

**Mercyhurst College
Civic Institute**



**Annual Report
1999 - 2000**

Mercyhurst College Civic Institute 1999-2000

Civic Institute Mission Statement

The Mercyhurst Civic Institute is a college-community partnership dedicated to the social, health, educational, and civic well being of the Erie region.

Its purposes are:

- Enhancing and facilitating citizen participation in decision making.
- Providing high quality objective information to inform local decision making.
- Convening community forums that encourage reasoned reflection and free and open discussion of regional issues.
- Educating the Erie community about various issues through Institute reports and publications.
- Fostering human networks that enhance communication, link resources, strengthen community participation and build social capital.
- Facilitating learning for the Mercyhurst community.

The Mercyhurst Civic Institute is made up of three Centers of expertise and focus: the *Center for Child and Family Policy*, *Center for Justice Research and Policy*, and *Center for a Healthy Community*.

Mercyhurst College
501 East 38th Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16546
(814) 824-2327
Fax: (814) 824-2182
Web site: WWW.mercyhurst.edu/civicinstitute

Mercyhurst Civic Institute Board of Visitors

Mercyhurst College Community

College President – Dr. William P. Garvey

Vice President of Academic Affairs – Dr. Joseph Gower

Chair of Board of Trustees – William Sennett

President, Sisters of Mercy - Sr. JoAnne Courneen

Director of the Mercyhurst Civic Institute – Dr. Thomas Gamble

Director of Center for Child and Family Policy – Dr. Thomas Gamble

Director of Center of Justice Research & Policy – Dr. Pete Benekos

Director of Center for a Healthy Community – Dr. Mark Levine

Public Sector

Erie County Executive – Judith M. Lynch

Mayor of the City of Erie – Joyce Savacchio

Chair of County Council – Carol Loll

President Judge of the Erie County Court – William Cunningham

Superintendent of Schools for the City of Erie – Dr. James Barker

District Attorney – Bradley Foulk

Director Department of Human Services – John Petulla

Warden, Erie County Prison – Charles Barber

Erie County Planning Department - Dave Skellie

Congressman - Hon. Philip English

Chief Juvenile Probation Officer – Robert Blakely

Philanthropic/Non Profit/Community Leadership

Director of Erie Conference – Jacob Rouch

President of the Erie Community Foundation – Michael Batchelor

Director of the United Way of Erie County – Alan Perez

President of Hamot Health Systems – John Malone

President of St Vincent Health Center – Sr. Catherine Manning

Director of Catholic Charities - Msgr. Michael McGraw

President of the NAACP – Dorothy Smith

Director of the Hispanic American Council – Jovino Morales

Board Chair, CALL – Fr. John Hilbert

Oath of the Athenian City State

"We will strive for the ideals and sacred things of the city,
both alone and with many;
we will unceasingly seek to quicken the sense of public duty;
we will revere and obey the city's laws;
we will transmit this city not only not less,
but greater, better and more beautiful
than it was transmitted to us"

Mercyhurst College
Civic Institute

Special Features

Section I	Mission
Section II	Director's Report
Section III	Organizational Structure
Section IV	Policy Analysis / Program Evaluation
Section V	Publications
Section VI	Community Planning / Community Development
Section VII	Speakers Series
Section VIII	Presentations
Section IX	Technical Assistance (Completed Projects and Current Projects)
Section X	Research Advisory Committee
Section XI	Revenue Sources and Expenses

II. Director's Report

Dear Friend

I am pleased to present this first annual report of the Mercyhurst Civic Institute. Due to the foresight of Mercyhurst College President William P. Garvey, the Civic Institute has succeeded the Institute for Child and Family Policy. As Mercyhurst's commitment to the improvement of civic life in the Erie region has matured, it became clear we had to broaden the vision. We have learned first hand how closely intertwined the well being of children and families is to the health of the communities in which they live, as well as to the strength of the many systems that serve those communities. The emergence of the Civic Institute is the result of our recognition that to serve children and their families we have to be willing to take a more comprehensive perspective.

The Mercyhurst Civic Institute offers its commitment to assist those working for the improvement of the community with a sense of optimism and a sense of modesty. The optimism is based on our faith in this region, its people, its resources and its future. The modesty is based on our sense of the complexity of the challenges facing us and the recognition that none of us can meet those challenges alone. As you review this report it will be evident that it is only when we are in partnership with the community that our contributions are truly useful. We submit this report to the community with the hope that the future holds many more opportunities for us to be partners for community progress.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas J. Gamble, Ph.D.
Director, Mercyhurst Civic Institute

II. Organizational Structure and Staffing

The interdisciplinary staff has extensive experience in health and human services management, research methods and program evaluation, data analysis, grant writing, strategic planning, and community relations. The Institute consists of three Centers: The Center for Child and Family Policy, The Center for Justice Research and Policy and The Center for a Healthy Community.

