

Federal Judicial Center
Off Paper - Episode 13:
"Reentry Begins at Arrest":
A Conversation with
Chief U.S. Pretrial Services Officer
Christine Dozier (Ret.)

Mark Sherman: From the FJC in Washington, D.C., I'm Mark Sherman and this is *Off Paper*. For today, a conversation with Chief U.S. Pretrial Services Officer Christine Dozier from the District of New Jersey. She retired last month after serving as chief for 15 years and as an officer in the district for the previous 15. Under Chief Dozier's leadership, the agency evolved into one on the cutting edge of pretrial work and criminal justice work more generally. She introduced a new perspective with her philosophy that reentry begins at arrest.

Nationally, Chief Dozier's leadership has been recognized by the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies where she has served for several years as the federal representative on the organization's board. She was instrumental in helping the State of New Jersey reform its bail system and create the state's pretrial services system. She also served two terms on the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts Chiefs Advisory Group.

More recently, Chief Dozier worked closely with the FJC on its science-informed decision-making initiative in collaboration with Massachusetts General Hospital's Center on Law, Brain, and Behavior and Harvard Law School. She's currently a PhD

candidate in public administration at Rutgers University, which means that pretty soon we'll be calling her Dr. Dozier. We've got Chris Dozier for the hour, folks. So don't go anywhere because it's going to be packed with about 30 years of shared wisdom that you're not going to want to miss.

Chris Dozier, welcome back to *Off Paper*.

Christine Dozier: Thank you so much for having me.

Mark Sherman: The last time you were here on the program a couple of years ago, you and Sherri Stan Aberdeen [phonetic] of the Pretrial Justice Institute spoke at some length about developments in pretrial justice. But this time, because I've got you here all by yourself, I wanted to begin by kind of digging deeply into this rather unique philosophy that you have brought into the system that reentry begins at arrest. You don't hear that a lot from pretrial folks because you guys are focused primarily obviously at the front end. You hear talk about reentry mostly from folks who are working on the back end, in probation. So can you tell us what you mean by reentry begins at arrest and how that concept has influenced your approach to pretrial services work?

Christine Dozier: Certainly. Thank you for giving credit for that to me. I'm not so sure I'm the one who originated that, but certainly, when I thought about this concept, it drew my attention and a lot of us out there in the field started thinking about this. I really credit a lot of it to the

Department of Justice's Smart on Crime Initiative and Reentry Initiative because it was a collaborative effort like none other I had seen with the federal probation and pretrial system.

The DOJ put points of contact for reentry in every federal district, and we saw all this effort to help offenders being released from incarceration after five to ten years of custody. They would come out with no GED or sometimes no substance abuse services when they had issues. A lot of resources were put into helping them succeed, which was fantastic. But those of us in the pretrial field watched this and thought, hey, I supervised that guy for a couple of years in fact. If these services are good for him coming out, why weren't they good for him earlier in the process?

So we really started thinking about what's our role in this. While pretrial's mission is not to rehabilitate, in the federal system, when we have 90 percent conviction rate and about 90 percent of those folks going to prison - many who are at low risk for recidivism, by the way - we start asking ourselves is there a better way to do it and what's pretrial's role in doing that. I think this is part of the reason why there's been this proliferation of specialty courts popping up on the front end because we're thinking how can we contribute to doing this better as a system.

Actually, it is not inconsistent with the pretrial mission at all. When you look at the statute, when you look at the

guide, when you look at a lot of our opinions and references, there are many references to not only risk but to needs and fulfilling the needs and helping defendants with those needs. As long as the risk principle is being upheld so that we're focusing in on the right people - the moderates, the high risk people - it is consistent with our mission.

In addition to that, pretrial has always owned diversion as one of its goals and missions. The Smart on Crime Initiative also encourage non-traditional diversion cases. When we start diverting moderate and even some higher risk cases that are doing well, clearly there's a need to address behavior and have some behavior modification model and rehabilitative model involved. So pretrial's role has been evolving.

One of the important things I think we need to discuss when we talk about this issue is there is a great concern in the pretrial world about mission creep and should pretrial be focused on behavior modification and rehabilitation. I do understand that concern because, working with the NAPSA Board, we see that in some 3,000-plus counties across the country. There are only about 400 pretrial programs, so clearly we need to be focused on building good pretrial fundamental bail programs around the country. But this evolution of some of these programming, what you talked about with the FJC and the focus on behavior, clearly there's a room for that in our system and it needs to be explored more. The National Institute of

Corrections calls some of this harm reduction initiative, and that's never a bad thing.

