



LEGACY TRAINING INC.

3rd Annual
**SOUTHERN
ILLINOIS
CONFERENCE
ON JUSTICE**

*"Reformation,
Restoration, and Reentry"*

CARBONDALE CIVIC CENTER
200 S Illinois Ave, Carbondale, IL 62901

April 9th - April 10th



**The Third Southernmost Illinois Conference on Justice
Reformation, Restoration, and Re-Entry: Let's Get to WORK**
Carbondale Civic Center, Carbondale, Illinois

April 9–10, 2026

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Thursday, April 9, 2026 (pre-conference)

8:30 a.m. - Registration/Breakfast/Exhibits

9:00 am. Welcome/Introductions - Lynne M. Chambers, Esq. CEO/Executive Director, Legacy Training, Inc.

9:05 “*The Delta Works! Impact and Investments in the Delta*”

Presenters:

- Sea Talantis, Director of Human Infrastructure at the Delta Regional Authority (DRA)
- Daniel Musgrave, Workforce Program Manager, Delta Regional Authority (DRA)

Learn what role the Delta Regional Authority has in supporting workforce development initiatives throughout the Delta region. After this session, you will understand key programs designed to promote job creation, workforce training, infrastructure development, and economic revitalization in rural and economically distressed communities.

9:35 – 9:55 “*Illinois Humanities Envisioning Justice Initiative*”

Presenter: Dr. Tony Pizarro, Program Manager, Illinois Humanities

This presentation introduces the **Illinois Humanities Envisioning Justice Initiative**. This statewide effort supports community-based projects exploring the impact of mass incarceration through storytelling, arts, humanities programming, and civic dialogue.

10:05 – 10:45 “*From Release to Stability: Lessons Learned from the Insignia Group Training Academy-A Demonstration Project for Rural, Workforce Development and Re-Entry*”

- Dr. Sara Dobie, Director, Graduate Program, SIU School of Social Work.
- Dr. Morris Jenkins, JD, Phd. Associate Professor (Emeritus) Lewis University and Principal Investigator, Insignia Group-Workforce Development Demonstration Project for Returning Citizens,
- Aaron Woods, Research Associate
- Van Ikner, Dean of Students, Insignia Group Training Academy
- Insignia Group Members

Findings: Successful re-entry requires more than release from incarceration—it requires access to stable housing, employment pathways, supportive services, and community integration.

10:45 a.m-11:10. “Expanding Clean Energy Workforce Pathways: Understanding CEJA and the Workforce Hubs

Presenters: Greg Bouhl , CEJA Hub Director and Marcella Woodson, CEJA Hub Manager, MANTRA-CON, Kevin Clark, Director, CEJA Navigators, Carbondale NAACP

An overview of CEJA and its workforce development initiatives, including the creation of regional **Clean Energy Workforce Hubs** and the role of **Community Navigators** in connecting residents to training, resources, and employment opportunities within the clean energy sector.

11:10 - 11:45 – “Let’s Get to Work- Career Pathways for All” Van Ikner, Moderator

Panelists:

- Adam Robertson - Carpenter’s union
- Freddie Brown - The IDOT Highway Construction Training Program
- Austin Frank, CEO, ARF Solar
- George Moss – Moss Heating and Cooling, Inc.

Panelists will discuss how job seekers can connect with employers in high-demand industries—including solar installation, electrical work, HVAC, carpentry, and trucking—who are actively seeking skilled and reliable workers.

11:45 – 12:15 “Talent Acquisition and Retention: Leveraging Transferable Skills”

Presenter: Ammiel Russell, Human Resource Professional, and Project Coordinator for Healing Illinois Initiatives, Legacy Training, Inc.

This presentation examines innovative strategies for recruiting, hiring, and retaining talented employees from underutilized labor pools, particularly individuals who are formerly incarcerated. Participants will explore practical approaches for spotting talent.

