

Glenn Martin – 20 years of CJ reform, from the inside out

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When Glenn was being released in 2000, after a six-year term of incarceration in New York prisons, he experienced something that would in no small way help formulate his path for the years to come. “The correctional officer who was in charge of my release looked me in the eye,” Glenn reports, “and told me he would be seeing my son here in the future. I had already decided my future life would be totally different from my past one, and that cemented it in stone.”

Today Glenn is the president and founder of GEMtrainers.com, a social justice consultancy firm that partners with nonprofits from across the United States to assist with fundraising, organizational development, and marketing. Glenn is a longstanding American criminal justice reform advocate and is the founder and former president of JustLeadershipUSA (JLUSA). He co-founded the Education from the Inside Out Coalition, a national campaign working to remove barriers to higher education facing students while they are in prison and after they are released.

While in prison, Glenn took college level courses, earning an associate degree in social science, and views his liberal arts education as a key turning point in his life.

After release, he began his career with the Legal Action Center (LAC), eventually serving as the co-director of LAC’s Helping Individuals with criminal records Reenter through Employment (H.I.R.E.) Network. Glenn worked to address the obstacles facing ex-offenders who try to reconnect with their communities and society at large, and he regularly spoke with media regarding criminal justice issues.

From 2007 until 2014, he served as vice president of development and public affairs for the Fortune Society, a group dedicated to helping people returning from prison succeed with starting new lives.

In early June 2015, Glenn, along with other criminal justice reform activists, were invited to the White House to discuss mass incarceration and law enforcement issues. Glenn was flagged by the United States Secret Service as a security risk because of his criminal record and required to have a special escort in order to enter the White House complex for the discussion. Once cleared, he used the incident “. . . to frame the topic for larger criminal justice reform.” Ultimately, he met with President Obama to discuss JustLeadershipUSA and his efforts to help shrink the criminal justice footprint in the lives of all Americans.

For almost 20 years, Glenn has been a part of the vanguard of successful reform advocates in America. His leadership has been recognized with multiple honors, including the 2016 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award, the 2017 Brooke Astor Award, and the 2014 Echoing Green Fellowship.

At NARSOL's Raleigh conference, Glenn will tell us how all of this shaped who he is and how he approaches advocacy. Titled “What 20 Years of CJ Reform Has Taught Me About Movement Building,” Glenn, using storytelling and other techniques, will draw distinct parallels between the campaigns he has participated in, created, and led and the upcoming opportunities and challenges inherent in sexual offense issues.

NARSOL is pleased to welcome Mr. Glenn E. Martin to Raleigh and to our 2022 conference.