* **Thomas Gamble**, Ph.D., is Director of the Civic Institute, the Center for Child and Family Policy, and is an associate professor of criminal justice and psychology at Mercyhurst. Prior to joining the faculty at Mercyhurst, Dr. Gamble served as Executive Director of Children & Youth Services. He is a graduate of the Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs at Syracuse University and the Yale University Post-Doctoral Program in Child Development and Social Problems.

* **Peter Benekos**, Ph.D., is a professor of criminal justice and the Chair of Mercyhurst College's Social Science Division and serves as the Director of the Center for Justice Research & Policy as well as a Senior Policy Analyst.

* **Mark Levine**, M.D., Director of the Center for a Healthy Community, received his Medical Degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University. He is a member of the teaching faculty at Hamot Family Practice Residency.

* **Sr. Maura Smith**, RSM, ED.D., Senior Policy Analyst, has been affiliated with the Center for three years. She has many years experience as a teacher and administrator. Current areas of expertise include: neighborhood planning and revitalization, affordable housing programs, and public policy issues involving welfare reform and higher education.

* **Art Amann** received his Masters Degree in Corrections. He is a faculty member in the Criminal Justice program. Prior to joining the Civic Institute, he was the Warden of the Erie County Prison.

* **Amy Danzer**, Research Policy Analyst, received her Masters Degree in Psychology from Princeton University. Her areas of expertise include policy analysis, grant writing and proposal design, as well as resource identification, neighborhood revitalization and early childhood programming.

* **Sue Johnson**, Administrative Assistant, received her Bachelor's Degree in Education from Mercyhurst College. Her role includes database management, website management, monthly invoicing, and assisting with budget accountability.

* **Lisa Roberts**, Research Policy Analyst, has been with the Center for one year. She possesses

a Bachelor's Degree from Mercyhurst College in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Juvenile Justice and Corrections. She also received her Master's Degree in Administration of Justice from Mercyhurst College. Her areas of expertise include: drug courts, juvenile justice, data collection, and program evaluation.

* ***Sherrie Sonnenberg***, Research Policy Analyst, has three years of experience working in the field of juvenile justice and possesses a Masters degree in Administration of Justice from Mercyhurst College. Her areas of expertise include: juvenile delinquency, juvenile justice, research methodology, data collection, grant management and program evaluation.

The Civic Institute is also supported by four graduate assistants: Amy Doane, Heather Powell, Kari Repenning, and Jessica Vielhuber. The Institute also has one work study student, Amber White.

III. Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation

- ***Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children ("Children's Partnership") Grant (Fall 2000)***

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* prepared and received a grant in the amount of \$24,000 from the Children's Partnership to interface Erie County's Communities That Care initiative with Erie's Promise. The Center has taken on the consultant role of collecting and assessing data on programs that provide the five fundamental resources to Erie County's youth to determine which youth they help, how they help the youth, and what their effectiveness in assisting youth is. The five Fundamental Resources noted by America's Promise are as follows: ongoing relationships with caring adults, parents, mentors, tutors or coaches; safe places with structured activities during non-school hours; healthy start and future; marketable skills through effective education; and opportunities to give back through community service.

- ***Pennsylvania Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs Grant (1999-2001)***

The *Civic Institute* was awarded \$168,645 from the Pennsylvania Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs to evaluate an innovative program for treating persons coming out of Pennsylvania Department of Corrections facilities with a dual diagnosis of substance abuse and mental illness. Named CROMISA, the three-year treatment program funded for \$590,995 is being implemented by the Erie County Office of Drug and Alcohol Abuse in partnership with GECAC Drug and Alcohol Program Stairways, Serenity, Inc., the Forensic Mental Health Program of Erie County (part of Case Management Support Services), the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

- ***Juvenile Detention Census Management Project (Ongoing)***
 In August 1998, the *Center for Child and Family Policy* developed a pilot Level of Security Screening Instrument to help the Edmund L. Thomas Adolescent Center make decisions about which youth admitted to detention are eligible for transfer to shelter services. The Mercyhurst Level of Security Screening Instrument (MLSSI) attempts to assure that those youth transferred pose less risk to community safety, less risk of absconding, and less risk of harming themselves or reoffending than do ineligible youth. The Center's staff complete screening forms on all youth admitted to secure detention and prepare monthly Census Management Reports for the Department of Human Services.
- ***Nurse Home Visiting/PATHS Project Grant (Summer 1999)***
 On behalf of the Erie County Policy and Planning Council, the *Center for Child and Family Policy* assisted the Erie County Health Department in submitting a grant application in the amount of \$294,690 to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. This application provides for the implementation of a Nurse Home Visiting Program (NHV) and the Promotive Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) Program. Nurse Home Visitation is a program that sends nurses into the homes of at-risk pregnant women bearing their first child to ensure the health of the mother and child and to address the needs of young school aged children. The Center also proposed to implement the PATHS Project to assist children in evaluating their options and pursuing the path containing fewer high-risk behaviors.
- ***Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) (Annually Since 1999)***
 On behalf of the Erie County Department of Human Services, the *Center for Child and Family Policy* prepared and, in June 2000, received notification of a second year of funding from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Erie County was awarded \$182,994 to implement a juvenile crime reduction plan. The plan includes: (1) reducing the influx of juveniles entering juvenile probation with allegations of "failure to comply" sentences, (2) providing critical competency development support to youth being released from out-of-home placements, (3) reducing the overcrowding problem in the secure detention program at the Edmund L. Thomas Adolescent Center and improving the efficiency of the court by utilizing teleconferencing to conduct detention and review hearings for juvenile offenders, (4) improving the coordination and communication between the City of Erie Bureau of Police and other agencies in an attempt to gather and share information on truancy and gang related activity, and (5) enhancing and re-enforcing the current Millcreek Diversion Program by having police officers supervise juveniles during their performance of community service hours.
- ***Quarterly Report of Juvenile Placement Trends and Practices (Ongoing)***
 The *Center for Child and Family Policy* prepares a Report detailing expenditures and placement number trends over time for dependent and delinquent youth in Erie County.

