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MAYOR'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL AND
THE VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the activities of the Vera Institute of Justice from February 1, 1976 to July 31, 1976, and is submitted in fulfillment of the reporting requirements of the New York City Police Department/Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Contract running from December 1, 1975 through November 30, 1977.

Although most of Vera's programs received direct funding from sources other than the CJCC, virtually all have benefitted from CJCC's support. Contract funds are used for planning and developing projects for the New York City criminal justice system. These funds provide support for the Vera staff who supervise the projects and for the planners at the projects who suggest improvements and new directions.

Funds have been used in direct support of the Police Liaison Office, Pre-Trial Services, Victim/Witness Assistance Project, Appearance Control Unit, Early Case Assessment Bureaus, Women on Patrol Study, and Supported Work for Ex-Addicts and Ex-Offenders. The contract has also supported planning staff for the Corrections Projects, Manhattan Bowery Project, Court Employment Research, and Job Creation.

PART I - PROMOTING EFFICIENCY AND
FAIRNESS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Since the time of the Manhattan Bail Project, Vera has tried to make the criminal justice system do what it was supposed to do, more efficiently and more fairly. In that project, the goal was to have judges require money bail only when it was needed to assure a defendant's appearance in court, and to release on their own recognizance defendants who were likely to appear in court even though they had not been required to post bail. The project was designed to reduce the unfairness of a money bail system for poor defendants and to reduce the costs to both taxpayers and defendants for pre-trial detention.

The Vera projects described in this section have similar goals: providing information, increasing consistency in decision-making and speed in case handling, and decreasing time wasted for those involved with the system.

VERA/POLICE LIAISON OFFICE

A Police Liaison Office has operated at Vera since April, 1966. It became a sub-unit of the Police Department's Criminal Justice Bureau in July, 1971 when the Bureau was established as a result, in part, of joint Vera-Police activities.

The responsibilities of the Liaison Office include providing opportunities for police to assist in the design of projects that relate to law enforcement and facilitate project procedures involving police operations.

In the period covered by this report, the Office worked on the following projects:

1) Victim/Witness Assistance Project. The Liaison Office has been coordinating and attempting to gain approval of a pilot program that will allow project representatives to visit certain precincts in Brooklyn in order to obtain the names of complainants and victims from the Police Department complaint files. This procedure, which will allow the project to expand the scope of its services and increase its capability to assist the victims of crimes, is presently awaiting approval from the Police Department's Legal Division. The Liaison Office has also assisted V/WAP in its efforts to increase the number of police officers on alert by refining procedures, improving forms control and issuing orders that require officers to list additional dates for possible court appearances.

2) Manhattan Bowery Project. The Office continues to supervise the activities of the police officers assigned to rescue patrol. During the first six months of 1976, these officers

brought to the Project from the streets of the Bowery and other areas over 3,000 destitute or injured alcoholics. In addition, 840 persons were referred to other rehabilitative agencies.

The Liaison Office has also assisted the Bowery Project in preparing to open its West Side facility. Police officers and former alcoholics will staff one or two rescue patrols, to cover four precincts on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

The Liaison Office continues to maintain close contact with other Vera-sponsored projects such as the Pre-Trial Services Agency, Wildcat Corporation, and the Women on Patrol study.

PRE-TRIAL SERVICES AGENCY

In March of 1976 the Pre-Trial Services Agency (PTSA) opened its Manhattan Office, taking over from the Probation Department all interviewing and notification responsibilities for the borough with the greatest volume of cases. Within a few months, PTSA Research discovered that Manhattan recommendation patterns, disposition rates, and "jump" rates among non-recommended defendants differ substantially from those of other boroughs. Attempts to explain these differences are expected to bring new insight into who fails to appear and how the agency affects the justice system; this greater insight may, in turn, bring about some changes in criteria for recommending ROR.

