

Data Science Capstone:
Creating a Resource for Transgender Incarcerated
Individuals

Kayla Park

December 9, 2025

Under the supervision of Professor Mar Golub and Professor Jo Hardin

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Goals	2
3	Ethics	3
4	Process	3
5	Final Product	5
6	Next Steps	6
7	Conclusion	6

1 Introduction

Transgender incarcerated individuals face alarmingly high rates of sexual assault. They are over five times more likely to be victimized by facility staff and more than nine times as likely to be assaulted by other incarcerated people compared to the general population [1]. When examining the intersection of transgender identity and incarceration, two already extremely vulnerable populations, we find a group that is subject to violence and often ignored. We shouldn't see these two separate populations that just overlap by chance, but recognize the criminalization of people because they are trans. Often police will target and arrest transgender people for lack of identification, using the "wrong" bathroom, and increased profiling in general. This leads to a disproportionate number of transgender individuals in the carceral system where they are victims to a number of abuses. In addition to sexual violence, they are denied access to trans-specific health care and frequently experience verbal harassment [2]. There are also reports showing that about 85% of LGBTQ+ incarcerated individuals have been placed in solitary confinement [3]. Trans people in particular are placed in isolation as a form of "protection," but solitary confinement is a known form of torture and has serious physical and mental health effects. There are few organizations that support incarcerated individuals, and even fewer that respect transgender folks. This discrimination contributes to the barriers of transgender, incarcerated individuals face and is the source of inspiration for the project. Through one of the professors at the 5Cs, Professor Mar Golub, I was able to connect with people who needed assistance with creating a resource for transgender, incarcerated people to help them more easily access reliable resources and gender-affirming organizations.

2 Goals

This project will be two-fold: collecting the information on organizations and then creating the digital toolbox. For the first goal of gathering data on various Californian organizations that support incarcerated people, I need to find information such as location, services provided, intake process, etc. Since there already exists a list of LGBTQ+ specific organizations in California, my aim is to find general non-profits assisting incarcerated people and find out if they are gender-affirming. However, most of the organizations do not have this information on their website, so I will need to call these organizations and ask them directly. My second goal originates from the lack of effective databases or lists. Most resources for incarcerated individuals provide only a sentence or two on the organization or is a single spreadsheet with rows of information. My goal is to create a free, searchable database where anyone can easily find the most helpful organizations.

3 Ethics

This project will affect the lives of real people, so ethics is an essential aspect of this capstone. Although I will not conduct experiments on people, I am providing a resource to marginalized members of the community. It is important to keep the needs of incarcerated transgender individuals at the forefront of this study. Even though the research process is tedious, I have to collect the most updated information about each organization and the services they provide in order to create the most effective resource. Additionally, since every organization is not explicit about whether or not they are gender affirming, I will have to contact each organization. It is crucial for the research process to be meticulous to prevent instances where someone does not receive gender affirming care or is refused services because of transphobia.

4 Process

There are two main parts to this project: collecting data on organizations and then creating a searchable database that any user can easily access to find the organization that fits their needs. For the data collection aspect of this project, I started my search using basic web browsers like Google and took a few minutes looking at each individual's organization's web page. If I could find programs or mission statements that insinuated they helped formerly or currently incarcerated people, I linked the website to a spreadsheet. To start, I specifically looked at four areas with/ a high concentration of incarcerated individuals, including the Bay Area, LA, Kern County, and San Bernadino.

After I felt like I had exhausted the web search resources, I moved on to finding organizations through social media. The challenge with many grassroots, incarceration-focused organizations is that they are difficult to find and might only have a social media page instead of a website. However, I was able to find a few organizations by looking in the followers and following section of the incarceration organizations I found in my initial search. Once this process was completed, I was satisfied with the number of organizations I found and moved on to collecting information from each of these organizations. This part was the most tedious and time consuming because I had to scour each website to collect the information I needed. The details I looked for were: Name of Organization/Agency, Location (of where they offered support), Services, Contact Info, Eligibility and Language, Applications and Intake Process, and Additional Notes.