- ***Intermediate Punishment Evaluation (1998)***
The *Center for Child and Family Policy* was awarded a grant in the amount of \$38,480 from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to study Erie County Intermediate Punishment Programs. These programs provide an alternative to incarceration, while maintaining family stability and holding offenders accountable to their family and the community. The focus of the study was to examine program completion, cost effectiveness, and the utilization of jail cells. Three Mercyhurst College graduates, Maria Garase, Carol Gullifer and Tara Puhlman assisted in the data entry phase of the research.
- ***Initial Evaluation of Collaborative Intensive Community Treatment Program (1998)***
One of the *Center for Child and Family Policy's* previous graduate assistants evaluated the Collaborative Intensive Community Treatment Program (CICTP). CICTP is a private, nonprofit, treatment program for adjudicated dependent and delinquent youth in Erie County. The program is designed to address the increase in juvenile residential placements in Erie County and the escalating costs associated with them. This evaluation measured recidivism, behavioral performance and cost effectiveness. The report was released in June 1998.
- ***Communities That Care Evaluation (Delinquency Prevention Program(s)) (1998)***
The *Center for Child and Family Policy* is continuing its fourth-year project of monitoring attendance, behavior and academic performance of children participating in the Communities That Care (CTC) delinquency prevention program at Edison Elementary School. Evaluation results have proved CTC's success in preventing the onset and continuance of juvenile delinquency.

V. **Publications**

"Directions: Understanding Child and Family Well-Being in Erie County, PA, 1998"

This 100 page tabulation and analysis of 16 child and family well-being indicators is the most comprehensive compilation of information about children and families available for Erie County. It analyzes the county, the city, and the municipalities, and it provides comparisons to state and similar county rates. Directions was released in September 1998.

Annual Report of the Office of Drug and Alcohol Abuse

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* analyzed data, graphed trends, wrote portions of and organized the Annual Report for the Erie County Office of Drug and Alcohol Abuse for publication in both 1998 and 1999.

Institute Special Reports

Erie County Policy and Planning Council for Children and Families: Working Together on Behalf of Children and their Families, November 2000.

Erie County Adult Criminal Justice System Study, September 2000.

Juvenile Offenders & Crime, March 2000

Teen Pregnancy & Births, March 2000

Area 13 Neighborhood Action Plan, February 2000

This is a report on the neighborhood planning process in Erie's East side that was sponsored by the Erie Neighborhood Watch Council in collaboration with McAuley Institute and the Mercyhurst Civic Institute.

Local Juvenile Detention Center Overcrowding Reduced Through Census Management Project: A Local Example of Applied Policy Research, September 1999

Juvenile Offenders & Crime, February 1999

Births to Single Women, September 1998

Erie County's Communities That Care Initiative, August 1998

Juvenile Crime and Violence, March 1998

Teen Pregnancy and Adolescent Childbearing, February 1998

Youth and Crime in Erie County, Winter 1997

The Facts, February 1997

Adolescent Pregnancy and Births to Single Teens in Erie County

Institute Insight, Summer 1997

A free newsletter discussing policies and programs impacting children and families.

The Mentor, Fall 2000. Spring 2000, Fall 1999.

A free biannual, research-based newsletter whose primary focus is social policy issues. The publication is co-authored and edited by graduate students Kari Repenning and Heather Powell. The project is sponsored by an Academic Enrichment Grant, the Mercyhurst Civic Institute, and Alpha Phi Sigma, the criminal justice honor society.

Institute Annual Report, 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000.

VI. **Community Planning / Community Development**

- ***Grass Roots Leadership Training Class***

In conjunction with Corrine Egan, the *Center for Child and Family Policy* coordinates and conducts an eight to twelve week leadership training course. The participants in these training sessions are community grassroots leaders who want to become more effective in their volunteer and civic roles. To date, Grass Roots Leadership training has been provided to the Black Achievers of the Glenwood YWCA, members of the Tenants Council, Neighborhood Watch Groups and ethnic outreach workers of the Hispanic-American Council.