To try to make the pre-trial process work better, CJCC had asked Vera in 1973 to establish an agency which would:

1. decrease the number of days spent in detention by defendants who could be safely released to the community while awaiting trial;
2. reduce the rate of non-appearances in court by defendants released from detention and awaiting trial;
3. provide a variety of services to the public, criminal justice agencies and defendants, to enable the pre-trial process to operate with greater efficiency and fairness.

In order to achieve the first goal, release of suitable defendants before trial, PTSA submits to the arraigning judge a bail recommendation for every defendant who consents to be interviewed. If a "recommended" or "qualified" defendant is not released, PTSA then presents Written Re-Argument letters or tries to arrange release to a third party or supervised release. To achieve the second goal, a low failure-to-appear rate, the Agency tells every defendant when he is expected to appear in court.

PTSA began operating in Brooklyn in June, 1973, and expanded to Staten Island in June 1974; to the Bronx in December, 1974; and, as stated above, to Manhattan, in March, 1976.

From December 1, 1975 to August 1, 1976 (March to August for Manhattan), 21,976 defendants were interviewed in Brooklyn; 16,613 in the Bronx; 19,161 in Manhattan; and 921 in Staten Island. The interviews resulted in nearly identical recommendation patterns in Brooklyn and the Bronx: about 48% of the defendants fell in the "recommended-verified" category -- that is, they were recommended for release on their own recognizance on the basis of verifiable community ties and no outstanding warrants or current charge of bail-jumping. Another 16% were "non-verified recommended" (previously called "qualified") -- that is, they were recommended on the basis of non-verified community ties. No recommendation (equivalent to a finding of insufficient ties, residence

outside the New York City area, or conflicting residence information) was made for 17% of the Brooklyn defendants and 21% of the Bronx defendants.*

In Manhattan, however, the recommendation picture is quite different. Only 28% were recommended on the basis of verifiable ties, and no recommendation was possible for 39% of the defendants. (Non-verified recommendations were 15%, virtually the same as the other boroughs.) One possible explanation for this difference is that Manhattan has more rooming houses, single-room occupancy hotels, and dwellings without phones; Manhattan defendants therefore are more likely to be transients, less likely to show attachment to the community which leads to a PTSA recommendation. But a study conducted by PTSA research found that although out-of-state and transient defendants account for a substantial number of Manhattan interviews, by themselves they do not explain the inter-borough discrepancies in recommendation rates, and further investigation of these discrepancies is needed.

At arraignment, Manhattan continues to present a different picture from the other boroughs. Staten Island disposes of only about one-twelfth of its cases at arraignment; the Bronx, about one-fifth; Brooklyn, about one-third. In Manhattan more than one-half of the cases do not go beyond

* All percentages are rounded off. Staten Island had 62% in the first category, 12% in the second, and 13% in the third. The remaining category, "other," includes defendants who refused to be interviewed or had an incomplete interview, a current charge of bail-jumping, warrant outstanding, or prior record unavailable. In all the boroughs, these cases make up 12-18% of the total.

arraignment. This high early disposition rate may be the justice system's response to the different kinds of crime (more prostitution, minor drug offenses, etc.) or the vastly greater volume of cases in Manhattan.

Turning to the fate of those defendants remaining in the system and judicial response to PTSA recommendations, we find that Manhattan no longer differs from the other boroughs. The lowest percentage (46%) of defendants are ROR'd in Brooklyn; the highest (62%), in the Bronx; the Manhattan figure (48%) is virtually the same as Brooklyn's. In every borough, the ROR rate was the highest for PTSA "recommended" defendants and next highest for those whom PTSA found "qualified." Rates for each of these categories were higher than the borough's overall rate.* This suggests, as do past studies linking ROR rates and PTSA recommendations, that judges were using PTSA reports, or the factors underlying those reports, as a basis for reaching ROR decisions.