Mark Sherman: One of the things that occurs to me as I think about reentry beginning at arrest is - and the pretrial role is really sort of taking a more systems view - that we have in most cases an individual who's coming through the system. They're arrested. They end up before the court. They're perhaps either detained or released, hopefully released if the case allows for it. Then you all in pretrial services will supervise them. Then I think something like 97 percent of the cases end up in a conviction or a plea. Most of those individuals are going to be doing some time in the Bureau of Prisons. Then they're going to come out on the back end and be supervised by U.S. Probation which is also within the federal courts and within the district court.

So, to me, it speaks very clearly of taking a systems view and sort of seeing how this individual is going to be touched by our system in various ways and by various parts over the course of this very critical part of their life. If you can sort of take a harm reduction or an early intervention approach, it just seems to make more sense not just in terms of public safety, which is paramount obviously, but also just in terms of efficiency and cost. Can you speak to those issues?

Christine Dozier: Sure. Well, clearly what little research exists in federal pretrial and it's consistent with

what we see in the state research with the state systems, clearly when defendants have an opportunity to be released pretrial, the research shows that they do much better. They succeed at a much higher rate not only during the term of pretrial but post-conviction supervision. They also have much better outcomes in the sentencing phase. They have the opportunity to not only assist in their defense in a better way but to put their best foot forward to work, to earn money to support their families, to get interventions on substance abuse, mental health, and cognitive behavioral therapy, things like these that really allow them to turn their lives around. When judges see people that have come a long way since the time of their arrest, clearly there's an impact at sentencing for the better.

Mark Sherman: I think that this is something worth elaborating on, this idea, that there is some research out there that substantiates the claim that if a person does well on pretrial supervision, it can really positively affect their sentence and then how well perhaps they even do in the BOP and then obviously coming out onto post-conviction supervision. It's one thing to sort of claim that anecdotally. It's another thing to say that there's some research out there to support it. So again, I think from a community safety perspective, to some degree it might be counterintuitive but it actually can work.

The other thing I wanted to ask you about is to what degree have you, because you pushed this idea of reentry beginning at arrest, have you gotten any pushback either from other people in pretrial, state or federal, or perhaps from federal defenders who again I think have good reason to be concerned about things like mission creep and risk assessment and all the things that are being written about now that are of concern?

Christine Dozier: Yes, for sure. I think it's good that there's pushback because we do need to carefully think through how we're doing things. When we start seeing a trend happening in the system, we want to make sure it's for the right reasons and it's going to have the good outcomes that we want.

Certainly, there has been pushback from many in the pretrial field who are concerned, we'll call them purists, and many of them who worked hard in those early years to educate stakeholders what pretrial was about and what it was for. It was to reduce the incarceration, the pretrial incarceration - I'm talking about of presumed innocent people - to reduce crime on bail and to reduce failure to appear.

In the state system, in many of these programs, those cases are being turned around in a very short period of time. They have a lot of lower level cases misdemeanors and things like that so they're turning them around in a couple of months.

Obviously, you're not going to even touch upon the beginning of behavior modification in just a couple of months.

So I understand it's not the place for it in many jurisdictions. But when you think about it in the federal system, again, that 90 percent of them are going into custody regardless, and when the specialty court started proliferating all throughout our system, and these people started having really good outcomes, then we started thinking but what about the other 1,500 people under our supervision that don't have the benefit of this type of program. It really necessitates thinking about this as a broad system.

So I understand we have to be selective about how it's applied. Many in the defense world of course had concerns about where is this leading. You want to put my presumed innocent person into cognitive behavioral therapy? I can tell you that the head of the Public Defender's Office in the district of New Jersey saw that by doing so, the defendants were doing much better. They were having fewer violations. There was less noncompliance. They were improving their lives and they were having better outcomes. So they essentially said we are comfortable with you having this kind of programming because we understand what you're trying to do with it. So there's a lot of need to educate about what we're trying to do and what won't be done such as more violations as a result.