- ***United States Department of Justice Teleconferences***

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* sponsored and organized several national satellite videoconferences presented by the United States Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. They included Juvenile Offenders and Drug Treatment: Promising Approaches, Mentoring for Youth in Schools and Communities, Juveniles and the Criminal Justice System, Integrating the Professionals in Child Maltreatment Cases, Using Research to Improve Drug Abuse Treatment, School Violence Prevention, What About Girls? Females in the Juvenile Justice System, Model Court Practices in Abuse and Neglect Cases, Promising Practices for Safe and Effective Schools, Crowding in Juvenile Detention: A Problem Solving Approach, Comprehensive Framework for School Violence Prevention, and Child Delinquency: Early Intervention and Prevention.

- ***Harvard School of Public Health and the Prevention Institute***

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* worked with GECAC Drug and Alcohol to present and foster discussion on a series of four Violence Prevention Videoconferences presented by the Harvard School of Public Health and the Prevention Institute. The teleconferences included Organizing for Change, Building Bridges: Strengthening Schools and Communities, Preventing Bias and Promoting Respect, and Bringing the Elements Together: Ending the Cycle of Violence.

- ***Building Positive Teen Behaviors, An Erie Area Youth Empowered Program***

The *Civic Institute*, in conjunction with the Office of the County Executive, received a grant from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to complete a Building Positive Teen Behaviors Through the Media project. The project, to design and create public service announcements, was open to all public and private schools. The County Executive's Office joined with the Civic Institute, Pro Video Publications, Inc. and the Times Publishing Company to offer this competition to students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. The participating schools formed teams of 6 or less students and submitted 30 second scripts which focused on drug awareness, teen pregnancy prevention, reduction of juvenile crime, and conflict resolution. A total of 39 teams entered this competition with 7 being chosen for production. The 7 public service announcements were judged by a student media committee, as well as representatives from each of the local broadcast networks. The winning announcement was aired on the local broadcast networks and on the school closed circuit television.

A second component to the Building Positive Teen Behaviors Through the Media project included Newspaper in Education supplements that were made available to schools and teachers. The supplements were developed around a variety of teen behaviors from Drug Awareness and Conflict Resolution to Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Juvenile Crime. The Institute provided text to various supplements and was also charged with evaluating the teenagers' responses to the supplement.

- ***Solutions 2000...Strategies for Safe Schools and Student Success***
August 15 – 17, 2000

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* played a dual role at a local safe schools conference. Dr. Thomas Gamble provided a profile of America's Children and stated that profiling of children at all levels has become a common and useful way of targeting resources to the children and communities most in need of assistance. Amy Danzer co-facilitated a conference workshop called "Grant Writing and Funding Strategies."

- ***Drug Courts: Breaking the Drug-Crime Cycle***
June 28, 2000

The keynote address for the Center for Justice and Mental Health Issues' annual Criminal Justice Conference and Awards Luncheon was given by Joseph C. Peters, the White House Drug Policy Office's Deputy Director for State and Local Affairs. The focus of this conference was on the proliferation of "drug courts," which deal with all drug-using offenders while they are on probation and supervised in the community.

- ***Investing in Prevention Through Community Collaboration: Local Policy Maker's Role***
May 23, 2000

The *Civic Institute* was invited to participate in an invitation-only special policy maker's forum in Harrisburg, PA. The forum was offered in conjunction with the Building Partnership's Conference and was in partnership with the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP). The forum brought together key policy makers from select community collaboratives who are working together to produce better outcomes for children and their families. The forum provided skill development and resource material on the benefits and challenges of community collaborative prevention, strategies for improving the capacity to lead in a changing community environment and the use of a field analysis tool to explore opportunities for developing stronger, more effective community collaboration.

- ***Building Our Community***
May 10, 2000
 The *Mercyhurst Civic Institute*, Erie County Assistance Office, Erie County Department of Human Services, Erie County Policy and Planning Council, and the United Way of Erie County sponsored a welfare reform presentation titled, “Building Our Community.” Guest speaker, Dr. Sherri Heller, Deputy Secretary of Income Maintenance for the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, discussed the direction of welfare reform in Pennsylvania. The lecture also focused on initiatives and collaborations between the Erie County Assistance Office and community service providers, as well as perspectives on service needs and gaps.
- ***State Budget Briefing***
March 3, 2000
 The *Mercyhurst Civic Institute*, in partnership with the United Way of Erie County, participated in a state budget briefing. As part of the Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children State Fiscal Analysis Initiative, Joan Benso, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Partnerships, presented an analysis of the impact of the Governor’s 2000-2001 budget proposal on children and families.
- ***Building a Healthy Housing System Summit***
March 1, 2000
 A dynamic coalition of housing professionals joined hands to impact the housing services system and financing in Erie. The objective of this summit was to gather the critical concerns and the creative ideas of the best and brightest housing professionals in the county and collectively prepare recommendations that were submitted to HUD, County Officials and the City Planning Office for the purpose of impacting the Consolidated Plan.
- ***Sustainable Community Development in an Urban Context Conference***
May 14-15, 1999
 The McAuley Institute, a Washington, D.C. housing organization, along with the *Center for a Healthy Community*, hosted a two-day conference for approximately 50 local planners, governmental leaders, social service agency employees and residents. Topics included the history of urban development, successful ways to plan growth and revitalization of deteriorating areas and discussions to set priorities in creating urban revitalization with the City of Erie.
- ***Teen Pregnancy***
December 2, 1998
 The *Center for Child and Family Policy* co-sponsored a community forum on teen pregnancy along with The Erie Community Foundation. The purpose of the forum was to help individual donors and corporate grant makers make more informed decisions on the issue of teen pregnancy. Facts on statistical trends in teen pregnancy at the national, state, and local levels were presented.

