

Identifying and Scaling Higher Education in Prison Programmatic Resources: Grantee Profile



University System of Maryland (USM)



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
of MARYLAND

Location | Baltimore, Maryland

Facilities served:

- Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI)
- Maryland Correctional Training Center

Associated programs within the University System of Maryland:

- University of Baltimore, Second Chance College Program
- Bowie State University, Prison Education Program
- Towson University, Fair Chance Higher Education Initiative

[Additional Program Information](#)



Resource Overview: Reentry Services Roadmap

The USM resource—the Reentry Services Roadmap—is designed to strengthen reentry outcomes by structuring supports and scaling the innovative Reentry Peer Navigator model originally implemented on the University of Baltimore (UBalt) campus. Reentry Peer Navigators at UBalt help prepare students for reentry by providing pre- and postrelease services, including reentry planning, daily check-ins, transportation to appointments and school, guidance on navigating the college campus and community resources, social activities, and study support. UBalt has relied on an informal network of Reentry Peer Navigators and is currently formalizing and expanding this model, ensuring that students have consistent support to succeed in college post release. The Reentry Services Roadmap will also serve as a replicable framework for other USM schools, starting with Bowie State University (BSU) and Towson University, and for higher education programs in other states.

The Maryland Reentry Services Roadmap is the first of its kind in the nation to align an entire university system with campus reentry services. UBalt's experience, along with that of BSU and Towson University, has positioned Maryland to create a replicable model that ensures that reentry students can navigate campus, access resources, and feel a sense of belonging.



What the Resource Includes

The Maryland Reentry Services Roadmap provides a structured model for supporting students from incarceration through reentry, integrating academic preparation, peer navigation, and wraparound supports to enhance degree completion and employment outcomes. The resource includes the following components:

- A step-by-step Reentry Services Roadmap that begins prerelease and extends through campus integration
- Details and considerations about the Reentry Peer Navigator role, like training, responsibilities, and best practices
- Tools, templates, and tracking systems for consistent implementation across USM campuses



Resource Refinement and Scaling Journey

Through this grant, the UBalt team will engage in an evidence-informed cycle of continuous improvement to codify UBalt's reentry goals and services, detail the Reentry Peer Navigator role, define training needs, and provide templates and tracking tools that all USM schools can use. This work will enhance the applicability and transferability of these resources to the broader HEP field. The UBalt team will improve and finalize the resources through a series of hands-on refinement activities. This work will include conducting literature scans to inform resource content; gathering feedback from currently and formerly incarcerated students, current Reentry Peer Navigators, and community partners on the roadmap's effectiveness and implementation; and piloting the resource in USM universities. These steps will help ensure that the materials are useful, practical, and based on solid evidence. The team will explore these key topics during the refinement and scaling process:

- Best practices for working with postsecondary state systems to transition students from prison to campus
- The effect of campus-based wraparound services on student academic outcomes
- Tailoring wraparound supports to meet the needs of first-generation students, adult learners, and other distinct student groups

Learn More About the Grantee

The University System of Maryland (USM) currently has three prison education programs in the state; two programs are in operation, and one will launch in fall 2026. In 2016, the University of Baltimore (UBalt) launched the Second Chance College Program at Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI), a maximum-security facility for men, and it has served 156 incarcerated students. On average, the program serves 50 students per semester, and 17 students have graduated with a bachelor's degree in human services administration and business administration. Bowie State University (BSU) began operating its prison education program in 2022. Also operating at JCI, BSU has served 45 incarcerated students and offers a bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in entrepreneurship. Towson University will launch its prison education program in fall 2026, and it will offer an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree program.

To learn more about the project's evidence-informed continuous improvement cycle, read the [Identifying and Scaling Higher Education in Prison Programmatic Resources one-pager](#). The insights and materials developed through this project will be shared with the broader HEP field to support ongoing improvement in prison education programs.



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