

Project: Introducing New Tools Using Evidence and Risk Assessment to Confirm Eligibility for Prosecution Treatment (INTERCEPT).

On June 24, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office held The Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP) Colloquium for NJP community panelists, city officials and local agencies. Presentations were made by Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer, Community Justice Initiative Director Camilo Cruz, Managing Attorney and NJP Supervisor Jose Egurbide, CCI and APA. The Colloquium recognized the work of community members as well as NJP staff, and provided data and programmatic information on NJP, a pre-filing alternative to the traditional criminal process. Colloquium topics included: Risk/Needs Assessment, Restorative Justice versus Traditional Prosecution, Data Collection and Analysis, Strategic Partnerships, and Evidence-based Strategies.

Managing Attorney Jose Egurbide is exploring cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) curricula for program participants. On June 15, SMEs Roger Morris and Allyson West, both of San Francisco Community Court, provided information and discussed CBT curriculum.

The site is exploring Motivation Interviewing (MI) training for staff. On

July 12, the site discussed MI training and the Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity ("EPIC") program with SMEs Diane Pasini-Hill, Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Department of Public Safety, and Roger Przybylski, RKC Group.

The team and site champion/SME Faye Taxman are working toward sustainment planning for INTERCEPT.

## St. Louis

Weekly News: St. Louis Police Department Implements Programs in Hopes of Connecting with Youth

### [READ MORE](#)

Site Updates:

Project: The Gun Redirect Program

As of July 14, fourteen people have been admitted to the Gun Redirect Program through the St. Louis Circuit Attorney's Office (SLCAO). This represents a 57% increase in participants since last month, when the site reported eight participants' involvement in the program.

Recently, a probation officer, who is a partner of the SLCAO, forged a relationship with the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE). SLATE's mission is to offer no-cost employment and job training services for job seekers with barriers to employment and support for businesses looking to hire diverse work workforce. SLATE now offers program participant mentoring meetings in the courthouse following court appearances.

The site is finalizing its Strategic Plan.

## San Diego

Weekly News: San Diego County Program for Nonviolent Felons May be Helping to Keep People From Returning to Jail

### [READ MORE](#)

Site Updates:

Project: The Community Justice Initiative (CJI).

As of July, CJI has made over 2,500 offers to potential participants. Reportedly, 60% or 1,674 of people accepted their offers. As of August 1, the site screened 143 individuals and completed 21 needs assessments, since implementing risk needs assessments in April.

On July 11, the site team hosted a meeting for the private defense bar to discuss CJI.

The site completed and distributed a CJI survey to prosecutors and members of the defense bar. The site reports that 117 surveys were sent out.

The site is scheduled to meet with its researcher partners on August 2, to analyze exit survey results. Based on survey results, the site may consider strategies to increase participant feedback.

Project Lead Jamie Ledezma will be leaving the City Attorney's Office on August 12th to continue her career teaching at Southwestern College. Lara Easton will serve as Smart Prosecution's Project Lead.

The site is finalizing its Strategic Plan.

# SITE ACTIVITY

## Harris County

Weekly News: Safe House Helps Sex Trafficking Victims

### READ MORE

Site Updates:  
Project: SAFE Court (Survivors Acquiring Freedom and Empowerment)

As of August 1, SAFE Court is operating over-capacity with 27 participants. To date, nine participants graduated from the program, and four women are scheduled to graduate on August 3.

A Peer-to-Peer site visit to New York City and Queens is being planned for team members to observe the Queens County, Prostitution Diversion Court. CCI will provide technical assistance to Harris County during the site visit.

A Peer-to-Peer Exchange is being planned for the Harris County District Attorney's Office and their law enforcement partners with the Los Angeles Human Trafficking Task Force. On July 13, the site participated in a Peer-to-Peer planning conference with Captain Merrill Ladenheim and other Human Trafficking Task Force members regarding Los Angeles model.

## San Francisco

Weekly News: An Algorithm Is Being Tested in San Francisco to Set Pre-Trial Bail

### READ MORE

Site Updates:  
Project: Case Strategies Unit (CSU)

On July 7, Dr. Andrew Fox, Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at University of Missouri, Kansas City; CSU Managing Attorney Frank Carrubba and Analyst Matt Yee presented Smart Prosecution's Social Network Analysis for Prosecutor's Webinar. Dr. Fox explored the value of social network analysis as a tool for mapping social relationships. Frank Carrubba and Matt Yee discussed CSU's application of social network analysis. They detailed its use to identify auto burglary crime drivers in San Francisco.