PTSA judges how well it is meeting its second goal, reducing the rate of non-appearance, by calculating failure-to-appear (FTA) rates. Since some defendants miss court dates due to misunderstanding or conflicting commitments, or intentionally fail to appear but then can be persuaded to come to court, PTSA calculates both an "aggregate" FTA rate

* The same results were found in PTSA's 18 month report, covering the period just preceding the period described here.

(based on total number of appearances missed by ROR'd defendants) and a "willful" FTA rate (based on the number of defendants who fail to return to court within 31 days of the missed appearance). To discover whether its recommendations do predict, as they are supposed to, which defendants are most likely and which are least likely to appear at their next scheduled court date, PTSA calculates FTA rates for each recommendation category. In other words, besides calculating total rates for the city and each borough, it calculates the rates for "verified-recommended" defendants, "non-verified recommended," "no recommendation," and "others."

From December 1, 1975 to June 27, 1976 (March to June, 1976, for Manhattan), in all boroughs, for defendants ROR'd at arraignment, the lowest aggregate and willful FTA rates were for verified recommended defendants. The next lowest rate was for non-verified recommended defendants. Again, this duplicates the findings for the previous 18 months. However, in a change from the findings of the 18-month report, defendants ROR'd after arraignment in the December-June or March-June period failed to appear at higher rates than those ROR'd at arraignment; previously, this post-arraignment group had had FTA rates equal to or lower than the group ROR'd at arraignment.

In a comparison among the boroughs, Brooklyn is found to have the lowest aggregate and willful FTA rates in all categories. Manhattan generally has the highest rates by a small amount, although its willful rates for recommended

defendants fall between the Brooklyn and the Bronx rate. The Manhattan totals -- 11.9% aggregate FTA and 7.1% willful FTA are higher than Brooklyn (6.6%, 3.4%) and the Bronx (8.7%, 5.1%), apparently because the rates for "non-recommended" and "others" are much higher.

To help achieve all three goals -- reducing unnecessary detention time, minimizing "jump" rates, and providing services to defendants during the pre-trial period -- PTSA and Vera research staff are undertaking a number of studies to evaluate PTSA's impact and to find ways to increase that impact. Two areas which profoundly influence the pre-trial process will be or are being explored:

1) Judicial decision-making regarding ROR and bail - How is it affected by PTSA recommendations? How much is it influenced by community ties? charge? criminal record?

2) FTA rates and pre-trial recidivism rates - What are they? Can they be predicted by the same criteria PTSA uses to make its recommendations: Can the rates be predicted by other factors, such as charge and criminal record?

To supplement data tape analysis, Vera has conducted or is conducting a small manual recidivism study; a study of all cases arraigned in Brooklyn in a given period, all defendants in detention on a given day, and judicial decision-making regarding cases in these samples; and a comparison of FTA and pre-trial recidivism in the Probation ROR program and the Manhattan PTSA program.

VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROJECT

As the Victim/Witness Assistance Project (V/WAP) ended its first year of operation, analyses of the Project showed that it had saved a significant number of witnesses, particularly police witnesses, from appearing in court unnecessarily. But it had not succeeded in increasing civilian attendance, and therefore had not had the impact on court efficiency which increased civilian attendance had been expected to produce.

V/WAP began operation in July, 1975 as a cooperative venture of the CJCC, Kings County D.A.'s Office, New York City Courts, New York City Police Department, and Vera Institute. Its first year was funded by a one-million dollar LEAA grant (\$1.4 million on an annualized basis) and matching New York City funds. In its second funding year, which began on May 15, 1976, it sustained a 15% cut in its annualized operating budget. The immediate results of this reduction were a 14% reduction in fulltime personnel and a reduction in the Crime Victim's Hotline's hours of operation from 24 to 16 per day. With the exception of the Hotline, the project has been able to operate as it did in its first year. This is attributed to consolidation of project administration to counter the natural tendency to rely heavily on administrative resources during implementation; increased use of volunteer, part-time, and work-study personnel; and increased efficiency due to reorganization of the work flow.

The Project has two functions: gathering and disseminating information to improve appearance control, and providing services to witnesses and victims of crime.

To fulfill its appearance control responsibilities, V/WAP interviews all police and civilian prosecution witnesses who pass through the Complaint Room and also tries to gather, from police officers, information that will help the Project contact absent ("missing") civilian witnesses. In the first quarter of 1976, V/WAP conducted 6445 police interviews, 2159 civilian victim and witness interviews, and 2733 "missing witness" interviews -- an average of 810 interviews per week.

Information from the Complaint Room interviews -- specifically, addresses and phone numbers -- tells V/WAP how to communicate with witnesses. Information from the PTSA computer and the ADAs' court information sheets tells V/WAP what to communicate -- specifically, when and where the witnesses are expected in court. The V/WAP computer uses all this information to generate notification letters and lists of witnesses who need to be called or sought out by a community representative. In the first quarter of 1976, the Project issued 9319 civilian notifications and 10,632 police notifications -- an average of 1425 notifications per week.

Whenever possible, witnesses are put on alert, allowing them to stay at work or at home unless they are actually needed in court. In the first quarter, 1203 civilians (13% of those "stated") were placed on alert; only 204 (17% of the civilians on alert) were called to court ("activated"). Thus, 999

civilian appearances were saved.

For police, the figures were even more striking. In the first quarter, 3955 officers (37% of those statused) were placed on alert; 590 alerts (15%) were activated, resulting in a saving of 3365 police appearances. These averages understate the project's achievements since within the reporting period, both the numbers and the percentage of officers on alert rose significantly. In January there were 1115 (34%) officers on alert; in March, 1674 (41%), of which 1136 were not called to court. If the March rate continues, and if the value of each saved appearance is set at \$125 per day, V/WAP will free \$1.7 million worth of police manpower for patrol -- manpower worth more than the project's total present operating costs of \$1.2 million per year.

V/WAP was expected not only to prevent unnecessary appearances but also to increase civilian attendance at necessary ones. The project was found to be less successful in the latter area by both the Impact Evaluation, which the research arm of V/WAP issued in May, and the Outside Evaluation, which Forrest Dill issued in June. The V/WAP report shows that there has been only a marginal (statistically non-significant) improvement in appearance rates at the first adjourned date, and that this advantage is lost by the next court date. Dill attributes this to factors over which V/WAP has no control, including the lack of concern for witnesses' convenience, the system's tolerance for delay and repeated adjournments (which discourage civilian

attendance), and the fact that only in serious cases is considerable pressure put on witnesses to appear.

V/WAP research has established that witnesses' presence is associated with case outcomes. But since the project has not succeeded in increasing witness attendance, it is not surprising that there has been no change in the kinds of dispositions or the average time required to reach a disposition.

At the end of June the project reorganized its operations in order to attack the problem of civilian appearance rates. Earlier, the research department had begun an interview study of civilian complainants and witnesses to try to determine why so many drop out of the process. Results of a pilot study suggest that non-appearance occurs in certain types of cases (e.g., cases in which complainant and defendant have a prior relationship) and occurs also because of disillusionment with the court process, particularly with the time it demands. If the full study confirms that witnesses tend to drop out when they have a prior relationship with the defendant, it may recommend that a new way of handling these cases should be developed. Perhaps an alternative to Criminal Court processing, such as mediation or counselling, could be created; V/WAP could identify prior-relationship cases in the Complaint Room and target them for the alternative processing.

Insofar as non-appearance results from dissatisfaction with the court processes, V/WAP should be able to help attack the problem through its services, reorganization, attempts

to decrease civilian time in the complaint room through the use of stipulations, and efforts to increase the use of civilian alerts.

APPEARANCE CONTROL UNIT

The forerunner of Victim-Witness was the Appearance Control Unit (ACU) which Vera created in 1970 in cooperation with the Police Department to operate a telephone alert system for prosecution witnesses. This system allows prospective witnesses to remain at work or at home on the date of a scheduled court appearance until it is determined that they are needed in court.

Appearance Control became a part of the Police Department's Court Division in 1973, but its director continues to be a Vera employee. The Unit has offices in New York, Bronx and Queens Counties. In Kings County, it works in conjunction with Vera's Victim/Witness Assistance Project.

During the first six months of 1976, in the four counties in which ACU operates, 27,460 court appearances (42% more than last year) were saved for prosecution witnesses. Of these, 18,416 were New York Police Department appearances. An additional 4,407 witnesses, of whom 3,075 were police officers, were saved part of a day in court. These saved appearances increased police manpower available for patrol by 169,604 man-hours, 39% more than last year. The increase over last year has been particularly apparent in New York and Kings Counties, with improvement in the latter due to the successful ACU-V/WAP cooperative effort.

EVALUATION OF EARLY CASE ASSESSMENT

Early Case Assessment Bureaus (ECABs) were established during 1975 in the District Attorneys' Offices in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. Under this program, senior attorneys with trial experience are stationed in the Complaint Rooms to evaluate every felony case and give it one of five designations, or tracks: immediate presentation to the Grand Jury ("A" track), holding for Grand Jury presentation until the file is completed ("B" track), additional evaluation prior to felony prosecution ("C" track), reduction to misdemeanor status and prosecution in the Criminal Court ("D" track), or outright dismissal in the Complaint Room ("E" track). Vera was asked to do a cost analysis of the project and to evaluate the effect of the Bureaus' screening.

The Vera study is now nearing completion. Among its preliminary findings are a reduction in the number of cases sent to the Grand Jury, increased dispositions in Brooklyn of "D" track cases at Criminal Court arraignment, and expedited felony prosecution of "A" track cases in the Bronx. As a device for "front loading" felony prosecution, ECAB therefore appears to be meeting with some success.

In the course of their study of ECAB, however, the Vera researchers have become concerned over the absence, within each of the District Attorneys' Offices, of technical aids for the administration of programs such as ECAB. ECAB

administrators have difficulty determining what happens to cases as they proceed through the court system, after they have been given an ECAB track designation. Consequently, it has been difficult to assess the full impact of the ECAB program.

CORRECTIONS

Problems of crime and the justice system in New York City are entwined with conditions and procedures in the State Corrections System. Over 65% of the State prison population comes from the City; their experience in prison undoubtedly affects their behavior when they return to the City, as the majority of them do.

Soon after his appointment last year the State Corrections Commissioner contracted with Vera for two projects which he believed would improve the prison experience: preparation of an inmate rule book, detailing rights and responsibilities, and development of a more systematic selection procedure for the Temporary Release program.

In preparing the rule book, Vera has conducted extensive interviews with staff and inmates at five Corrections facilities. Visits to additional facilities are planned, and arrangements are now being made with Department officials for a series of working and drafting meetings.

After studying Temporary Release in New York and elsewhere, Vera proposed new selection criteria and procedures. The final design, which was developed after close collaboration between Vera and Department staff, is scheduled to be implemented on a pilot basis in September; all Temporary Release applications from four Upstate facilities -- Auburn, Elmira, Walkill, and Bedford Hills -- will be processed according to the new procedures.

Arthur Kill, the first State facility in New York City, is the focus of another Vera-Corrections study. This 600-bed facility opened in Staten Island in June, 1976 to hold inmates who will probably be paroled to New York City. At the Corrections Department's request, Vera has worked with the New York City-area Parole Office to develop a parole transition program for the Arthur Kill population. (The Parole Office was involved because parole services, which are now a responsibility of the State Corrections Department, include not only supervising offenders already on parole, but also preparing inmates about to be considered for release.)