- ***Adolescents***
September 2, 1998
The *Center for Child and Family Policy*, in conjunction with The Erie Community Foundation, sponsored a community forum on the issue of adolescents. More specifically, it answered the following questions: What is the nature and scope of the delinquency problem in Erie?; What nonprofit programs effectively curb delinquency?; What are the current and long-term costs of delinquency?; and Where are the roles of family, school, church, neighborhoods, and non-profits?
- ***Child Care***
June 3, 1998
The *Center for Child and Family Policy* and The Erie Community Foundation sponsored a forum on child care in Erie County. The discussion focused on the availability of day care, the relationship between day care and welfare reform, and the relationship between the quality of day care and child development.
- ***Nurturing Neurons Colloquium***
April 24, 1998
The *Center for Child and Family Policy*, in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh Institute of Politics and The Erie Community Foundation, sponsored a colloquy on the policy and program implications of infant brain research. Recent infant brain research indicates that the nature and quality of the prenatal and postnatal environment have important implications for brain development and for the future life chances of children. Children who are provided with cognitive, linguistic and social stimulation, who are properly nourished and who receive medical care will experience optimal conditions for brain development which will have an effect on their ability to learn quickly and efficiently. This conference explored the social policy and social program implications of such research and tried to assure that children in Erie County benefit from this research.

The panelists included: Dr. Heidi Feldman, Program Director from the University of Pittsburgh, University of Community Leaders and Individuals with Disabilities; Dr. Robert McCall, Co-Director, Office of Child Development; and Mr. Robert Nelkin, Starting Points, Office of Child Development. In addition, three local panelists, The Honorable Jane Earll, Senate of Pennsylvania, 49th District; The Honorable Judith M. Lynch, Erie County Executive; and Mr. R. Benjamin Wiley, CEO, GECAC, spoke at the session.

- ***Understanding Homelessness in Erie County***

March 4, 1998

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* and The Erie Community Foundation sponsored a forum entitled “Understanding Homelessness in Erie County” to help individual donors and corporate grantmakers make more informed decisions on the issue. Michael Batchelor, president of the Foundation, and Dr. Thomas Gamble welcomed participants and introduced the speakers. Facts were presented on defining homelessness, identifying service providers and understanding funding sources. At the conclusion of the presentation, there was a panel discussion in which Dr. Randall Clemons, associate professor of political science at Mercyhurst, served as moderator.

- ***Allegheny County’s Early Childhood Initiative***

December 10, 1997

The *Center for Child and Family Policy*, in conjunction with the Institute of Politics at the University of Pittsburgh and the Erie Community Foundation, sponsored a colloquy on building effective public-private partnerships to serve children. This was the first time that these three institutions collaborated to bring the community this type of program.

A panel from Allegheny County, including Margaret Petruska of the Heinz Endowment, Christina Groark of the Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh, Karen Shapira from the United Way of Allegheny County and Martha Isler from the Allegheny County Early Childhood Initiative, discussed the process used to create a \$59 million initiative to develop high-quality child care centers.

VII SPEAKER SERIES

- ***Juvenile Justice: Ancient and Modern, the Value of Doing Less Harm***

October 16, 2000

The *Civic Institute* sponsored a lecture on the Juvenile Justice System with guest speaker Professor **Franklin E. Zimring**, the William G. Simon Professor of Law and Director of the Earl Warren Legal Institute at the University of California at Berkeley. Professor Zimring argued that the key function of Juvenile Justice was and still is to divert kids from the harm that the adult criminal process would inflict on them.

- ***“Kids Who Beat the Odds”***

October 4, 2000

The *Civic Institute*, Mercyhurst College Education Department and the Mercyhurst College Social and Behavioral Sciences Division invited **Jonathan Kozol** to Erie to speak on behalf of “Kids Who Beat the Odds.” “For more than 30 years, Kozol has used his writing to give voice to the dispossessed of American society. He has ventured where few Americans care to look, let alone spend time-homeless shelters, housing projects, inner city schools-offering unflinching portraits of adults and children facing poverty, racism, and the inequities of American life.”

- ***“Preventing Crime & Violence: the Case for Early Intervention”***

April 10, 2000

“Preventing Crime & Violence: the Case for Early Intervention” was the title of a talk given by **Dr. Daniel S. Nagin**, professor of public policy and management at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. The talk, which was sponsored by the *Civic Institute*, was intended to provide the most recent findings on developmental trajectories and criminal careers, especially regarding the relationship between Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and delinquency.