Mark Sherman: So is it fair to say that one can be presumed innocent but still have needs that are perhaps separate and apart from the legal disposition of the case? In other

words, that people have all kinds of needs. Pretrial services is equipped many times to help the person get those needs met. Whether it's with cognitive behavioral groups or treatment or employment assistance or educational assistance, there's a budget for that. So it sounds like you're saying there is a difference between sort of the strictly legal aspect of the case, the presumption of innocence which is paramount and important obviously, but also that people can come to us with certain needs and we are in a position to help get those needs met if the person wants that.

Christine Dozier: Certainly. More importantly, if those services are addressing risk, which I find they are compatible, they're consistent, those types of services that we're providing to someone who's unemployed, we know that when people without work are more likely to have noncompliance issues than people who have jobs and are making money and are stable, that's all part of pretrial's mission, is to help stabilize and get them to the disposition. And these services are helping.

I think the addiction issue and understanding our society has developed about addiction and the causes and the reasons and has, therefore, brought a lot of support to treatment instead of incarceration for these individuals. But we've learned from some of the recent research in evidence and programming that it's not just addiction. It's things like adverse childhood experiences and trauma and the way many, many of our defendants

have been raised that they have difficulty with compliance with the many, many obligations we put on our defendants. Therefore, they need more support.

We need to work with them in a different way to help them be successful and to reduce the noncompliance by providing cognitive behavioral therapy to a defendant who's really struggling with how to have a job that he's never had before and has had issues with authority. We really have to help them think differently about their future and about how to remain successful so that, by providing these services and these interventions, we're not only addressing the risks and making it more safe for the community but we're helping those individuals as well.

Mark Sherman: This can also be something that really makes the difference between somebody being detained and released because obviously these are things that the court can mandate as conditions for release. Then you all supervise the individual in the community to ensure compliance with those conditions.

Christine Dozier: Exactly. As we're seeing, just as we know that when we release someone into treatment programs, they're more likely to be successful than without that treatment, releasing somebody with the supervision coupled with the support system that so many of them don't have using Second Chance Act Funding to remove some of the obstacles for them to get services, to get a vocation, to help support their families

and engaging them in more of a supportive relationship, that's very important. Some folks might say this is a hug a thug type liberal approach that doesn't appeal to them. But the fact is the evidence has shown that by having a collaborative relationship with the defendant by helping them through MI, this cognitive model, the star model that's been built out in the federal system, that we're better able to help them understand themselves come to their own conclusions about what's in their best interest and what's going to help them get to the goals they set for themselves. So it's not a liberal approach. It's an evidence-based approach that has better outcomes.

Mark Sherman: Chief U.S. Pretrial Services Officer Chris Dozier is my guest. After a short break, we'll talk with Chris about some challenges she faced upon becoming chief and how she overcame them. You're listening to *Off Paper*.

Lori Murphy: Hi. I am Lori Murphy, a colleague of Mark Sherman and head of the Executive Education group at the FJC. We have a podcast that focuses on leadership in the federal courts called *In Session: Leading the Judiciary* that I think you'll like. Each episode features current research and cutting-edge insights into leadership.

Guests include Michael Lewis, ground-breaking author of *The Undoing Project* and *Moneyball*; professor Jennifer Eberhardt, implicit bias researcher at Stanford University; and Harvard Business School's expert on psychological safety, Amy Edmondson.

Each episode strives to enhance listeners' critical-thinking skills, encourage expression of authentic leadership and promote the use of best practices among judiciary executives.

Episodes are available wherever you get your podcasts or on FJC.dcn. Join us! The podcast is In Session: Leading the Judiciary!

Mark Sherman: Chris, I want to ask you to reflect on your first few years as chief. Before you became chief, you were already working as an officer in the District of New Jersey, and your agency have had a couple of very good value-driven leaders before you took over. Can you talk about how your predecessors influenced you and what you learn from them especially in terms of both service and leadership?

Christine Dozier: Certainly. My first chief, John Martorano [phonetic], was a DATS - Drug and Alcohol Treatment Specialists - in the Federal Probation Office before becoming the first chief when our district split in 1987. So having been a treatment officer, he had a perspective that he brought to pretrial which was teaching us compassionate service. Right from the beginning, I came in understanding a role that of course accountability was part of it but compassionate service to those that we supervise.