12:15 – 1:30 Lunch/Exhibits/Roundtable discussions/Activations

Sidney and Solomon Catering, Carbondale, Illinois

1:00 – 1:45 “Pathway Development & Career Navigation for Returning Citizens: Building Employer Pipelines, Incentives, and Digital Access”

Presenter (s): Ricky “Re-entry” Hamilton, Michael Cannon, and Kitty Leggiery

GOT JOBS America (GJA) builds real career pathways for people leaving incarceration by starting with the destination first—identifying the careers and industries that are hiring, then designing a repeatable pathway into those roles. Discover how GJA maps existing skills, institutional training, and community-based credentials into high-need sectors.

2:00 p.m. – 2:45 “ Clean Slate Illinois: Expanding Employment Opportunities for Returning Citizens”

Presenter: Greg Chambers, Director of Policy, Coalition to End Permanent Punishments

This presentation will explore how Clean Slate legislation is transforming access to employment for returning citizens across Illinois. Chambers will examine the legal framework of the policy, the types of records eligible for automatic sealing, and how the law affects background checks used by employers, licensing bodies, and housing providers.

2: 45 – 3 p.m. Illinois Solar for All: Energy Equity and Economic Opportunity for Low-Income Communities

Presenter: Jay Terry, Grassroots Educator, Legacy Training, Inc.

What is **Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA)** and what is its role in expanding access to renewable energy for low-income households and environmental justice communities?

3: 15 – 4:00 p.m. “Faith, Environmental Justice, and Workforce Pathways: Engaging Faith Communities in Renewable Energy and Reentry Opportunities” Jay Terry, Moderator

Presenters: Rev. Larry T. Barnett, Rev. Wade Halva, Rev. Ramone Collins

This discussion will introduce participants to the foundational concepts of environmental justice and examine how faith communities can engage in workforce development.

4:15 P.M. - 6 P.M. Art Show and Networking Reception - Varsity Theater, Carbondale, Illinois - Blaxx Smokehouse Catering, Mounds, Illinois

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. “Art, Storytelling, and Justice: Creative Voices from the Reentry Community” (see attachment)

This special conference program integrates the arts as a powerful vehicle for dialogue, reflection, and community healing. A performance by **Mud Theatre Project** will use storytelling and theatrical expression to explore the lived experiences of individuals impacted by incarceration and the journey toward restoration and reintegration. Complementing the performance, an **art exhibition will feature works created by formerly incarcerated artists.**

Conference - Friday, April 10, 2026

8:30 a.m. Registration/Breakfast/Exhibits

9:00 Welcome -

Lynne Chambers, JD, MSW, CEO/Founder/Executive Director, Legacy Training, Inc.

Mayor Carolin Harvey, City of Carbondale - Welcome/Remarks - by video

Stan Reno, Carbondale City Manager, Former Carbondale Chief of Police

Marcy Cascio-Hale, Jackson Co. State's Attorney - Welcome/Remarks (invited)

9:30 - "Understanding the Role of Judges: How Courts Work and Why It Matters"

Presenter: The Honorable Jonathan A. Mitchell, Associate Judge, First Circuit

Judge Mitchell will debunk common misconceptions about the courts and explain how judges make decisions based on law, evidence, and procedures. Topics include judicial independence, ethics, sentencing limits, elections and appointments, and the rights of individuals appearing before the court.

10:30 a.m. 11: 00 a.m. "Advancing Justice Reform: The Role of Oversight and Advocacy in Improving Correctional Systems"

Presenter: Gwyneth M. Troyer, JD, MA, Director of Prison Monitoring, John Howard Association

The John Howard Association (JHA) of Illinois was founded in 1901 and takes its name from an 18th-century English humanitarian. JHA monitors prisons and advances independent oversight of carceral systems to promote humane treatment and increased transparency. This presentation will provide an overview of the data and analysis of the work of JHA.