The purposes of the project would be to improve the employability, life skills, and job placement for about 150 inmates; to make their transition to parole from facility confinement smoother; to increase the parole release rate for Arthur Kill inmates at their next Parole Board appearance; and to test revised parole case-management techniques. The Corrections Department is now reviewing the Vera-Parole Office proposal.

COMPUTERIZED DISPOSITION-REPORTING FOR THE NEW YORK CITY COURTS

With the concurrence of the City Administrative Judge, the State Office of Court Administration contracted with Vera in April to develop an automated system of disposition reporting in the City Criminal Courts. The computerized system is intended to (1) relieve court clerical personnel of the burdens imposed by a manual reporting system and (2) provide complete and timely disposition information to DCJS, which is charged with maintaining criminal history files for the State.

Vera was given this assignment in part because its use of computers in the Pretrial Services Agency had given Vera considerable experience with the problems of gathering and reporting data in the complex city court system. The software developed for the PTSA system formed the basis for the OCA effort and reduced the time needed to implement the system. Currently, court dispositions are being input into the system in Brooklyn, Manhattan and the Bronx on an experimental basis. When procedures are finally established for collecting information and quality control procedures are developed to assure accurate reporting of dispositions, the information which has been put into the system will be reported to DCJS and court personnel.

The new system has the potential for producing other information useful to the courts, for calendaring and for court management. Eventually, other actors in the criminal

justice system -- police, legal aid, corrections, and parole --
may also use the information which this computer system can
provide.

PART II - DIVERSION PROGRAMS

Beginning with the Manhattan Bowery Project in 1967, Vera has developed diversion programs to remove from the criminal justice system men, women, and children whose problems might be better treated in other settings. Vera created the Bowery Project for alcoholics, the Neighborhood Youth Diversion Program for young people brought to Family Court, and the Court Employment Project for those who had not yet acquired a criminal record. As each of these projects proved its worth, it was spun-off to become an independent corporation, independently funded.

No new diversion programs were begun in the period covered by this report. Vera has maintained informal ties with the projects it began, sometimes consulting on problems or new directions or helping to assure funding for project threatened by the City's continuing fiscal problems.

COURT EMPLOYMENT PROJECT EVALUATION.

The Court Employment Project (CEP) was begun in 1968 to divert from the New York City criminal justice system certain defendants who were judged not dangerous to the community and who might profit from counselling, educational, and employment referral services to be offered by the project. Its goals were to reduce recidivism, dispose of criminal charges, and enhance education and employment opportunities for its participants.

The project is now an independent corporation which operates under contract to the City's Human Resources Administration. The City's deepening fiscal crisis in late May and early June threatened the project's funding. Not knowing at what level it would be funded after July 1, or whether it would be funded at all, CEP stopped intake, laid off program personnel, and concentrated its efforts on outstanding court cases. On June 29 the City released accrued funds and an additional \$50,000 to the program so it could maintain a skeleton staff during July while funding deliberations continued.

Before these events occurred, Vera's Research Department had begun its evaluation of the Court Employment Project. Preliminary organization began in February and March. A project director and three staff members were hired. LEAA project funds were activated on April 1 and an intake study was initiated to examine formal and informal aspects of CEP's

screening and intake. In addition, a preliminary operational study of the service program was undertaken.

When CEP's funding was threatened and then virtually cut off, the evaluation project had to slow field research and develop contingency research plans. Acting under one of these contingency plans during the summer, the evaluation staff examined what happened to eligible defendants and how Assistant District Attorneys and Legal Aid lawyers handled their cases in the absence of this diversion program.

MANHATTAN BOWERY PROJECT

The proposal to merge the Bowery Project with Beth Israel Hospital has been approved by the boards of directors of both organizations. While the necessary State approval is being sought, the Bowery Project is proceeding with its plans to expand to the West Side of Manhattan. A lease has been signed and construction has begun on a new facility, where admissions are expected to begin in late October or early November. This social-setting (non-medical) detoxification center will accommodate 40 residents for stays of approximately five days.