Tom Henry was brought in when the agency was developed as the supervisor at the time but became second chief. Tom was a PhD and a former teacher. So he really taught all of us how to prepare ourselves right from the beginning to be future leaders, to develop ourselves as professionals, a professional expertise in pretrial services which meant pursuing advanced education. Many of us got our master's degrees working full-time. First, in training, most of us in the management team had gone through foundations management, and leadership development programs with the FJC, engaging in national level working groups and advisory committees, doing district reviews. So we're learning from other districts what wonderful practices are out there.

Mark Sherman: And not so wonderful.

Christine Dozier: And not so wonderful, yes. Yes. So a broad national perspective that really helped develop our staff and learn from others and just have a broader view. But he really taught us to take ownership of our own development and hone our craft. So I tried to emulate both of them throughout my career.

Mark Sherman: The notion of thinking about leadership even from the line and developing yourself from the beginning is something that really resonates with us over the last few years. As you know, the FJC has developed a set of 10 competencies for probation and pretrial officers. One of those 10 competencies happens to be every day leadership, this philosophy that Tom

brought in as chief and that you learned from, and this was a number of years. He was really kind of ahead of his time, which is kind of what you're describing - this notion of every day leadership simply because you don't have the title, right? Supervisor, deputy chief, chief, the way it works in our system, right? The title has nothing to do with leadership or the characteristics of leadership. Those really begin at the beginning. It sounds like you really sort of took that to heart and the rest is history as they say.

Christine Dozier: Yes, absolutely. I think we've always told our staff that everybody is a leader in their own right and helps develop and build our credibility one case at a time, one project at a time. You don't have to be an officer to be in a leadership capacity. Just taking pride in what you do and wanting to be the best whether promotional opportunities and management track is your goal or not. There are many who aren't interested in doing that for love and passion of the line work, and I applaud that and we need that. But they are clearly still leaders by showing others how to do it well and thinking with an open mind about the evolution of the practice.

Mark Sherman: In the 30 years that you've been with the district of New Jersey, have you sort of seen that manifests in terms of the culture of the district?

Christine Dozier: Oh, certainly. Yes. I think we've encouraged many different creative approaches to the way we do

our work. We've always encouraged a lot of input. We developed committees to get input from all different offices, satellite, main office, from all different staff members in different roles. We put together a local pretrial advisory committee to bring concerns, bring issues, bring suggestions.

In fact, when I was a new chief, they brought a suggestion that they wanted to change the model that we had in the district of a generalized approach to being an officer doing both investigations and supervision. They wanted to bifurcate and have a specialization. While I had concerns about how that might work - will it have well-developed officers who have broad knowledge? Will there be enough officers who wanted to just one or the other - we left it to them to work it through. And they did. They came to us with a policy that we implemented and it's worked to this day.

Mark Sherman: It sounds to me like one of the ways, sort of a general way in which it's manifested in the district is that officers aren't shy about coming to the leadership with ideas and sort of laying them out. Whether you agree with the ideas or not, it's like there's a sort of they don't wait for the boss to speak from on high about what we're going to do. Obviously, there's going to be some of that, too, but they feel empowered because of this notion of leading from where you are basically, which is what you've articulated. They feel empowered to come to the chief, or to the deputy, or to the

executive team with ideas and they're prepared to kind of hash them out. If the idea is rejected, it's rejected. No skin off my back. We're going to move on, we're professionals. Is that a fair characterization?

Christine Dozier: Most certainly. We brought in the FJC to do a program one year that was how we influence in all directions. We're used to trying to influence judges to hear about certain cases, influencing attorneys and/or peers, influencing by mentoring students and younger officers but really driving home the point that you all have significant influence. You're in a position of importance and you should use that influence for the better.

We have always encouraged a lot of the participation in things outside of the district, both, within the district committees. Some have gotten extra education and training in something specific like cyber monitoring. We have several officers on district review teams just going out, learning, sharing their experience with others and bringing back information. So, I view that as leadership roles.

Mark Sherman: When you became chief, did you have a particular agenda that you wanted to pursue? Were there changes at the district or national levels that you had in mind? Or, was developing a vision more of a gradual process for you? I guess I'm asking is, Chris, what your motivation was for wanting to become chief.