11:00 – 11: 30 a.m. "Utilizing Entrepreneurship and Personal Development Education to Build Inclusive Economies: An Overview of Defy Ventures" (VIRTUAL)

Presenter: Melissa O'Dell, Executive Director

This session will discuss Defy's programming, including the CEO of Your New Life, which is facilitated in three IDOC facilities, as well as the post-release services Defy provides throughout the state for graduates of the program.

11:30 – 12:30 LUNCH/ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION/ACTIVATIONS

Taco Bar by Moes, Carbondale

12:30 -1:15 “Faithful Lawyering in Troubling Times: A Conversation with Christian Legal Professionals”

Presenter (s): Professor Cheryl Page, Simmons School of Law, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Kevin Green

Facilitator: Precious Taylor, JD Candidate, May, 2026, Simmons School of Law, Southern Illinois University

Christian attorneys and legal professionals to explore what it means to practice law with integrity, courage, and compassion during times of social uncertainty and division.

1:15 to 1:45 “Justice Restored: The Work of the Illinois Innocence Project and the Fight Against Wrongful Convictions” (Virtual)

Speaker: John Hanlon, Esq., Executive Director of the Illinois Innocence Project at University of Illinois Springfield. (retired)

Attorney Hanlon will discuss the critical work of the Illinois Innocence Project. Participants will gain insight into the causes of wrongful convictions, including eyewitness misidentification, false confessions, inadequate legal representation, and misuse of forensic evidence.

Continuing Education:

Social workers can receive 6 hours of CEU for pre-conference, and 5 hours for the conference. Both days of attendance will yield 11 hours in conjunction with Southern Illinois University School of Social Work.

Continuing Ed is pending for CLE, MTU, PD

Exhibitors

- Legacy Training, Inc.
- Community Health and Emergency Services,
- Southern Illinois Community Foundation
- Meridian Health
- Man-tra Con
- ARF Solar
- Carpenter’s Union

The People Powering the Conversation



Lynne M. Chambers



Sea Talantis



Daniel Musgrave



Dr. Tony Pizzarro



Dr. Sara Dobie



Dr. Morris Jenkins



Aaron Woods



Van Ikner



Greg Bouhl is the Director of the Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA) program at Man-Tra-Con Corporation, where he leads a workforce initiative dedicated to opening doors in the clean energy sector for individuals facing barriers to employment. With a background in both business ownership and economic development, Greg has spent over two decades supporting growth in Southern Illinois and is committed to being part of the solution.



Marcella Woodson is a workforce development professional with eight years of experience and currently serves as CEJA Hub Manager at Man-Tra-Con Corporation, supporting southern Illinois. With a background in behavioral health and trauma-informed care, she takes an equity-focused approach to connecting underserved populations—including returning citizens—to career pathways in the clean energy sector. Through partnerships with community organizations, training providers, and employers, she works to build sustainable career pipelines while reducing barriers and expanding economic opportunities.



Kevin Clark



Adam Robertson, with more than two decades of experience in the trades, he serves as a dedicated Representative and Organizer for the Mid-America Carpenters Union. His career began in 2000 as a carpenter apprentice, where he quickly distinguished himself through hard work, skill, and a commitment to excellence. Over the years, he advanced to roles including Foreman and Superintendent, gaining deep field experience and leading teams on complex projects. He has also contributed to the growth of the union as an instructor, helping train and mentor the next generation of carpenters. Driven by a belief in continuous growth, Adam

Robertson is committed to moving upward and forward—both personally and professionally. He is passionate about investing in others, strengthening the workforce, and building pathways for members to succeed. His motivation comes from being exceptional at what he does and from the support and inspiration of his family.



