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**How Corporations Influence Decision Makers at  
Corrections Conferences, Trainings, and Meetings**



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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Executive Summary** ..... 2

**Introduction** ..... 4

**SECTION 1**

**Corrections Companies Provide Low-Quality Services at High Costs** ..... 7

**SECTION 2**

**Corrections Companies Spend Millions to Access Professional Corrections Associations** ..... 12

**Conference Sponsorships** ..... 13

**Conference Program Advertisements** ..... 15

**Conference Vendor Fees** ..... 15

**General Support Contributions** ..... 16

**Scholarships and Awards** ..... 16

**SECTION 3**

**How Corrections Companies Influence Decision Makers in Professional Corrections Associations**... 17

**Corrections Companies Build Relationships with Key Officials** ..... 17

**Corrections Companies Lead Conference Workshops** ..... 18

**Corrections Companies Promote their Brands** ..... 19

**Corrections Companies Generate Leads at Vendor Booths** ..... 23

**SECTION 4**

**Conclusion** ..... 24

**Notes** ..... 25

## Executive Summary

### **Private corrections companies, which contract with corrections departments and facilities to oversee and provide services to incarcerated people, make up a multibillion-dollar industry.**

Every year, they devote resources to building influence with decision makers in order to find and capitalize on new business opportunities. One key avenue of influence is through professional corrections associations, which are non-profit organizations that support corrections officials, including wardens, administrators, state Department of Corrections staff, sheriffs, and others through events, trainings, and public policy advocacy.

This report first details how companies spend millions of dollars sponsoring conferences, paying vendor fees, and providing other funding to gain access to the professional corrections associations. This report then shows how corrections companies leverage this access in ways that can influence decision makers and benefit the companies' bottom lines.

Considering corrections companies' track records of providing low-quality services that harm prisoners, communities, and taxpayers, the influence they exert through professional corrections associations is cause for concern.

The research in this report is based on limited information that professional corrections associations make publicly available. Consequently, the report's findings constitute only a portion of the total contributions made by companies and the subsequent opportunities they receive to influence decision makers.

**Private companies make contributions to professional corrections associations.** In 2014, sponsors, vendors, corporate partners, and other non-individual entities contributed at least \$3 million to five of the largest professional corrections associations, including the American Correctional Association, the American Jail Association, the Association of State Correctional Administrators, the Corrections Technology Association, and the National Sheriffs' Association.

In return, corrections contractors are able to build relationships with and influence decision makers in key ways:

- **Corrections companies send executives and staff to professional corrections association conferences to meet decision makers.** Many companies receive lists of attendees, allowing the corporate staff to target certain corrections officials.
- **Corrections companies lead trainings and workshops at conferences.** Often times, companies will directly market goods and services.
- **Corrections companies host conference events** where their executives and marketing staff meet with and give speeches to corrections officials.
- **Corrections companies market their products and services at conference vendor booths** to identify potential government customers and generate leads.
- **Corrections companies advertise on conference materials**, such as the program books, hotel room key cards, tote bags, and take-home mugs. This marketing encourages officials to consider the companies' products and services when making purchasing and outsourcing decisions.

### A Case Study of the Corrections Technology Association

Companies that make contributions to professional corrections associations benefit from opportunities to influence decision makers who attend association conferences. Corporate sponsors' involvement in the Corrections Technology Association's (CTA) conference in 2014 provides an illustration of how this works. In total, 35 companies from telephone, banking, commissary, software and other sectors sponsored CTA's conference. Each sponsor paid between \$3,000 and \$7,500, contributing a total of \$150,000, which was likely a large portion of CTA's total annual revenue. (In 2013, the most recent year for which CTA's tax filings are available, sponsors contributed \$126,000 to the annual conference, equivalent to 71% of CTA's revenue for that year.)

