

**Occasional Series on Reentry Research
Prisoner Reentry Institute at John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

***“Perceived Criminality, Criminal Background Checks
and the Racial Hiring Practices of Employers”***

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Michael Stoll is Professor of Public Policy in the School of Public Affairs, and Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Urban Poverty, at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He received his Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Urban Planning and a BS in Political Economy from the University of California, Berkeley. He also served as a Visiting Scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York City. His main research interests include the study of urban poverty and inequality, specifically the interplay of labor markets, race/ethnicity, geography and policy.

Dr. Stoll's published work includes an examination of the labor market difficulties of less-skilled workers, in particular the role that racial residential segregation, job location patterns, job skill demands, employer discrimination, job competition, transportation and job information play in limiting employment opportunities. His work has been featured in a variety of media outlets including NPR, PBS, ABC Chicago Talk Radio, the Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle, and the New York Times.

Currently, Dr. Stoll is working on major research projects that examine the labor market consequences of mass incarceration, the benefits and costs of the prison boom, the sources of the increase in imprisonment in the U.S., the social and economic consequences of urban sprawl, and sources and consequences of differences in auto insurance premiums within metropolitan areas.

Sharon Dietrich is Managing Attorney for Public Benefits and Employment for Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, where she has worked as an attorney in the Employment Unit since 1987. She represents low income persons in employment matters, such as unemployment compensation, discrimination, family and medical leave, wrongful discharge, pensions, and issues arising from welfare reform.

For a ten-year period beginning in 1994, Ms. Dietrich also worked as a contract attorney with the National Employment Law Project, New York. NELP provides assistance to legal services programs, unions and community based organizations nationwide and promotes a national advocacy agenda on issues such as job training, unemployment compensation, employment discrimination, and welfare-to-work.

In her work for both CLS and NELP, Ms. Dietrich has focused on issues involving the employment of formerly incarcerated individuals. These activities include efforts to inform legal and social service staff about the barriers to employment faced by individuals with a criminal record and the legal handles to address these barriers; representation of individuals who have been denied employment because of their criminal records; participation as co-counsel in *Nixon v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, a lawsuit challenging a Pennsylvania

statute prohibiting the employment of formerly incarcerated individuals in long-term health care facilities; and contribution to Every Door Closed, a report from CLS and the Center for Law and Social Policy that discusses the cumulative civil law problems faced by people with a criminal record.

On May 1, 2002, Ms. Dietrich received an award from the Pennsylvania Prison Society in recognition of her work on behalf of formerly incarcerated individuals. Ms. Dietrich is a summa cum laude graduate of Albright College and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Kareem Omary is a Job Developer with the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), a New York City-based nonprofit organization that provides employment services to formerly incarcerated men and women returning home from prison or jail. He is responsible for prospecting employers to fill their human resource needs, maintaining a roster of potential and current employers, and conducting targeted job search campaigns to place clients into permanent, private-sector jobs.

Before joining CEO, Mr. Omary held a variety of sales and marketing positions in the private sector, based in the Washington, DC/Northern Virginia area. These included serving as Branch Manager of Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Sales Representative at Pitney Bowes and Office Manager and Translator for Saudi Aramco, one of the world's largest oil companies. Mr. Omary enjoys leveraging his private-sector experience on behalf of CEO's clients and prides himself on developing long-lasting partnerships with employers.

Born in Kuwait City to a Syrian father and Spanish mother, Mr. Omary was raised in Kuwait and Syria and is fluent in Arabic. He moved to the United States with his family when he was 11-years-old. He graduated from Emory & Henry College with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communications.