Freddie Brown



Austin Frank is the founder of ARF Solar, a solar energy company based in Alton, Illinois. He began his entrepreneurial journey in real estate and general contracting, but after completing a NABCEP solar training course, he shifted his company's focus toward the rapidly expanding solar industry. Today, ARF Solar serves clients across Illinois, managing every aspect of the solar process—from sales proposals to construction and ongoing maintenance. ARF Solar specializes in maximizing state incentive programs and pairing them with innovative financing strategies, enabling nonprofit and public sector organizations to complete solar projects at little to no upfront cost. At

its core, ARF Solar is driven by a mission to help consumers achieve energy independence while offering a smart, long-term investment. Current Projects Include: City of Marion, City of Alton, Village of Hartford, Village of Roxana, City of Bellville



George Moss is a longtime entrepreneur and skilled tradesman based in Cairo, Illinois, and the owner of Moss Heating & Air Conditioning. With over 47 years of experience in the HVAC industry, Mr. Moss has built a strong reputation for providing reliable, high-quality heating and cooling services to both residential and commercial clients. As a dedicated small business owner, he has led his company with a commitment to honest workmanship, technical expertise, and customer satisfaction. Under his leadership, Moss Heating & Air Conditioning has offered a wide range of services, including installation, repair, and maintenance of heating,

ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Throughout his decades of service, George Moss has remained a trusted figure in the Cairo community, known for his consistency, professionalism, and deep-rooted commitment to keeping homes and businesses comfortable year-round.



Ammiel Russell is a Southern Illinois native. During her high school career she enjoyed the distinction of Athlete Scholar, as a standout softball player and high honors student. Ammiel is also a talented vocalist, and has performed and competed regionally. She obtained a bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management and a minor in Business Analytics from Southeast Missouri State University. After graduating, magna cum laude, she joined the Talent Acquisition team at Southern Illinois Healthcare as an HR Recruiter. Ammiel has worked with Legacy Training, Inc., a community arts and health-focused nonprofit, since 2017. She began her involvement during

high school as a member of the “Grand Chain Poets”, a creative writing initiative. She has held the role of administrative assistant and currently serves as a program coordinator for the organization. Some of the projects she has been part of include Healing Illinois, the Healing Southern Illinois Study Tour, Envisioning Justice, and the annual African American Women's Health Conference.



Ricky “Re-entry” Hamilton is a workforce development strategist, entrepreneur, and advocate committed to advancing economic mobility for justice-impacted individuals and underserved communities. As the founder of GOT JOBS America, LLC, he leads innovative initiatives that connect employers, government agencies, and job seekers to sustainable career pathways, with a strong focus on reducing systemic barriers. His work emphasizes digital equity by promoting access to technology, digital literacy, and training for emerging industries. Grounded in lived experience and community engagement, Ricky develops reentry and workforce models that reduce

recidivism, strengthen local economies, and expand opportunity, while also leading the cross-sector initiative Jobs 4 Justice.

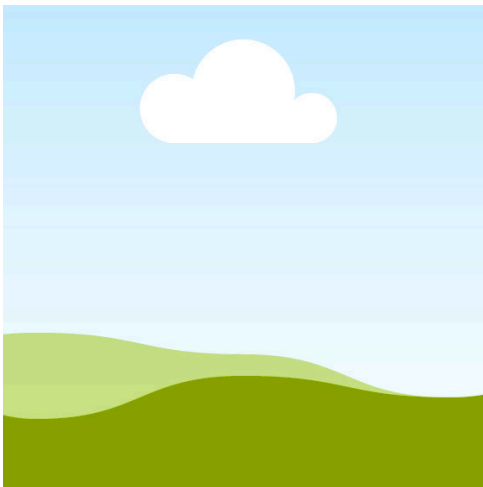


Michael Cannon is a workforce development leader and advocate dedicated to creating pathways to opportunity for justice-impacted individuals and underserved communities. As Co-Founder of GOT JOBS America, LLC, he helps design and implement strategies that connect job seekers to meaningful employment while supporting employers in building inclusive talent pipelines. His work focuses on practical, results-driven solutions that combine job readiness, employer engagement, and ongoing support to ensure long-term success. Through collaboration with government agencies, community organizations, and industry partners, Michael works to

reduce barriers to employment, strengthen communities, and promote sustainable economic growth.