As sponsors, these companies received opportunities to influence the decision makers in attendance:

- Each sponsor had the opportunity to send at least two company representatives to meet and build relationships with the attendees. Sponsors that contributed \$7,500 could send five representatives.
- Each corporate sponsor also had the opportunity to lead a 50-minute workshop. JPay, for example, held a workshop to promote the company's video messaging service. In total, 17 of the 24 workshops were led by corporate sponsors.
- Each corporate sponsor also received advertisement space in the conference's program book. The 36-page program book contained 35 corporate advertisements.
- CTA gave sponsors lists of attendees, allowing the companies to target certain decision makers during the conference or follow up after the conference.
- All sponsors received logo and name publicity on the conference materials and website to build their brand recognition.

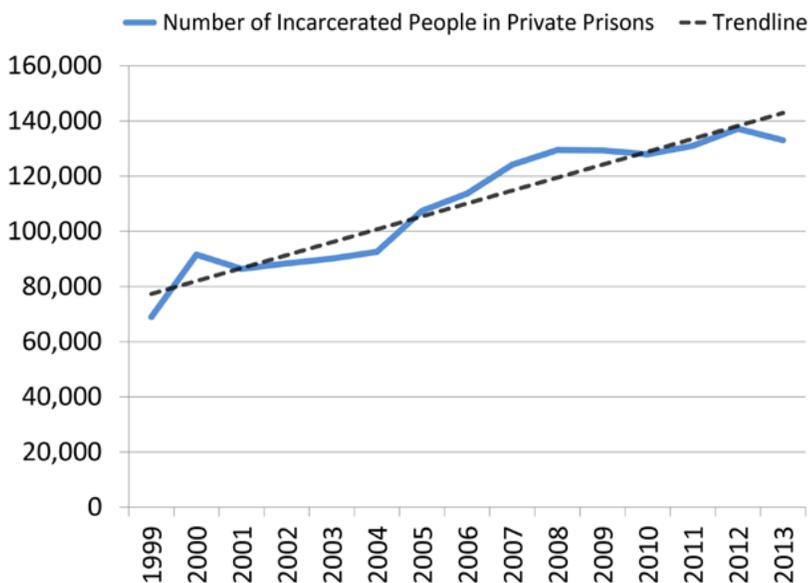
These benefits have the combined effect of encouraging decision makers in attendance to use the corporate sponsors' services whether or not the officials were initially planning to outsource.

## Introduction

In the 1980s and 1990s, federal and state governments adopted a series of “tough on crime” policies that arrested an increased number of Americans, and imprisoned them for longer periods of time.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, from 1978 to 2008, the proportion of people incarcerated in the United States grew nearly fourfold, from 131 to 506 for every 100,000 people.<sup>2</sup>

The growing number of incarcerated people spurred the creation of the for-profit corrections industry. In 1980, the private corrections industry was nonexistent, but by 2013, corrections companies were managing the incarceration of 133,000 people, equivalent to 8 percent of the total prison population.<sup>3</sup> (See Figure 1.) Concurrently, corrections companies that work in industries such as health care, telecommunications, and prisoner banking grew to provide an increased number of services to correctional facilities. JPay, for example, which was founded in 2002, now provides money transfer services to 1.7 million inmates, or nearly 70 percent of all people incarcerated.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1: The Private Prison Industry Is Growing<sup>5</sup>**



For years, private corrections companies have been working behind the scenes to influence decision makers and expand their bottom lines. Corrections companies contribute to campaigns, lobby, and — as this report explores — build relationships with officials through professional corrections associations.<sup>6</sup>

Today, decision makers and citizens are repealing “three strikes” rules, mandatory minimum sentencing, and other pro-incarceration policies.<sup>7</sup> Legislators and citizen initiatives are introducing new policies that reduce prison populations and recidivism, as well as improve prisoner rehabilitation programs and cut corrections costs. As a result, corrections departments and courts are sending fewer people to prison while increasingly utilizing probation programs, residential re-entry centers (or “halfway houses”), and rehabilitation facilities.<sup>8</sup>

### The Benefits of Professional Corrections Associations

**W**hile this report warns against private companies influencing decision makers through professional corrections associations, companies' involvement in the associations can produce some benefits for government officials.