Christine Dozier: Well, I certainly didn't have any specific agenda beyond wanting to be the best that we could be as an agency, as individual, as a district and thinking about different ways. Leaving alone what was working well and tweaking what could be more efficient or effective. So just by wanting to see what we could make better, I started networking. I became involved in some IT grants in the early stages with the pretrial chief from Central California at the time. We implemented the first kiosks and the electronic case file. As a result, I got on a working group when we started looking at PACs and PAC CCM. Eventually it became the IT working group.

The funny thing is I'm the least technologically savvy, but all the more reason why that drew me because I wanted to learn more about it. The more I just became involved, eventually I started meeting people, talking to more people, networking. I became involved in the pretrial services working groups and had opportunities to help write some of the monographs and things like that. So, really, it was just being open to other ways of doing things that helped me bring things back to my district just as my other staff members were going out and bringing back suggestions. Really, just the agenda was always how can we do it better.

Mark Sherman: I think the lesson here maybe is that you don't have to come in with sort of a specific agenda in mind, that that's not essential to good leadership, right? But rather

coming with an open mind and wanting to be the best and knowing that there are improvements that can be made. But you need to figure out and work with your team to figure out what those need to be at the district level. Obviously, the more you participate in national groups, you'll be able to articulate what kinds of changes might need to take place at the national level but that it can be incremental. Not having an agenda is okay, but you need to have an open mind. You want to be the best and look for opportunities.

Christine Dozier: Exactly. I also think it's important to always look for mentors. Look for people who you can learn from and grow from that experience. There are always mentors all around us at all stages of our life. And to continue to look to spend time and get to know people who have things to share with us.

Mark Sherman: I think this idea of constantly growing throughout your career is just really a valuable insight. To that point, one of the trends we've seen, Chris, that perhaps began in the 1990s and really seem to gain steam in the early 2000s and onward is the increasing numbers of women in federal pretrial and probation leadership positions. I think this is probably happening throughout law enforcement, but we're focused on probation and pretrial. It's certainly been the case there.

You were appointed in 2004, meaning you're a fairly young chief at the time. I imagine you were often the only woman in

the room when you were in meetings with your male district and national counterparts often who were much more senior than you were. Could you describe what that was like?

Christine Dozier: Well, I really encountered that even earlier in my career.

Mark Sherman: Sure.

Christine Dozier: When I was promoted to a supervisor, I was one of the few women and certainly younger women in the group. So I would be sent to some training and meetings and I would find myself standing out. Certainly it was intimidating in the beginning because I was green and didn't know what I didn't know. But I found the vast majority to be so welcoming. Most of my mentors have been older men who've just been very open about bringing me in and in teaching me. But on occasion I would feel as if my opinion didn't seem to resonate or someone might be appearing dismissive, I didn't try to assume why it might be - whether it was age, whether it is my gender. I just determined to prove them wrong, that I did have something of value to share with them and that they could learn from someone much younger and less experienced. I think that has always worked well for me.

Mark Sherman: Yes. Well, you're hardly known as a shrinking violet in our system.

Christine Dozier: No. I don't think that's my --

Mark Sherman: You bring the Jersey attitude in a very, very good and positive way. I think it's very helpful to hear you say this isn't something that happens when you become chief.

Christine Dozier: That's right.

Mark Sherman: This is something that happens from the very beginning and you have to learn how to navigate that as somebody who might be the, quote-unquote, minority in the room. You don't know what you don't know, but you also know what you know. It's important not to be bashful about articulating what you do know and then fighting for it.

Christine Dozier: Having your voice heard most certainly.

Mark Sherman: Having your voice heard, absolutely.

I'm talking with Chief U.S. Pretrial Services Officer Chris Dozier of New Jersey. She retired last month.

We're going to take another break. When we return, I'll ask Chris about her biggest accomplishments and her thoughts regarding the future of pretrial justice and the lesson she's learned as a leader. Stay with us.

Lori Murphy: The FJC has new videos available online from some of the best clinicians and researchers in the country that will help you deepen your knowledge about issues of substance use and mental health in the criminal justice context. Dr. Margaret Sheridan of the University of North Carolina and Dr. Kerry Ressler of Harvard University discuss brain development and toxic stress in children and adolescents. Dr. Peter

Friedman of the University of Massachusetts and Baystate Health offers an overview of the neurobiology of addiction and the neuropharmacology of opioid addiction. Dr. Eden Evans of Massachusetts General Hospital provides a lecture on the biology and treatment of addictive disorders and co-occurring psychiatric disorders. And Dr. John Kelly of the Massachusetts General Hospital Addiction Recovery Management Service talks about that service as an example of good outpatient treatment for substance use disorders.