On July 21-22, two CSU team members—a neighborhood prosecutor and analyst—took part in a Peer-to-Peer site visit to King County (Seattle). They attended a regional Car Theft Initiative meeting and met with law enforcement and private partners to learn about Seattle's program. The team members attended a King County Data-Driven Prosecution Meeting and shared information about San Francisco's Crime Strategies Unit.

## Baltimore

Weekly News: Police, Residents Unite for National Night Out in Baltimore

### READ MORE

Site Updates:  
Project: Implementing Evidence-Based Risk and Need Assessment during the Pretrial Phase

The site recently welcomed Sarah Labus as its new Smart Prosecution Project Coordinator.

The team with its research partner, Dr. Kevin Baldwin of Applied Research Services, is in the process of obtaining pre-trial services data.

A Peer-to-Peer site visit is being planning for the fall. The purpose is for team members to observe and learn from a jurisdiction that has successfully implemented a pre-trial risk assessment for decisions regarding pretrial release.

The site is finalizing its Strategic Plan.

## Cook County

Weekly News: Chicago Nonprofit Helps Mentally Ill Access Services, Stay Out of Jail

### READ MORE

Site Updates:  
Project: Misdemeanor Deferred Prosecution Enhancement Program (MDPEP)

As of July 31st, 681 participants have been enrolled in MDPEP since the program's inception in January 2015. The site reports a success rate of 89.7% for participants and a 10.2% removal rate of participants.

The Arnold Foundation has awarded funding to two researchers at the University of Chicago and Washington University in St. Louis to conduct a data-driven evaluation of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office diversion programs, including MDPEP. The researchers' goal is to develop a template for jurisdictions seeking to implement diversion programs.

continued on next page

# SITE ACTIVITY

## Kings County

Weekly News: New York City Wants to Move 16- and 17-Year-Olds From Rikers Jail to Bronx Center

[READ MORE](#)

Site Updates:

Project: The Brooklyn Young Adult Justice Initiative

As of July 26, there are 1,600 cases pending in KCDA's Young Adult Court Part. This number shows an increase of 166 pending cases since July 5.

The site will be meeting with the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) to discuss prosecutors' potential use of CCI's risk assessment to identify high-risk young adults between 16-24 years old.

On July 25, site team members participated in a Peer-to-Peer exchange with Harris County's SAFE Court team members. The purpose was for the Brooklyn Team—an FY '15 site—to learn about FY '14 site Harris County's experience working with a young adult population. During this knowledge-sharing exchange, relevant topics were discussed including: procedural justice, trauma-based care and services for participants, project stakeholders, risk assessment tools, community engagement, program modifications, and lessons learned.

The team, including members of CCI research will be developing a Young Adult Justice Initiative survey for Prosecution Unit Staff.

The site is finalizing its Strategic Plan.

## CONTACT US

### David Adams

Senior Policy Advisor,  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
US Department of Justice  
[david.adams@usdoj.gov](mailto:david.adams@usdoj.gov)

TTA Providers:

### Beth Merachnik

Director,  
Smart Prosecution Initiative  
Association of Prosecuting  
Attorneys  
1615 L Street NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036  
[beth.merachnik@apainc.org](mailto:beth.merachnik@apainc.org)

### Margo Badawy

Project Attorney  
Smart Prosecution Initiative  
Association of Prosecuting  
Attorneys  
1615 L Street NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036  
[margo.badawy@apainc.org](mailto:margo.badawy@apainc.org)

### Kristi Sipila

Project Associate,  
Smart Prosecution Initiative  
Association of Prosecuting  
Attorneys  
1615 L Street NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036  
[kristi.sipila@apainc.org](mailto:kristi.sipila@apainc.org)

This Newsletter is funded through a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Neither the U.S. Department of Justice nor any of its components operate, control, are responsible for, or necessarily endorse, this newsletter (including, without limitation, its content, technical infrastructure, and policies, and any services or tools provided). This project was supported by Grant # 2014-YX-BX-K001 Awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice

