

## SPEAKER & PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES



### **CRAIG DEROCHE**

**Senior Vice President, Advocacy and Public Policy, Prison Fellowship**

DeRoche serves as senior vice president for advocacy and public policy at Prison Fellowship, the nation's largest outreach to prisoners, former prisoners, and their families. He leads the organization's efforts to advance restorative criminal justice reform at the state and federal levels. A recognized subject-matter expert, he has testified before Congress and confers with lawmakers to help them design legislation that prioritizes accountability, community participation, and second chances.

DeRoche made front-page news when, at 34, he became the speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives. In 2010, he made national headlines again for two alcohol-related arrests, revealing a long-concealed addiction to alcohol. It was only after his arrests, the ensuing rehab, and a renewed focus on his Christian faith that he entered lasting recovery. He relates the story in *Highly Functional*, his 2015 memoir.

Since joining Prison Fellowship, DeRoche has brought his political acumen and personal experiences to the pursuit of restorative criminal justice. He pens op-eds for publications including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Times*, and *The Christian Post*. He serves on the Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections, a bipartisan body charged with making recommendations to Congress and the president about how to improve the federal corrections system. He is also a signatory to Right on Crime's Statement of Principles on conservative criminal justice reform. Right on Crime is a project of the Texas Public Policy Foundation in cooperation with Prison Fellowship and the American Conservative Union Foundation.



### **DEREK COHEN, Ph.D.**

**Deputy Director, Center for Effective Justice, Texas Public Policy Foundation**

Dr. Derek Cohen is the deputy director in the Center for Effective Justice at the Texas Public Policy Foundation and the Right on Crime campaign. Dr. Cohen graduated with a B.S. in criminal justice from Bowling Green State University, and earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati. His academic work can be found in *Criminology and Public Policy*, the *Oxford Handbook on Police and Policing*, the *Encyclopedia of Theoretical Criminology*, and has scholarly articles currently under review. He has presented several papers to the American Society of Criminology, the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, and the American Evaluation Association on the implementation and outcomes of various

criminal justice policy issues. Prior to joining the Foundation, Dr. Cohen was a research associate with University of Cincinnati's Institute of Crime Science. He also taught classes in statistics, research methods, criminal procedure, and corrections.

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### **GARY COBB**

**Former Assistant District Attorney, Travis County**

Gary Cobb is a former Assistant District Attorney with the Travis County District Attorney's Office. During his 26 years career as an ADA he prosecuted defendants in approximately two hundreds jury trials, several of which garnered local and nationwide attention. When Cobb retired in January 2017 he was Director of the Grand Jury Division of the DA's Office. In addition to supervising and mentoring many less-experienced prosecutors, he worked as a Teaching Specialist at the UT School of Law. Cobb has lectured for the Texas District and County Attorneys Association, for the Austin Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, and was previously on the faculty at the National District Attorneys Association. He has worked as a Teaching Specialist at the UT School of Law, lectured for the Texas District and County Attorneys Association and for the Austin Criminal Defense Lawyers Association and he was previously on the faculty at the National District Attorneys Association. He presently serves as a volunteer in various community organizations, including the African American Youth Harvest Foundation, My Brother's Keeper and the Mayor's Civil and Criminal Justice Work Group.



### **CATHY STOEBNER DEWITT**

**Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Texas Association of Business**

Cathy Stoebner DeWitt is the Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the Texas Association of Business. DeWitt lobbies on business issues such as employment relations, criminal justice, privacy, immigration, nonsubscription and workers' compensation. DeWitt came to TAB in 1998 as the Communications Director of the Association where she served as editor, writer and designer of statewide publications and spokesperson for the media on legislative issues. In December of 2006, she became Governmental Affairs Manager to lobby on behalf of TAB business members. In 2007, DeWitt was made Vice President of Governmental Affairs. Prior to joining the Association she was an associate with the public relations firm, ROSS Communications, and also served as Deputy Campaign Manager for Senator John Cornyn's Supreme Court Race in 1996.



### **BARBARA HOOD**

**Certified Peer Support Specialist, Jail Outreach Program, Haven for Hope**

Barbara Hood began her road to recovery in May of 2013. After years of opiate addiction Hood was arrested for an addiction related offense, which then prompted her to seek help. She spoke with a counselor at Alpha House, who told her they were full at the time, but to call every day. Hood did just that, and in July 2013 she was admitted to their program. Through this process, she learned the root cause of her addiction and triggers, how to deal with fear and shame, and got treatment for depression. Hood then got a sponsor and her life took off with clarity and fortitude. She began to volunteer at Haven for Hope after attending a meeting there. She says that there was a spirit at Haven that touched her spirit and from that moment, she began to truly live. Hood has found her life's work at Haven for Hope's Jail Outreach Program, where she is able to help people like her find their way back to life.