Kitty Leggieri is the Vice President of Business Development and Solutions at Maximus, with over 42 years of experience in workforce development, employer incentives, and strategic growth. She specializes in connecting employers with innovative solutions, including workforce incentive programs and tax credits, to expand access to employment. Through her leadership, she builds strong partnerships between businesses, workforce systems, and community organizations to create sustainable, inclusive hiring pipelines and support individuals facing barriers to employment.



Greg Chambers



Jay Terry



Larry T. Barnett, Sr. is an educator, pastor, and community leader with a career spanning more than four decades. He holds a B.S. and M.S. in Education from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and earned a Doctorate in Theology in 2014. Barnett was the first African American Dean of Students at Century High School and served as a school administrator in Sparta and Carbondale, while also coaching and refereeing basketball for 30 years. Since 1985, he has been the pastor of St. John Praise and Worship Center and is a respected counselor to ministers locally and internationally. He also serves as Scholarship Coordinator and Chaplain for the Buffalo Soldiers MC

and enjoys hunting, riding his Harley, and sports with his wife Carol, their five children, and grandchildren.



Rev. Wade Halva



Rev. Ramone Collins is a minister, community leader, and workforce development professional with over 20 years of pastoral and leadership experience in Illinois. He currently serves as a Community Organizer with United Congregations of Metro-East, advancing equitable economic development and clean energy access, including leading the Clean Energy Workforce Hub in East St. Louis. Formerly Director of the Workforce Development Center for the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, he has built strong partnerships to expand training and employment opportunities. A long-time chaplain for the East St. Louis Police Department and

founder of Connect Illinois, Rev. Collins combines faith-based leadership with workforce and community development to create lasting social and economic impact.



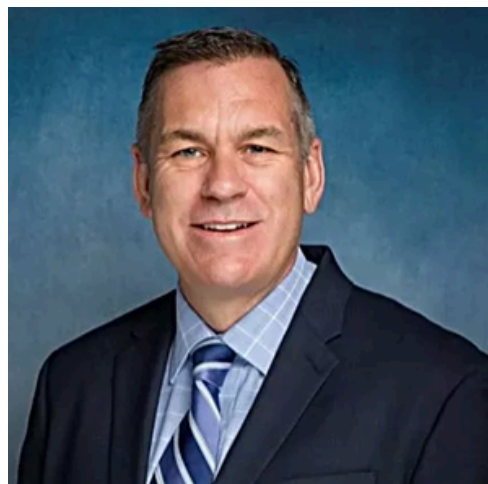
Mud Theatre Project was conceived behind prison walls.

Inside the Illinois Department of Corrections, a community of writers refused to accept silence as their sentence. Through workshops and performances, through late nights shaping scripts and early mornings revising drafts, these artists exposed the pipeline carrying children from classrooms into cells. Incarcerated writers became nationally recognized playwrights, journalists whose bylines appeared beyond razor wire, artists whose work demanded attention from people who'd never looked inside a prison before. Now many of us have come home. We return carrying skills honed in captivity,

insights earned through decades of forced reflection, and an unshakeable commitment expressed in our guiding principle: Transformational Therapeutic Rehabilitation Through the Arts. Our conviction, tested and proven: artistic expression doesn't just document change. It catalyzes it. In overlooked neighborhoods, with dismissed communities, among people written off as disposable—there, especially there—art plants radical hope and cultivates impossible futures.



Mayor Carolyn Harvey was elected as Mayor of Carbondale in 2023 and previously served for several years on the City Council. She previously worked at SIUC in the Bursar's Office, Division of Continuing Education, and Registrar's Office. Carolyn attended Miles College, John A. Logan, and SIU. She has been involved with the Chamber through attending monthly luncheons, volunteering for the golf scramble, and helping with other events.