The City has proposed an additional expansion, to the Murray Hill section of Manhattan. In this area the Project would run a "sobering-up" station, the new type of State facility for motor vehicle drivers and others found drunk in public. Formerly, such persons were subject to arrest and incarceration. However, on January 1, 1976, a new State law in effect adopted the approach of the Manhattan Bowery Project and prohibited arrest for public intoxication.

Several changes in funding arrangements have taken place during the period covered by this report. The outpatient clinic at the Bowery location has been licensed by Medicaid and therefore has become eligible for Medicaid funding. Project Renewal, the supported work project for ex-alcoholics to which some outpatients are directed, is now being funded by CETA, a federal program, rather than the more vulnerable City Highway Department budget.

PART III - SUPPORTED WORK

In 1970 the Vera Institute of Justice began to experiment with "supported employment" as a rehabilitative mechanism for certain groups of socially and medically disabled persons. In June of that year, Vera established its first supported work endeavor, Project Renewal, which employed a group of ex-alcoholics referred from the Manhattan Bowery Project; the following year Vera established the Pioneer Messenger Service to employ ex-offenders and addicts in treatment. Pioneer was absorbed in 1972 into the newly-created Wildcat Services Corporation. Needs of Wildcat employees led, three years later, to the formation of a Job Creation Unit at Vera.

WILDCAT SERVICES CORPORATION

At the Wildcat Services Corporation, changes over the past six months and plans for the future have been shaped by fiscal considerations. Wildcat's budget dropped from \$13,842,300 in FY '74/75 to \$12,566,000 in FY '75/76.* The number of crew members was reduced by attrition from a peak of 1600 in FY '74/75 to 1069 in July, 1976. Administrative consolidation brought into a central unit all functions except operations supervision and planning, and resulted in a savings of \$400,000.

With a further \$1.8 million cut in its Department of Employment appropriation and the expiration of the federal waiver which made welfare diversion possible, Wildcat had to seek new sources of funds for FY '76/77. In early August, 1976, it signed a contract with Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) which will bring \$700,000 to Wildcat. It received a Department of Labor grant for \$495,000. And it drafted legislation, which was proposed by the State Department of Social Services, passed by the state legislature, and signed by the Governor, to allow welfare diversion to continue.

In joining forces with MDRC, Wildcat is joining a

* Of the '75/76 budget, the New York City Department of Employment provided 56.5%; SSI (welfare diversion), 19.8%; service contracts, 9%; National Institute of Mental Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse, 5.8%; Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, 2.3%, and Department of Labor, 6.5%

nationwide test of the supported work concept. MDRC is funded by the Ford Foundation and several federal agencies to supervise and study supported work projects in 12 sites throughout the country. Participation in the national demonstration will result in two significant changes for Wildcat. 1) The Wildcat population being served will be expanded to include AFDC mothers, and out-of-school youth, and 2) no crew member may be employed by Wildcat for more than 18 months.

In order to integrate the new populations into Wildcat operations, two planning consultants, whose services are funded through an MDRC grant, began work in January on an AFDC welfare diversion waiver, referral sources, and research design. To soften the impact of the 18-month limit, task forces were created to reassess the roles of counseling and job development. Their primary concerns have been to broaden the scope of skills training and to intensify job placement efforts.

Wildcat's special HEW waivers, which permitted Wildcat to enroll individuals who were Home Relief (HR) recipients at the time of hire and transfer them to SSI temporarily, ended in June. In addition, Section 164-a, to the State Social Services Law enables Wildcat to move these individuals (numbering approximately 700) from SSI back onto HR. Section 164-a also provides that HR recipients who have been convicts, addicts, or alcoholics may continue to receive their full welfare grants while they participate in an approved supported

work program. The passage of this legislation was a step toward institutionalizing the concepts of supported work and welfare diversion.