All of these videos and more are available on FJC.dcn's probation and pretrial services education page under video programs.

Mark Sherman: We're back with Chris Dozier. Chris, you are chief for 15 years which in our system is a long time. You were able to accomplish quite a lot. One area of management that pretrial and probation leaders and really leaders in lots of organizations struggle with regularly involve issues around human resources and, in terms of the bigger picture, creating a caring and compassionate workplace. You're able to do a fair amount of that work during your tenure. Could you talk about some of the things you did?

Christine Dozier: Certainly. Well, when I first became a manager, many of us when we're new to management think that the role is to have a certain way of doing things that we think works best and to get everybody on board with doing it that way.

And when things don't quite go that way, trying to change that. But over time, I came to realize that we really need to appreciate people have a lot of different creative ways of doing things. We need to embrace that and try to bring the best out in everyone.

I've often said that some of the more flexible benefits creative approach type things is more work for managers but it's better for the staff, and I do find that to be true. When we have a request to do something differently, the new chief would've said, if we do that, then somebody else is going to want to do it and the agency is going to fall apart. But over time I came to find that, you know what, we can do these things. If they become a problem, we'll deal with it. And most often they don't become a problem.

So really being attentive to the needs of staff. Certainly as we've aged in our workforce, there are a lot more personal needs of staff. I often talk to the staff about we as a profession are really good at taking care of others or defendants but not necessarily taking care of ourselves and each other. So I think it's really important that we remember we're a court family. We're with our work folks more than our own families for the most part. So even though we may not always agree with each other, we may not even always like each other, we need to have each other's backs because all of us at one point or another will most likely need some help.

What really changed the way I viewed my role was when we had some instances of tragedy, losing coworkers that we have had over 30 years. We have had this a few times whether due to illness or something tragic. I saw at that time that staff really came together. They were really sensitive to each other's needs. They really reached out and helped each other. Over time, I had just come to appreciate that our most important resources are our human resource and we really need to invest in it. So taking time to talk to the staff about this very concept, that if you need help, ask for help. If someone ask you for help, lend it. If it's a busy day which most days are and there's a little tension, cut some slack because you never know what people have going on in their personal lives. Quite often people do have some challenges in their personal lives that they need some help at work.

That's one of the lessons I think that's been most important. It's all about the relationships. It's true in terms of doing a good job, the relationships we have with the court, the relationships we have with our stakeholders. Building relationships is real key to people having confidence when you're coming to them with some ideas and some thoughts about how things can be done.

As a manager, particularly when I have to have a difficult conversation with an employee about performance, it's so important that they feel that you're coming at them from the

right place, a place where you want them to do well and not where they're feeling demoralized. It's all about the relationship building.

Mark Sherman: I think this is one of the most difficult areas that managers have to deal with and learn how to deal with, which is what we call a performance evaluation or performance management or whatever it might be. It could be on an individual basis. It could be on an agency-wide basis. Typically, as you know, the traditional approach is to use performance evaluation or management almost as a cudgel.

People feel like they're going to get hit over the head if they've gone off track or whatever. But the reality is that if you want somebody to improve and you want your organization to improve, the way to approach performance management is in a developmental way. That when you need to have difficult conversations, in this case we're talking about performance management, it's about leading with the good. Right? Because it's the rare case where somebody hasn't done something, especially at the professional level, something really good. Right? Then you talk about those areas for improvement. Not weaknesses. Areas for improvement. Depending on how you have that conversation, the individual is typically receptive especially if you're there also offering support like tangible support.

I think this is one of the areas that we experience it's not probation and pretrial specific. It is an issue that we have in organizations. The whole tone of the organization will change, I had found, if those conversations sound supportive and not punitive. It sounds like that's kind of what you're taking away from your experience as well. In your point about having worked in this particular agency for 30 years, 15 years of it as the chief, and having experience some really significant human issues - tragedy, loss, all those things - you made the point of, you know, we're with these people sometimes more than when we're with our own families. So why should we relate to them any differently in terms of us as human beings? We love our families, we got to love our people. It sounds to me like you kind of grew into that and came to that over the course of your tenure. Perhaps not even just as chief but over your tenure in the district.