- ***Centennial Celebration of the Juvenile Court***

June 8, 1999

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* invited a panel of national and state experts to Erie to speak on the centennial celebration of the Juvenile Court. The speakers, along with their presentation titles, are as follows: **Dr. Howard Snyder**, National Center of Juvenile Justice, Exploring the Meaning of State & National Juvenile Arrest Trends; **Dr. Jeffrey Butts**, The Urban Institute, The History and Future of the Juvenile Court; **Mr. James Anderson**, Juvenile Court Judges Commission (JCJC), The Role of JCJC in the Development of Juvenile Justice Policy in Pennsylvania and Its Vision for the Future; and **Mr. Clay Yeager**, Governor’s Community Partnership for Safe Children, The Role of the Governor’s Partnership in the Development of Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Policy and Its Vision for the Future.

In addition to a national and state perspective, we also invited key leaders from Erie County to speak on the local perspective. Those who participated in the presentation were: The **Honorable Ernest DiSantis**, Erie County Family Court, The Present and Future of the Erie County Juvenile Court; **Dr. Robert Oliver**, Erie School District, The Significance of Collaboration and Local Community-Based Initiatives for Preventing and Responding to Delinquency; **Mr. Thomas Antolik** and **Mr. Robert Blakely**, Erie County Juvenile Probation Department, The Changes in the Juvenile Court and the Probation Department’s Response.

- ***Social Structure, Race and the Transformation of the Juvenile Court***

March 16, 1998

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* sponsored a lecture with **Barry Feld, PhD, JD**, Centennial Professor of Law at the University of Minnesota. The objectives of the session were to examine the social structural forces and racial changes affecting juvenile justice administration, examine Dr. Feld’s view of the transformation of the juvenile court from a nominally rehabilitative welfare agency into a scaled-down second-class criminal court for young offenders, and consider the future role of the juvenile justice system and the implications of abolishing the juvenile court.

- ***Family Violence and Corporal Punishment: The Effects on Children and Families***
December 11, 1997
The *Center for Child and Family Policy* sponsored a lecture on intra-familial violence. Guest speaker **Dr. Murray Strauss**, Professor of Sociology at the University of New Hampshire and Co-Director of the Family Research Laboratory, provided the most recent findings on the effects of family violence and corporal punishment on children and families and the long term effects of the use of corporal punishment on deviance and crime.
- ***Community Action Plan***
An Erie County Policy and Planning Council *Community Action Plan* was designed by the *Center for Child and Family Policy* to inform the Council of the well-being issues related to teen pregnancy, the problems associated with it, available community resources and present recommendations to the community on the issue.

VIII Presentations

December 3, 2000

“Producing Health: The Role of the Environment” presented by Mark J. Levine, MD, Director, *Center for a Healthy Community* at the “Greening the Campus” conference held at Mercyhurst College, Erie, Pennsylvania.

November 30, 2000

“Building a Healthy Community” presented by Mark J. Levine, MD, Director, *Center for a Healthy Community* at the meeting of the Sierra Club of Northwest Pennsylvania, Erie, Pennsylvania.

November 15, 2000

“Producing Health: The Role of the Environment” presented by Mark J. Levine, MD, Director, *Center for a Healthy Community* as part of the Environmental Science Series, Gannon University, Erie, Pennsylvania.

October 21, 2000

“Stories from the Front Lines: Building a Healthy Community” presented by Mark J. Levine, MD, Director, *Center for a Healthy Community* at the Annual Physicians Leadership Meeting, Chicago, Illinois.

September 22, 2000

Mark J. Levine, MD, Director, *Center for a Healthy Community* presented at the Healthy Community Summit 2000, Institute for Healthy Communities, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

September 22, 2000

Center for Justice Research and Policy staff presented a workshop entitled, “Does Community Service Work” in State College, PA. This presentation was made as part of the Pennsylvania Community Service Association’s annual conference.

June 21– 23, 2000

Art Amann, Director of the *Center for Justice Research and Policy* was part of a panel discussing county policy boards and their role in technology planning and implementation at a statewide Criminal Justice Technology Conference in Hershey, PA. The conference was attended by hundreds of county and state officials and technology experts.

May, 2000

Art Amann, Director, *Center for Justice Research and Policy*, was a presenter at the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Association of Probation, Parole and Corrections. The focus of his presentation was on the origins of probation in the United States.

April 4, 2000

Representatives from the *Civic Institute* were invited to address the senior management team of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) on April 4, 2000. The purpose of the presentation was to inform the managers about the successful community building strategies used by the Institute.

March 25, 2000

Lisa Roberts, *Center for Justice Research and Policy*, presented a paper entitled “The Drug Court Phenomenon: It’s Impact on Erie County, Pennsylvania” at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences convention in New Orleans, LA. The paper detailed the findings of the drug court feasibility study in Erie County.

March 13, 2000

Lisa Roberts, *Center for Justice Research and Policy*, presented a paper entitled, “Responding to School Violence: An Assessment of Conflict Resolution Programs” at the American Society of Criminal Justice Sciences Conference in Orlando, FL.