*The high number of corrections companies at professional corrections association conferences (sometimes as many as 300) provides decision makers with a one-stop location to learn about new products, technologies, and programs.<sup>10</sup>*

*For corrections officials looking to purchase goods and services, meeting several vendors at one place can save time and money. In addition, the presence of many companies that compete with each other can drive up the quality and drive down the price.*

*For these reasons, professional corrections associations actively recruit companies to attend conferences. According to the American Correctional Association's (ACA) exhibitor prospectus, "This is a great opportunity to meet face-to-face with thousands of decision makers who have the need and budgets for your products, services, and technologies."<sup>11</sup>*

*According to the Corrections Technology Association's (CTA) exhibitor prospectus, "The focused makeup of attendees offers [company sponsors] an unparalleled opportunity to showcase their products and services, and to form lasting relationships with potential customers."<sup>12</sup>*

Private corrections companies are using their influence to ensure that, even with these changes in criminal justice policies, they continue to grow their businesses. At professional corrections association conferences, companies seek to sell their services to corrections officials even as lower incarcerated populations reduce demand. Simultaneously, companies that have expanded into community corrections (e.g. CCA purchased Correctional Alternatives, Inc., a residential re-entry company, in 2013) seek to sell their new services to meet America's changing criminal justice policies.<sup>9</sup>

This report begins to examine the influence cultivated by corrections companies at professional corrections associations and how this influence can lead officials to continue to use companies' services even with changes in criminal justice policy.

The first section of this report profiles corrections companies that participate in professional corrections associations and highlights their track records of providing subpar service, often at high costs. The second section discusses how corrections companies spend millions through sponsorships, vendor fees, and other contributions to gain access to professional corrections associations. The third section shows how corrections companies use their access to these associations in ways that can influence corrections decision makers. The fourth section makes the case for transparency that allows the public to fully understand corrections companies' involvement in professional corrections associations.

It is important to note that currently, professional corrections associations do not publish reports that provide an account of their relationships with the companies. As a result, this report is not a comprehensive review of the contributions made by private companies to the associations and the benefits the companies receive in return. Rather, this report is a "playbook" that highlights the methods companies commonly use to influence decision makers through the associations.

### Public Disclosure Laws Do Not Cover Activities at Professional Corrections Associations

**P**private prison companies use three avenues to influence governments' decisions: (1) campaign contributions, (2) lobbying, and (3) relationships and associations.<sup>13</sup>

Public disclosure laws empower the public to monitor the influence of private corrections companies through the first two avenues: campaign contributions and lobbying. Contributors to candidates and political action committees must file campaign finance reports, which are publicly available. Advocates who work with officials on legislation must register as lobbyists, the records of which are public.

For example, public records show that between 2013 and 2014, the corrections industry contributed \$4.7 million to candidates and committees, the largest contributors being GEO Group and CCA.<sup>14</sup> In 2013, CCA had 102 lobbyists working in 26 states and GEO Group 46 lobbyists in 12 states.<sup>15</sup>

While disclosure laws for campaign contributions and lobbying are far from perfect, they allow the public to uncover instances of preferential treatment, corruption, and deals that pad a company's bottom line but hurt the public interest.

However, disclosure rules do not cover the third avenue of influence: relationships and associations. Because professional corrections associations are private, non-profit organizations, details about corrections companies' involvement with these entities are exempt from public review. This report begins to pull back the curtain on this third avenue of influence and shine light on the many undisclosed ways corporations influence decision makers who are members of professional corrections associations. It is important to note, however, that the findings are based on documents and sources that companies and professional corrections associations have made public, such as conference program manuals and prospectus brochures for sponsors. The limited scope of the publicly available information suggests that the data and examples in this report constitute only a portion of the actual involvement of corporations in professional corrections associations.