As expected, few categories were straightforward, and most required problem solving, an intense search, or settling for the best answer I could find. For the location column, I tried to list the specific locations the organization served, but many websites were not as specific as I had hoped. I sometimes ended up writing the general area of the main office which could be an incorrect assumption to make. For service category, I tried to detail as much information as I could on the specific services the organizations provided. This proved to be difficult as

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
incl	LOCATION	SERVICE CATEGORY	CONTACT INFO	ELIGIBILITY & LANGUAGE	APPLICATIONS & INTAKE PROCESS	OTHER NOTES											
Cal State San Bernardino Reentry Initiative (CSRI)	San Bernardino, Victorville, Moreno Valley, and Indio	Job assistance, career planning, housing, life skills, parole classes, adult basic education, vocational training, counseling services Visiting Centers at every California Prison: Writing programs for children of incarcerated parents, resting place, clothes, and transportation for visitors, children Family Liaison Services (FLS), Pre-Release Planning, Communication with support systems, parenting classes, creative conflict resolution, resource and referral Family and Friends Center in Stockton, California Case Management and Mentoring, Employment Readiness, Group Education and Support, Support for children and families. Services at SJC Jails: Case management services, parenting education, creative conflict resolution	https://carcenters.org/ // info@carcenters.org // 909.527.2983	Formerly incarcerated individuals, English	https://carcenters.org/get-started/ , they have to get their parole agent to submit a form	Reentry service, does seem to help currently incarcerated individuals											
Friends Outside			https://www.friendsoutside.org/ // P.O. Box 4085 Stockton, CA 95204 // 1148 W. Fremont Street Stockton, CA 95203 (209) 955-0701 (209) 955-0734 FAX	Incarcerated individuals and their families, English	Call for an intake appointment	They have this on their website: We celebrate the differences in gender and sexuality, including lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgendered and questioning people, and recognize the significance of those differences in navigating life's challenges and opportunities. This could be extremely helpful if this is still running efficiently											
Anti-Recidivism Coalition	Many Prisons and jails including juvenile jails	Felony Expungement, HART: 10 week workshops focusing on parole preparation and reentry planning, Creditable Messenger Program: Mentoring for incarcerated youth, Inside and Reentry Services (life coaches, therapy, addiction support, etc), Ventura Training Center: 18th Month, life skills, job readiness, firefighter training, housing program, Second chance opportunity readiness program, creates group	https://antirecidivism.org/ // Los Angeles Office 601 N. Alvarado Street Los Angeles, CA 90028 213 955 5885 Sacramento Office 2830 G St., Suite 210 Sacramento, CA 95818 916 942 9080	Incarcerated/ Formerly incarcerated individuals, English	Unclear	Temporarily ceasing to accept applications for expungement assistance											
Light House Social Service Centers	Reentry org for individuals in Riverside and San Bernardino County	Rental assistance program, outreach, housing case management, housing navigation services, public benefits assistance, temporary rental subsidy payment	https://lighthouse-soc.org/ // info@lighthouse-soc.org // 11003 E Cooley Dr #205 Colton, California 92324 (951) 571-3533	Formerly incarcerated individuals	Unclear												
Center for the Study of Correctional Education California State University San Bernardino	California Rehabilitation Center in Norco, CA	Inside out Class and Project Rebound: Program for formerly incarcerated individuals who want a degree at Cal State San Bernardino	https://www.casueb.edu/casueb/ // cavalan@casueb.edu Twitter: @CSCE_CSUSB Department of English Phone: (909) 537-3831 https://casuebcenter.org/page	Incarcerated individual at the Norco Rehabilitation Center	Unclear	Unclear if this program is still going on											

Figure 1: This is the spreadsheet of the organizations.

some organizations had their services on several different pages of their website or used vague terms such as "mental health services" or "Job Assistance." For contact information, I made sure to include the mailing address and phone number if possible. Most of the time, incarcerated people do not have access to computers on which they could email or view the contact page of an agency. Overall, one of my main challenges for all of these categories was that it was frequently hard to tell if an organization's website was up to date. One of my biggest concerns is that my toolbox will contain outdated or false findings. To mitigate this issue, I intend to ask any questions I have about their organization when I contact them.

