



**Achieving More Effective Outcomes with Women in Jails:
A Summit to Identify Strategies to Build and Expand
Gender Responsive Approaches that Work**

**hosted by the National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women¹
and the American Jail Association²
Washington, DC
October 16-17, 2014**

Background

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) – in partnership with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) – established the National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women (NRCJIW) in 2010 to address the unique and complex needs of adult women involved in the criminal justice system. The mission of the NRCJIW is to provide guidance and support to criminal justice professionals – and to promote evidence-based, gender responsive policies and practices – in order to reduce the number and improve the outcomes of women involved in the criminal justice system. Three of the overarching goals of the Resource Center are to:

- Promote gender-informed policy and management practices that have systemic impact and improve outcomes;
- Highlight critical issues confronting this population; and
- Build a community of professionals to encourage the exchange of ideas and information and advance gender-informed practices nationally.

In 2013, the NRCJIW and the American Jail Association (AJA) formed a partnership to highlight the critical issues specific to women in jails. A survey was conducted of AJA members to gain a greater understanding of their perspectives and challenges when working with women in jails,

¹This event is supported under grant #2010-DJ-BX-K080 awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, in partnership with the National Institute of Corrections.

² The American Jail Association (AJA) is a national, nonprofit organization that supports the professionals who operate our nation's jails. It is the only national association that focuses exclusively on issues specific to the operation of local correctional facilities.

and in January 2014, AJA's *American Jails Magazine* was entirely devoted to issues unique to women in jails.

This Summit is also a joint effort of the NRCJIW and AJA to increase the awareness of jail managers and staff about gender responsive strategies that can improve their effectiveness when working with women and enhance facility safety and security for staff and inmates. This one-and-a-half day event convenes approximately 30 jail administrators, practitioners, community providers, researchers and criminal justice professionals with diverse experience, expertise and knowledge about gender-informed policies and practices and working with women in jails to identify areas of improved practice and develop concrete strategies for engaging local correctional facility practitioners to enhance outcomes for women in jails.

Goals of the Summit

The primary outcome of the Summit is a written brief that articulates the key areas discussed during the Summit, along with some action steps and strategies that jail practitioners can implement to improve practices in each area. To this end, the specific objectives of the Summit are to:

- Gain a greater understanding of the needs and challenges facing practitioners and women in jails;
- Review the latest research on justice involved women and gender-informed best practices and how they may be applied in jail settings; and,
- Identify effective approaches, strategies and action steps that jail practitioners can take to enhance their practices.