## SECTION 1

## Corrections Companies Provide Low-Quality Services at High Costs

**Private corrections companies, which contract with corrections departments** and facilities to oversee and provide services to incarcerated people, make up a multibillion-dollar industry.<sup>16</sup> To increase profits, many of these companies cut corners on service quality, which creates poor living conditions inside the facilities, leads to higher rates of recidivism, and endangers surrounding communities. Below are descriptions of some companies, arranged by industry, that commonly sponsor conferences. Each company listed sponsored at least two of the conferences for the professional corrections associations in Figure 2. (See page 14.) The companies below are not a complete list of all corrections companies involved in professional corrections associations.

### Facility Operators



- **Corrections Corporation of America (CCA):** Operates 61 corrections facilities including prisons, jails, detention centers, and residential re-entry centers in 20 states.<sup>17</sup>
- **GEO Group:** Operates 66 corrections facilities, 65 day reporting centers, and dozens of re-entry and intervention centers. The company's U.S. corrections facilities hold 73,000 beds.<sup>18</sup>
- **Management and Training Corporation (MTC):** Manages private corrections facilities and teaches academic, vocational, and life-skills courses to prisoners. MTC houses 29,000 incarcerated people at 25 facilities in eight states.<sup>19</sup>

Correctional facility operators have a history of neglecting prisoners' basic needs and failing to create an environment conducive for rehabilitation. For example, at a detention center in southern Texas, MTC continually held new prisoners in solitary confinement because the facility did not have enough beds in the housing units, according to a report by the American Civil Liberties Union.<sup>20</sup> At a prison in Idaho, CCA falsified records that hid at least 4,800 hours of uncovered shifts during seven months in 2012.<sup>21</sup> A lawsuit filed in 2012 on behalf of Idaho Correctional Center's prisoners contends that, in order to save money by hiring fewer corrections officers, CCA relinquished control of the facility to prison gangs, leading to violence and serious prisoner injuries.<sup>22</sup>

Government and academic studies have quantified private prison operators' shortcomings. The Bureau of Justice Assistance concluded that private corrections facilities experience 49% more assaults on staff and 65% more inmate-to-inmate assaults than public facilities.<sup>23</sup> An analysis by the Minnesota Department of Corrections found that people in private prisons had a higher risk of recidivism than people in public prisons.<sup>24</sup> There is also a significant disparity in the amount of training that private and public sector correctional officers complete. A study by researchers at the University of South Alabama and the University of Tennessee found that private sector correctional officers undergo 174 hours of pre-service training, compared to public sector officers who undergo 232 hours of training.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, research shows that governments that outsource prison operations do not save money from the privatization deals.<sup>26</sup>

CCA, GEO Group, and MTC also have histories of adding provisions to contracts that pad their bottom lines but undermine the public interest. Occupancy guarantees, which compel states and local governments to pay corrections companies for unused beds, can be especially detrimental, causing financial harm, leading to unsafe prison conditions, and tying the hands of lawmakers and correctional agencies.<sup>27</sup>

## Food Service

### INDUSTRY LEADER

- **Aramark:** Serves 380 million meals to state and municipal facilities across North America.<sup>28</sup>

Aramark has a history of poor food quality and worker violations. The company was recently cited for food shortages and serving food contaminated with maggots, and hundreds of workers have been banned for misconduct, including inappropriate and sexual relationships with prisoners, trafficking contraband such as cocaine and heroin, and security violations.<sup>29</sup>

## Health Care

### INDUSTRY LEADERS

- **Armor Correctional Health Services:** Provides health care at jails and prisons in Florida, Georgia, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Virginia and Wisconsin. Armor currently oversees the care of 40,000 incarcerated people.<sup>30</sup>
- **Corizon Health:** Provides health care at 531 corrections facilities in 27 states. It currently oversees the care of nearly 345,000 inmates.<sup>31</sup>
- **MHM Services:** Provides mental health services for 280,000 prisoners and patients at state hospitals and penitentiaries.<sup>32</sup>
- **NaphCare, Inc.:** Provides health care and manages electronic health care records for 50 government clients. Naphcare covers 75,000 prisoners and patients.<sup>33</sup>
- **Wexford Health Sources Inc.:** Administers medical, psychiatric, and other health care services, both in-person and through tele-medicine, to offenders. Wexford currently holds contracts with 175 institutions and covers 112,000 prisoners and patients.<sup>34</sup>