Christine Dozier: Yes, absolutely. I really learned that we have a very diverse group, which is wonderful, but with very different skills and different ways of doing things. The job has also gotten far more complex, I believe. I used to tell new officers in training it takes about a year before you're really going to be comfortable and feel it. I recently had an officer say, are you kidding me, Chris? Two years, please. But I really feel like you can be in training on certain aspects your entire career. There's certainly been senior officers that I

think appreciated the extra support of saying, hey, maybe if you look at this FJC program, it'll help you in this regard. So approaching the problem and the evolution from a support perspective.

We changed our performance evaluations early on to say meets expectations or see goals. Not meet or doesn't meet. So if you're not meeting expectation, then there should be some goals to address that. It's a training issue. Everybody there wants to do well. We work really hard to recruit the best and I believe they are the best. People need different support and different types of guidance all throughout their career.

Mark Sherman: I suspect this also goes to issues like recruitment and succession planning, right? If you're the chief, especially if you have larger ambitions nationally in terms of things that you'd like to see changed, you're going to need to inculcate those values into your new officers that you're bringing on board but also think about who's going to be moving into management positions and your deputy position. Because when you're out of a district, the district still has to function and they can't depend on you. Obviously you're only a phone call away, but I think that's not a philosophy that you want to change when you're out of the district. You need there to be continuity and the staff needs there to be continuity. I suspect you've thought about this not just in terms of

performance evaluation or management but also just sort of the whole gamut of challenges that exist for a leader.

Christine Dozier: Absolutely. I think right from the point when we're recruiting people, we're looking for people that we see have the ability to grow and develop. That doesn't mean they have to be interested in the management track because they don't. But most do have some interest or many do. As I said, the way we are taught from Tom Henry, that leadership starts right from the beginning and kind of honing your skills right from the beginning, it's really important to be thinking longer term about having the personnel with the skillsets to evolve into these higher executive level positions so that there is a good seamless succession plan.

Our system is unique in some ways. As a national system, it's a wonderful thing that we learn from each other and we make so many wonderful connections. But it's a blessing and a curse because we also see a lot of movement within the system. We lose our talent to another district. Now we may gain some but certainly I find in our metropolitan areas it's challenging sometimes to keep people. So we're losing that talent and that experience. We're even seeing some competition in the recruitment, and the hiring, and the promotions among districts in which we need that stability within the district in order for there to be the relationship building. The staff feeling secure and not constantly having changes in the way we do things.

It was a source of pride that I promoted a strong deputy chief five years ago. Give a shout out to Jon Muller who was named chief after I left. That he was very well ready to assume the helm. The court was very confident in his abilities in the agency in general and the staff and the practices. Therefore, it was a very seamless transition. It could be a very hectic and disempowering situation if there's a lot of unknown that has happened in some districts. So I think it is really important that we think about the future both short- and long-term for our agency as part of our role as the executive.

Mark Sherman: I want to shift gears and talk about some of the work that you've done nationally. I'd like you to touch on both your work with the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies, or NAPSA, and the work you did with the state of New Jersey to help them develop and implement bill reform in state pretrial services that your service on both of those aspects is kind of interrelated. So talk about that if you could.

Christine Dozier: Yes. I went to my first NAPSA conference in 2005 in Cleveland. It was so energizing, inspiring. It really motivated me to think bigger picture and to want to go home and do better. So I met Greg Johnson, who was the chief in Cleveland at the time. In fact, he became one of those people that help mentor me. He was the federal representative on the NAPSA board at the time.

Greg worked with me in 2010. We had a conference, a pretrial conference in New Jersey and Atlantic City that was attended by 400 pretrial professionals from across the federal system. We realized there's really a yearning for this type of training, more of it. So when Greg retired, he asked me to take his place on the NAPSA board as the federal representative and I did that. It's just been an absolutely wonderful experience for me personally to learn and grow from so many wonderful people - state, local, federal.

I took on the role. Simultaneously, the pretrial representative from the Administrative Office retired, and I took on the role of developing the federal track at NAPSA for the curriculum. It became a really collaborative thing with the Federal Judicial Center, with the Administrative Office, PPSO. It allowed us this freedom to reach out to a lot of really key stakeholders in our system and talk to them about the issues, invite them to be on panels. And by asking them to speak, we are also helping educate them about our concerns.