November 20, 1999

Members of the *Mercyhurst Civic Institute* staff presented the following papers at the International American Society of Criminology Conference, “Explaining and Preventing Crime: The Globalization of Knowledge,” November 17-20, 1999, in Toronto, Canada. At a session titled “Alternative Juvenile Crime Strategies,” papers were presented by Dr. Peter Benekos, Dr. Thomas Gamble, Sherrie Sonnenberg, and Lisa Roberts.

November 20, 1997

Dr. Peter Benekos, Amy Cuzzola-Kern and Sherrie Sonnenberg, *Center for Child and Family Policy*, presented papers at the American Society of Criminology’s 49th Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA., November 19-22, 1997. Their papers, entitled “Trends in Youth Crime: Erie County, PA”, “Explaining the Increase in Juvenile Delinquency Residential Placements: A Study of Erie County, PA”, and “Responding to the Costs of Youth Placement: A Study of Community Intervention as an Alternative to Placement”, reported research findings on juvenile crime and juvenile justice in Erie County and Pennsylvania.

IX. Technical Assistance

COMPLETED PROJECTS:

- ***Drug Court Feasibility Study for the Erie County Drug Court Steering Committee***
The *Center for Justice Research and Policy* conducted a study for the Erie County Court to assess the feasibility of establishing a Drug Court. The project was funded by the United States Office of Justice Programs, Drug Courts Program Office. The Center evaluated probation and jail records for juvenile and adult offenders to determine the needs of the target population and eligibility for developing a specialized Drug Court in Erie County.
- ***Continuum of Care Submission***
The *Center for Child and Family Policy* was instrumental in obtaining a total of \$1,580,000 in grants for three area social service agencies. The Center provided technical assistance to the Erie County Department of Human Services and the City of Erie Department of Economic and Community Development to prepare this year's Continuum of Care submission to U.S. Housing and Urban Development. The \$1.5 million awarded to Erie County will be used to assist homeless persons in finding permanent housing and support services.
- ***Erie County Network for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention***
The *Center for Child and Family Policy* provided staff support for the development of the ECNAPP project (Erie County Network for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention). ECNAPP is a network of policy makers, service providers, governmental agencies and concerned community groups, as well as citizens and teenagers, that will coordinate, strengthen and enhance teen pregnancy prevention services in Erie County. The Center prepared a grant proposal for the 1998 Joint Corporators Project from St. Vincent's Health Center and Hamot Medical Center which was approved for funding in the amount of \$80,000. The Center also prepared and distributed the ECNAPP request for proposal (RFP). The RFP was distributed to community agencies interested in serving as the host agency.

CURRENT PROJECTS:

- ***Erie County Policy & Planning Council for Children and Families***

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* provides staff support to the Erie County Policy and Planning Council for Children and Families. The Council represents 60 community human service leaders, community representatives, non-profit organizations, government agencies, consumers of service and educators. The purpose of the Council is to provide a setting in which concerned agency representatives serving children and families seek to improve outcomes through adopting a more holistic and less fragmented approach to service provision. The Council also serves as a mechanism to stimulate research, discussion, evaluation and implementation of policy and programs to strengthen children and families in Erie County.

In October 1999, Erie County received two awards for its collaborative efforts. Erie was honored as a “Lighthouse County” by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and received an award from the Governor’s Community Partnership for Safe Children for sustaining collaborative leadership for safe children and communities.

- ***Grant Writing Workshops for The Erie Community Foundation***

The *Center for Child and Family Policy*, at the request of The Erie Community Foundation, sponsored a series of Quarterly Grant Writing Workshops for those looking for grant funding. The workshops cover the essentials of basic grant writing and provide resources for finding appropriate grant sources, as well as information specifically about the grant process through The Erie Community Foundation.

- ***Incorrigibility Work Group within the Erie County Policy & Planning Council***

The *Center for Child and Family Policy* provides staff support to the Incorrigibility Work Group. The term incorrigibility refers to youth who are out of the reasonable control of parents, teachers and other legitimate authorities but not yet delinquent. It is very likely that an effective service system for such children would pay significant benefits in reduced financial and human costs associated with intervening after delinquency occurs. The mission of the Incorrigibility Work Group is to work toward the development of a system of services for incorrigible youth in Erie County that is accessible, coordinated, effective, and accountable and that minimizes the need for juvenile probation or child welfare involvement with affected children and families while identifying children and families who truly need such services.

- ***West Side Neighborhood Project***

Through a grant from the Erie Community Foundation, the Trinity Center has expanded their after-school program for elementary students and added a middle school program during the 2000-2001 school year. The Heinz Endowments of Pittsburgh funded 3 years of a laboratory preschool for four and five-year-olds in the surrounding neighborhood beginning in September 2000. This Center City Child Learning Center is located in the former St. Joseph School. There will be low child-to-teacher ratios (7 to 1), and teachers will also make home visits to ensure good communication with the child’s caregivers.

