

THE VERA REPORT

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Manhattan Court Employment Project. After screening defendants in the Criminal Court, the Project staff, with the consent of the District Attorney, requests the court to adjourn the case for three months. During this time participants are placed in jobs or job training and receive counseling and supportive services.

From its inception in February 1968 to November 21, 1969, the Project has admitted 892 participants.

142 are active participants.

443 have been unfavorably terminated and returned to the court process.

285 have had charges against them dismissed.

Justice officials from South Vietnam visited the Court Employment Project November 12. The observers were: Truong-Hoang-Dang, Chief of Criminal Affairs; Vu-Tien-Tuan, Solicitor General; Duong Duc Thuy, Presidential Adviser on Legal Matters; and Quach Tong-Duc, Chief of the Cabinet in the Ministry of Justice. The visitors, who were accompanied by State Department officials, discussed legal reform and project operations with Dan Rubenstein and Joe Olgiatti.

A French television program to be broadcast throughout continental Europe and Africa will include a report on the Court Employment Project, and interview in French with Helen Barsky, a look at reps and participants and a glimpse of the clubhouse.

Appearance Control. To eliminate unnecessary appearances of People's witnesses -- the arresting officer, the civilian complainant, and the witness for the prosecution -- an Appearance Control Project will open in January 1970 in Part 1B1 of Manhattan Criminal Court.

In this misdemeanor and all-purpose part for non-jail defendants, two procedures will be instituted. First, the People's witnesses will be excused from appearing on the first adjourned date of the case. Then, for all subsequent appearances in the case, the People's witnesses will be on alert status. They will stay at home or at work and will not go to court unless called and told to appear.

The Project, developed by the Office of the District Attorney of New York County, the New York City Police Department, and Vera Institute, with the cooperation of the New York Criminal Court, will be directed by Vera staff attorney James Lacy.

The Manhattan Bowery Project marked its second anniversary November 27. On that date total admissions to the Project reached 5,539, accounting for the treatment of 2,387 men.

Since the detoxification center opened and an emergency clinic was established to provide out-patient care for over 200 men a week, the Police Department has discontinued paddy wagon roundup arrests on the Bowery. From May through October 1968, Bowery arrests for disorderly conduct, loitering, and public intoxication totaled 2,577 during the corresponding period in 1969, arrests dropped to 478.

2,400 wooden toy trucks have been finished and packed for shipment by six Bowery outpatients participating in Dove Toys Project, a five week old experimental work program. Another 2,400 toys, the balance of the original goal of 4,800, will be completed by early January, when the first stage of the program will be evaluated.

The trucks on sale at Macy's, Abraham and Strauss, and Kiddietown, a major toy outlet in Norwalk, Connecticut. U. S. Toys will show the trucks this week in New Orleans.

The trucks, which come in three styles and retail for an average \$6 each, are on display at Vera Institute, 30 East 39th Street, and are available to staff members at a discount.

Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation. Since the opening of the Brooklyn Center on October 8, 110 patients have been admitted for treatment and over 500 placed on the waiting list. New applicants are no longer being accepted, but are referred to other agencies and therapeutic communities.

The patients appear daily for a dose of methadone and attend a one-hour group therapy session three times a week. About twenty participants form a group.

Of the first 95 patients admitted for treatment, the average was a 33-year-old man with a habit costing \$35 per day and more than 11 years' drug history. Twenty-five persons of the group were employed.

The first 100 patients on the waiting list will begin treatment in January, when the center's second clinic will open. When fully staffed and equipped, the center will house five separate clinics -- each with its own staff of doctors, nurses, and counselors to serve about 100 patients.

The medical director and project counselors have been speaking at local grammar schools and junior highs about drug abuse and treatment. Speaking requests have resulted from 300 letters sent out by the Project to community leaders and organizations, explaining the program and inviting visitors to the center.

Traffic Court Alert. Under this system, the majority of officers scheduled for Traffic Court remains on patrol rather than automatically appearing in court; the officers are on alert and are summoned to come to court only if needed. During November 1969, 1,865 officers were on alert and available to go to court: 579 or 31 percent were required to appear; 1,286 or 69 percent were not needed in court and remained on patrol. During this period, Traffic Court Alert saved patrol time valued by the City at \$79,732.

The Manhattan Summons Project substitutes the issuance of a summons in lieu of detention in certain misdemeanor cases. Issuance of a summons returns the arresting officer to patrol and reduces detention and prisoner transportation costs. The practice permits the defendant to retain counsel and help prepare his defense. It reduces the possibility of the defendant's losing his job, and causing his family to be placed on welfare.

The New York City Police Department announced that during the first four months of the project's third year of city-wide operation (July 1, 1969, through October 31, 1969):

23,615 arrests were made for summonsable offenses.

9,825 summonses were issued, giving a 79 percent issuance rate. This shows a 5 percent increase over summons issuance during the corresponding months of 1968, when 8,199 summonses were issued, giving a 74 percent issuance rate.

During the first four months of the project's third year, the Manhattan Summons Project saved police patrol time valued by the City at \$888,775.

The Bronx Sentencing Project continues to submit presentence reports to the court in adult misdemeanor cases. The research staff has gathered data on 344 cases sentenced after a Vera report was submitted to the court and 344 cases in which either a report was provided by the Office of Probation or no social history report was before the court at the time of sentencing. The samples will be analyzed to obtain comparative sentencing patterns and recidivism rates. Recidivism data on the project's cases might suggest modifications in the project's sentencing guidelines.

The Sentencing Project and Volunteer Opportunities, Inc. (VOI) are jointly preparing a proposal to Bronx Model Cities which will permit an expansion of the Sentencing Project-VOI programs through the hiring of additional staff from the community. The expanded program may also encompass planning activities for a broad community-based ex-offender assistance project.

New Staff. At the Manhattan Bowery Project:

Leonard Singer is a new caseworker supervisor.
Brooks Stewart is a research consultant.

The Manhattan Court Employment Project has added two new reps:

Freddie Carrero.
Clayton Bird.