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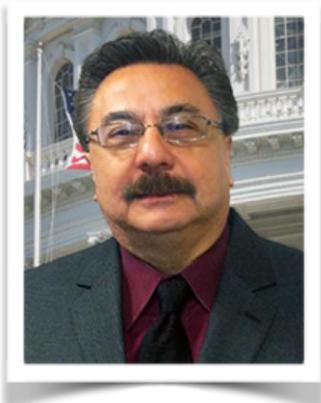


### **NICHOLAS "NICO" LAHOOD**

**Criminal District Attorney, Bexar County**

LaHood was sworn-in as Bexar County's Criminal District Attorney on January 1, 2015. Born and raised in San Antonio, LaHood has always had a spirit to serve. LaHood graduated from Central Catholic Marianist High School and attended St. Mary's University, where he earned his B.A. in Finance and Financial Services. He went on to receive his Juris Doctorate from St. Mary's School of Law. LaHood remained in San Antonio, where he worked as a criminal defense attorney for twelve years.

Since becoming Bexar County's top prosecutor, District Attorney LaHood has revamped the Pre-Trial Diversion Program and created a Child Abuse Unit, Domestic Violence Task Force, and a Conviction Integrity Unit within his office. LaHood believes in the Restorative Justice Model for non-violent offenders. DA LaHood is a Board Member for Child Safe San Antonio, The Bexar County Family Justice Center, the Rape Crisis Center, and Crosspoint, Inc. LaHood has been recognized by Law and Politics Magazine, as seen in Texas Monthly Super Lawyers edition, as a "Rising Star" for many years prior to being elected District Attorney. He was recently nominated as a Texas Bar Foundation Fellow, one of the highest honors bestowed upon a member of the State Bar of Texas. Before serving as the District Attorney, LaHood was a special prosecutor for Bexar, Karnes, Medina, and Wilson Counties. LaHood is also is a former Magistrate Judge in Bexar County, and adjunct professor at St. Mary's University School of Law.



### **MIKE LOZITO**

**Director of Judicial Services, Bexar County**

Mike Lozito works for the Office of the County Manager, with assignments to oversee the operations of the Medical Examiner's Office, Crime Lab, The Dispute Resolution Center, Pretrial Services, Criminal Justice Data Analysis Unit, Jail Population Impact Control Unit, Specialty Courts, Reentry, Central Ministration Facility and the Mental Health Department. Lozito is currently in collaboration with the Council of State Governments and the Meadows Mental Health Institute to identify and divert individuals with mental illness from the County Jail. His previous employment includes over 30 years Criminal Justice experience; Director of Programs and Regional Director with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Pretrial Operations and Private Sector Criminal Justice Programs.

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**MICHELA MARINELLI, Ph.D.**

**Associate Professor of Pharmacy, The University of Texas at Austin**

Dr. Michela Marinelli's research focuses on understanding the biological basis of addiction. Her lab uses a systems-approach, combining complementary levels of analysis, which include molecular, cellular, anatomical, and behavioral studies. Dr. Marinelli obtained her Ph.D. in Pharmacology and Neuroscience at the University of Bordeaux 2 (France). After post-doctoral training in the United States, she worked as an Assistant Professor at the INSERM (the French equivalent to the American National Institutes of Health). Since 2003, she has held two positions in the United States, as Assistant Professor at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, in North Chicago, and as Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin.



**DOUGLAS SMITH, M.S.S.W.**

**Criminal Justice Policy Analyst, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition**

Doug Smith develops policies to reduce Texas' over-reliance on incarceration and improve conditions of confinement and reentry for people leaving prison. Smith graduated magna cum laude from St. Edward's University in 1994 and earned his M.S.S.W. from the University of Texas at Austin in 2000. He previously served as a Policy Analyst in the Texas House of Representatives' Committee on Human Services, as well as a Legislative Director for a member of the House. He was also an Adjunct Instructor at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, teaching courses on Public Policy Analysis. His passion for criminal justice reform stems from his own experience in the criminal justice system, where he served six years in prison for crimes committed as a direct outcome of addiction. In addition to his state-level advocacy work with TCJC, Smith serves on the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Reentry Taskforce, the Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable, and the Reentry Advocacy Project. He also sits on the Board of Directors for the Austin Sobriety Center and the Texas Research Society on Alcoholism and Addiction.



**REGINALD SMITH**

**Peer Policy Fellow, Certified Peer Specialist, Communities for Recovery**

Reginald Smith has come full circle, ending an almost twenty-five year odyssey through the school-to-prison pipeline that ultimately led him back to school. He has worked in substance use recovery and has been a reentry advocate since his release from prison in 2012. While an undergraduate at The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, Smith worked diligently to educate students and faculty on the impact that mass incarceration has had on individuals and families particularly in communities of color. Due to his involvement in the criminal justice system Smith has sought to educate civic leaders and policy makers on criminal justice transformation and smart decarceration strategies. Smith is a former Vice President of the San Antonio Chapter of the Texas Association of Addiction Professionals, a Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement Austin City Hall Fellow, a UT School of Social Work College Scholar and the recipient of the 2016 Tower Award for Outstanding Student Volunteer and the inaugural Austin NAACP Self-Determination Award.