During the past six months, the Vera Research Department conducted a field study on the extent of alcohol use and abuse at Wildcat. It also gathered data on 30 alcohol-dependent crew members and 21 alcohol-dependent members of a control group (applicants not admitted to Wildcat). Vera has reported on long-term employment patterns of ex-addicts, studied child-care arrangements of a sample of male and female Wildcat workers, compared the performance of drug-free and methadone-maintained participants, and investigated employer attitudes toward ex-addict employees.

The commercial value of services provided to New York City during 1975-76 was estimated to be \$7,155,125, while billings to City agencies for these services totalled only \$1.2 million. An evaluation of other areas of the program for FY '75/76 showed that for every \$1 the City invested in the program, it received \$1.36 in return during that fiscal year.

JOB CREATION

Employment at Wildcat was always meant to be transitional, but permanent jobs for Wildcatters proved hard to find. Responding to this problem, Vera established a Job Creation Unit in early 1975. Its initial task was to create jobs for Wildcat graduates; it planned to focus on service jobs, which seem particularly suited to these employees and which also direct the bulk of available funds to salaries rather than capital investment.

The Unit's first project, the Vera Transportation Service, began operation on a pilot basis in June, 1976. Employing four former Wildcatters as drivers and attendants, and one as a reservations clerk, the Service provides door-to-door transportation to the elderly and disabled who reside in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Funds to purchase 10 specially equipped vehicles were awarded in July 1975 under the Urban Mass Transportation Act, but 11 months later the State had not yet purchased the vehicles. Therefore, the project began with only three rented vans, accepting trip requests only from social agencies, and charging no fare during this pilot stage. Vera received permission in August to purchase the vans directly, and expects to receive them and to hire the full complement of 20 drivers/attendants in November, 1976.

After two months of operation, the Transportation Service had served 594 individuals and had delivered 1464 rides. Sixty-five percent of the trips were for social/recreational purposes, 26% for medical purposes, and the remainder were for trips to social service and government agencies, for shopping, and other purposes.

The Transportation Service has received many expressions of confidence from its passengers and attributes this in large part to the special treatment which its employees provide. The drivers have been trained in defensive driving, first aid, assisting passengers using wheelchairs and other mobility aids, and recognizing and responding appropriately to the special problems of the elderly and disabled. All drivers are registered as blockwatchers with the New York City Police Department and have been instructed in procedures for reporting crimes they might witness.

Wildcatters' difficulties in moving on to non-supported work were compounded by the state of the economy. Economic conditions created another class of hard-to-place workers -- laid-off municipal employees whose chances of being rehired are minimal and whose skills are not easily transferable to the private sector. The Job Creation Unit, under a seven-month, \$49,000 grant from the Department of Labor, is exploring ways to train and employ these workers. As in its planning efforts for Wildcat graduates, the Unit is trying to identify unfilled social needs and to develop ways to

fill them. Projects would be financed by a combination of funding streams or by new uses of existing streams, such as unemployment compensation.

One such project conceived by the Unit is a neighborhood arson prevention program. The program would attempt to reduce loss in a target area in the West Bronx by (1) identifying arson hazards, (2) preventing arson incidents, and (3) minimizing damage from arson and other fires, once they occur. Applications for grants to finance this program have been submitted to CJCC, the Federal and State Departments of Labor, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, FAIR Plan (the major insurer of substandard housing in the state and the chief insurer of real estate in the target area) and savings banks which hold mortgages on much of the property in the area.

PART IV - STUDIES

Since the 1960s, politicians, administrators and reformers have tried to respond to the public concern with "law and order" -- the public sense, particularly in the cities, that crime was rife, and the criminal justice system was not doing enough about it. But the politicians and others were hampered in their efforts to respond -- they could not intelligently discuss or choose among alternative courses of action -- because they lacked basic information. To provide such information, Vera produced in 1975 studies on juvenile violence and felony dispositions; by mid-1976 it had nearly completed a study of policewomen on patrol.