By the end of this process, I had around 60 organizations in total to include in my toolbox. As I addressed in my ethics section, I have to make sure these organizations are reliable, specifically for transgender individuals. After a discussion with my supervisor, we decided it would be best for me to call the organizations and ask them directly on their stance. We judged there would be no reason for people to lie about the organization's position on serving transgender individuals and whether or not they are gender affirming. This was also a time-consuming process because not every organization answered the first time. Thankfully, my supervisor also recruited people from their class to assist me with the research aspect of this project. Even with their help, I anticipate this project will extend beyond one semester. Since this project could potentially have real-world impacts, it is crucial for me to remain diligent and not rush because the semester is ending.

At the same time I started calling organizations, I also began working on the searchable database through Shiny. There were many app developers I could have used, but I landed on Shiny because it was free and easy to publish on the web. Additionally, it is easy to customize, unlike other websites I tried that required a premium account for more advanced modifications. My initial vision

for the database included a map where users could find resources near them or in a specific mile radius, a searchable box where people could insert the name of an organization or the resource they are trying to find, and lastly, check boxes of resources people can select to narrow the search process. For this last aspect of the model, I needed to sort all of the services I collected into seven to ten general categories. This was particularly challenging because not all the descriptions fit neatly under a category and different organizations had different terms for potentially the same service. For example, some organizations used mental health services instead of counseling, but it is unclear what exactly the mental health services are and if it includes counseling. To remedy the problem, I decided to add an "other" category to include services that don't fit into any others. The categories I ended up with are: Mental Health Services, Education, Housing, Job Assistance, Substance Abuse and Other.

5 Final Product

For the final product, I was able to add a general search bar, location filter, services filter, and map. To make the design less chaotic, I decided to put the search bar, filter, and checkbox on one tab and the map on another tab. When a user filters for the services or location they need, the same organizations should appear on the first and second pages. The first page provides more detailed information about each organization, while the map gives the ability for users to look at locations relative to where they may be. A feature also allows them to hover over individual points for the name, address, and service of the location.

Name	County	Address	Services	More Detailed Info
Cal State San Bernardino Reentry Initiative (CSRI)	San Bernardino, Victorville, Moreno Valley, and Inyo	200 S Loma Rd, San Bernardino, CA 92408	Job Assistance; Housing; Education; Counseling; Other	Job assistance, career planning, housing, life skills, parole case adult basic education, vocational training, counseling services
Friends Outside	Visitors Centers are at every California Prisons, Family and Friends Center at Stockton, California. Services also provided at SJC Jails? Unclear at which jails or prisons they provided services for currently incarcerated individuals	1148 W. Fremont Street Stockton, CA 95203	Family; Reentry; Case Management; Job Assistance; Education; Other	Visitors Centers at every California Prison: Writing programs for all of incarcerated parents, visiting place, clothes, and transports visitors, childcare Family Liaison Services (FLS), Pre-Release Plan Communication with support systems, parenting classes, one conflict resolution, resource on release Family and Friends Center in Stockton, California Case Management and Mentoring, Employment Readiness, Group Education and Support, Support children and families. Services Jails: Case management service parenting education, creative resolution
Anti-Racism Coalition	Many Prisons and jails including juvenile jails	801 N. Alvarado Street Los Angeles, CA 90026	Mentoring; Job Assistance; Housing; Other	Felony Empowerment, HARRT: 11 workshops focusing on parole preparation and reentry plans Creditable Messenger Program: Mentoring for incarcerated youth Inside and Family Services (life coaches, therapy, addiction out etc), Veterans Training Center: 11 Month, life skills, job readiness, firefighter training, housing program, Second chance apprenticeship readiness program, creative gr
Center for the Study of Correctional Education California State University San Bernardino	California Rehabilitation Center in Norco, CA	5000 University Parkway San Bernardino, CA 92407	Education	Inside out Class and Project Rebound Program for formerly incarcerated individuals who re degree at Cal State San Bernac

Figure 2: The first page of the searchable database.

References

- [1] S. E. James, J. L. Herman, S. Rankin, M. Keisling, L. Mottet, and M. Anafi. The report of the 2015 u.s. transgender survey, 2016.
- [2] V. Jenness and J. M. Sumner. Where the margins meet: A demographic assessment of transgender inmates in men's prisons. *Justice Quarterly*, 28(6):835–866, 2010.
- [3] J. Lydon, K. Carrington, H. Low, R. Miller, and M. Yazdy. Coming out of concrete closets: A report on black & pink's national lgbtq prisoner survey, 2015.