It wasn't until I got on the NAPSA board that I realized my own state didn't have any pretrial services. We really sometimes in the federal system are only focused on what we're doing, but I started thinking about what's happening in my own state. It really was a grassroots effort began and had been going on for quite a while. I got in touch with several former federal prosecutors who were now in key positions in the state.

Judges, prosecutors, and eventually our governor and chief justice of our New Jersey Supreme Court.

Mark Sherman: Absolutely.

Christine Dozier: They understood what the federal bail laws were and flexibility that that provided them in that, when they got to the state that had a cash bail system, that it was wrong and it did not work well.

Mark Sherman: So just to remind the audience, the governor of New Jersey at the time had been the United States attorney for the District of New Jersey. Obviously, you work with that office every day so you knew each other.

Christine Dozier: Yes. Chris Christie was the U.S. attorney. When he became governor, he wanted preventive detention to address some of the violent crimes that had been occurring. There were really many key stakeholders from his office, from the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Defense Bar. There were a lot of just key people who said if we're going to do preventive detention, we need pretrial services to make this work well.

Marie VanNostrand was commissioned by the Drug Policy Alliance at the time to do a study of jail overcrowding in New Jersey. That study was published at the perfect moment that we had planned a symposium at Rutgers Law School about this. When Chief Justice Rabner saw the study, he put together a commission to plan basically bail reform and some other reforms.

I was really, really fortunate to be able to work in that reform. I testified before the assembly. I put the key people in New Jersey in touch with really a lot of the key people in pretrial throughout the country, most of them on the bail, on the NAPSA board because they had good running programs. I was fortunate to be a part of that. It was on the ballot and the voters in the state of New Jersey voted in a constitutional amendment and pretrial services has been in place since 2017.

Mark Sherman: It's an amazing accomplishment really. The outcome so far in New Jersey have been very positive is my understanding.

Christine Dozier: Yes. Many, many districts across the country are looking to New Jersey as one of the premier models for bail reform. It doesn't typically happen at that level. It's typically smaller evolution, but it's just been a tremendous thing. The work continues today. I'm still the representative on the NAPSA board. I'd like to engage more of our folks in the federal system and to work with us and eventually see someone else in that position. But it's really been such a wonderful opportunity for me.

Mark Sherman: Before we go, Chris, I want to ask you as you ride off into the sunset what you're hopeful about in terms of the future of pretrial justice especially in the federal system and what are some concerns you have and any final thoughts about leadership?

Christine Dozier: I feel very encouraged by the direction of our system. I think that there've been a number of things that have occurred in recent years that are really moving that ship, turning the ship. It takes a lot of time to turn but good things are happening. Certainly the programming that I've worked with at the FJC has just been so amazing and creative. The Harvard program being one of them. They helped us implement our drug court. Just so many wonderful things.

And the Administrative Office, they're doing great work as well I know. Shout out to Bill Hicks and John Fitzgerald who's now at the helm. Really he has a vision for engaging more and more key stakeholders. So I feel very encouraged by that. I think that our community is starting to have a better appreciation for some of the ways in which we need to help do this better. So I think that there are great things happening.

It's also challenging, a really challenging time. I know in my own district the workload had really exploded. We had hired 10 new officers just in the last year and they're still hiring when I left. There was a lot of retirements, so a lot of really new people. Great energy, but we lost a lot of that experience and expertise. Sometimes you just need to slow the role and just work on doing the fundamentals well before you can be more creative. But I'm very proud of our system. I'm so proud to have been a part of it. All I could say is that I encourage people to just be passionate about what they do.

Mark Sherman: Chris Dozier, I want to congratulate you on a remarkable career. I've known you for a long time. It's been just a pleasure to be able to watch you work and to work with you too. On behalf of myself and my colleagues at the FJC, I want to wish you all good things as you start this next chapter of your life.

Christine Dozier: Thank you so much. It has been my pleasure.

Mark Sherman: And thanks so much for taking the time to talk with us.

Christine Dozier: You're welcome.

Mark Sherman: *Off Paper* is produced by Jennifer Richter. The program is directed by Chris Maloney [phonetic]. Our program coordinators are Anna Glouchkova and Olivia Pennock. Remember you can subscribe to *Off Paper* wherever you get your podcasts. I'm Mark Sherman. Thanks for listening. See you next time.

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