Stan Reno



Marcy Cascio-Hale



Hon. Jonathan A. Mitchell is an Associate Judge in Illinois's First Judicial Circuit, serving primarily in Jackson and Union Counties where he presides over a wide range of civil and municipal cases. In addition to his judicial role, he has over 25 years of service in the U.S. Navy Reserve Judge Advocate General's Corps and currently serves as Commanding Officer of a legal unit supporting Navy Reserve Forces Command. A decorated military officer, he has served internationally, including in Iraq and Afghanistan. Judge Mitchell is also deeply involved in community service, contributing to several nonprofit organizations that support veterans and local initiatives in southern Illinois.



Gwyneth M. Troyer

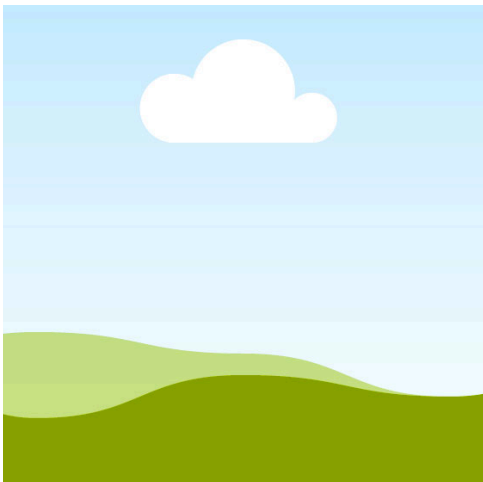


Melissa O' Dell



Cheryl "Shelly" Taylor Page is an Associate Professor of Law at Southern Illinois University School of Law and a tenured faculty member with decades of legal and teaching experience. A licensed attorney since 1993, she has served in multiple leadership roles at SIU, including Director of Experiential Learning and Clinical Experience. Her teaching and scholarship focus on human trafficking, domestic violence, and civil and human rights, with an emphasis on preparing practice-ready law graduates. Professor Page has taught at several law schools across the country, authored books and numerous publications, and serves as an expert witness on human trafficking for

the American Bar Association. She is also an active speaker and media commentator, sharing her expertise nationally and internationally.



Kevin Green's lifelong journey has blended music, science, law, and service. A Biological Sciences graduate from Indiana University, he began his career promoting Broadway tours before launching Greenfresh Company Services, a contracting business he led for 20 years. His work has included roles with the Indiana Court of Appeals, international human rights efforts in Hong Kong, and executive leadership as Vice President of Legal Affairs at SerVaas Factories International. Green has also contributed to medical research initiatives and organized major humanitarian fundraisers, including support for Chernobyl victims. Now president of Provizon Inc., a

nonprofit serving individuals impacted by the justice system, he continues his commitment to advocacy and community impact while enjoying creative, hands-on work. He is married with nine children and several grandchildren.



Precious Taylor



John Hanlon is an attorney and criminal justice reform advocate who served as Executive Director of the Illinois Innocence Project for 15 years. In this role, he led efforts to investigate and litigate wrongful conviction cases, working with law students, attorneys, and investigators to secure justice for those unjustly imprisoned. His work focuses on post-conviction relief, public education, and advancing systemic reforms to improve fairness and reliability in the legal system. Through litigation, advocacy, and community engagement, Hanlon remains committed to protecting the innocent and strengthening accountability within the criminal justice system.

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Sponsored by: Illinois Humanities, Envisioning Justice Initiative; SOL Community Foundation, in collaboration with the Southern Illinois Community Foundation, City of Carbondale, Humbled Hearts Ministries and the Simmons School of Law, Christian Legal Society



Illinois Humanities activates the humanities through free public programs, grants, and educational opportunities that spark conversation, foster reflection, build community, and strengthen civic engagement for everyone in Illinois.

Convened by:
Legacy Training, Inc.