The Erie School District and the preschool will work together to facilitate the transition from preschool to formal elementary education and to make sure children enter school ready and able to learn. Most of the children who attend the preschool will eventually enroll in the new elementary school being built on 21st and Sassafras Streets. The School District is also interested in supporting the Trinity Center after-school programs by providing academic support and possibly implementing some aspects of the Trinity Center programs in other existing programs located in the schools.

- ***Efficiency of Adult Probation and Parole Violation Sanctions Study***
The *Center for Justice Research and Policy* has been asked by the Erie County Court of Common Pleas to conduct a study concerning the efficiency of adult probation/parole violation sanctions.
- ***Implementing a Mental Health Court Feasibility Study***
The *Center for Justice Research and Policy* assisted Erie County officials in obtaining a small federal grant to explore the feasibility of implementing a Mental Health Court. The grant provided travel expenses to allow the President Judge and Mental Health experts to view Mental Health Courts in Oregon and Washington.
- ***Erie County Drug Treatment Court Evaluation***
Through grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the Erie County Drug Treatment Court was able to begin operation on March 2, 2000. The *Center for Justice Research and Policy* is conducting an evaluation of the program. The evaluation will look at the effectiveness of the program, as well as characteristics of the target population.
- ***Erie County Pre-Trial Processing System Evaluation***
A Technical Assistance grant was secured by the *Center for Justice Research and Policy* to begin a review of the pre-trial processing system in Erie County. The National Institute of Corrections will fund the study. Staff of the Center will work closely with a team of County professionals selected by the President Judge.
- ***Erie County Criminal Justice Advisory Board***
The Erie County Criminal Justice Advisory Board, formerly known as the Corrections Advisory Board, brings together criminal justice professionals, public officials, and private citizens to discuss pertinent topics affecting Erie County's criminal justice system. The Board provides a forum to share priorities, concerns, and opportunities and to work together on strategies for change. The *Center for Justice Research and Policy* helps to coordinate activities of the Board and provides staff support.

- Lake Erie Law Enforcement Association***
 The Lake Erie Law Enforcement Association (LELEA) was founded in the 1970s to provide leaders in the criminal justice community with an informal setting in which they could get to know one another better and share information and ideas relating to their work. The organization disbanded in the mid-1980s, but has been revived through the assistance of the *Center for Justice Research and Policy* and is meeting bi-annually.
- SPSS Technical Assistance to Erie County Adult Probation***
 The *Center for Child and Family Policy* provided technical assistance to the Erie County Adult Probation Department in developing a data collection instrument. Assistance has also been provided in setting up and analyzing data in SPSS, a statistical analysis software package. The Probation Department is interested in assessing the utilization of the Erie County Intermediate Punishment Programs. Currently, the Civic Institute is assisting with data collection, data entry and interpretation.
- Cancer Registry Project***
 The *Center for a Healthy Community* partnered with the Regional Cancer Center and the Erie County Department of Health to complete a Cancer Registry Project. The project is based on the hypothesis that the measurement of our ability to find the most common cancers at their earliest stages is necessary to provide outcome data crucial to continuous improvement and health services planning. Cancer cases are currently being mapped with the ArcView GIS software and will be developed into a report at a later date.
- Social Health Index Project***
 The *Center for a Healthy Community* in conjunction with the Regional Cancer Center's Cancer Registry is working on the evaluation of registry data using trend analysis and geographic information software, ArcView®. The Center is attempting to determine, for some of the most common cancers, 1) trends in stage at diagnosis to gain insight into quality improvement in health service delivery and 2) geographic incidence patterns to raise questions about potential etiologic aspects of cancer in Northwestern PA.
- Partnership for A Healthy Mill Creek Watershed***
 The *Center for a Healthy Community* in partnership with local neighborhood organizations, academic institutions and others has received a planning grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to initiate a watershed association in the Mill Creek Subwatershed. The partnership was designed to raise awareness of the link between environment and human health, promote environmental stewardship and engage youth in neighborhood-based activities that meet the above goals.
- Environmental Education Through Art***
 The *Center for a Healthy Community* in partnership with Mercyhurst College Service Learning Office has received a grant from the Pennsylvania Campus Compact Public Initiative Agenda to initiate a watershed art project that promotes awareness of environmental stewardship and the link between the environment and human health.

- ***Center for Child and Family Policy Library***
The *Civic Institute* has established a research library for Mercyhurst College students and the Erie community to promote the study of child and family issues. Resources include various publications/articles on issues such as poverty, crime, juvenile justice, health, education, program evaluation, and county profiles.

X. Research Advisory Committee

The *Civic Institute* has convened a Research Advisory Committee to provide access to an interdisciplinary group of scholars assist in evaluating and expanding the research agenda for the Institute. The members provide input and make suggestions regarding:

- Research issues, ideas and topics concerning children, youth, and families;
- Ideas and information on funding sources, including requests for proposals and funding studies;
- Substantive knowledge in one's discipline and technical research skills;
- Identifying students/graduates who are interested in and capable of participating in or conducting Civic Institute research projects.

X. Revenue Sources and Expenses