Many correctional health care companies have track records of prisoner abuse and undertreating severe maladies.<sup>35</sup> For example, between 2008 and 2013, Corizon was sued for malpractice 660 times.<sup>36</sup> In Florida, recent government audits of the company have shown serious shortcomings in health care provision and nursing.<sup>37</sup> In one court case, the jury found Corizon negligent for \$1.2 million in damages after the company ignored the signs of a spinal abscess and administered improper treatment for the symptoms, which included Tylenol for no leg reflexes and K-Y Jelly for a prolapsed rectum.<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, from 2008 through 2012, Wexford received 1,092 malpractice claims.<sup>39</sup> In one recent lawsuit, a prisoner gave birth to a stillborn after Wexford provided negligent health care while she was in solitary confinement. Wexford denied her a doctor when its medical staff did not find a fetal heartbeat and continually gave her Tylenol for intense pain. In addition, corrections officers deactivated the prisoner's emergency call button.<sup>40</sup>

## Telecommunications



- **Global Tel\*Link (GTL):** Controls 50% of the call service market for correctional facilities with contracts that cover 1.1 million inmates in 2,100 local, state, and federal facilities.<sup>41</sup>
- **Securus Technologies:** Operates phone, video call, and email services for incarcerated people at 2,200 facilities in the U.S. and Canada.<sup>42</sup>
- **Telmate:** Offers a range of telecommunication information technology services, such as phone, video call, and photo sharing, to incarcerated people at over 240 facilities across the U.S. and Canada.<sup>43</sup>

Telecommunication corrections companies often charge incarcerated people extortionate rates and fees to call their family and friends. Fees vary between states and companies, but according to a 2012 study by the Prison Policy Initiative, a 15-minute call through GTL in Georgia would cost a prisoner \$17.<sup>44</sup> In August 2013, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) found prison phone companies' rates for interstate long-distance to be "exorbitant" and subsequently set cost ceilings.<sup>45</sup>

The high costs have two negative consequences. First, since prisoners' loved ones often pay for the calls, these fees can strain already-tight family budgets. Second, the high fees cause prisoners to communicate less and lose touch with their connections to the outside world. Prisoners' ongoing correspondence with their families has proven to be a key factor in lowering rates of recidivism.<sup>46</sup>

Some companies with video call contracts attempt to ban in-person visitation and then charge high rates to use their video software. At a jail in southern Wisconsin that no longer allows in-person visitation, Telmate charges \$7.50 for a 30-minute video call from the jail's visitation room and \$19.80 from a home computer.<sup>47</sup> According to the Prison Policy Initiative, up until May 2015, Securus Technology's standard contracts required the jail or prison to eliminate in-person visits. Roughly three-quarters of county jails with video visitation have ended in-person visits.<sup>48</sup>

## Prisoner Financial Services



- **JPay:** Currently provides money transfer services to 1.7 million incarcerated people in 32 states, nearly 70% of all prisoners.<sup>49</sup>

In many correctional facilities, incarcerated people are responsible for paying for their basic needs, such as medical care, clothes, food, electricity, and toiletries. Since incarcerated people can earn as little as 12 cents per hour, families often send them money to cover their costs.<sup>50</sup> Prisoner financial service companies act as middlemen between the incarcerated person and the family, many charging exorbitant fees on the money transferred to prisoners' accounts. The fees charged by JPay can approach 45%.<sup>51</sup>

These high fees burden families with costs that can strain the budgets of people who are often already poor and limit the funds they have to regularly visit or call the person incarcerated, which in turn can lead to higher rates of recidivism.<sup>52</sup>

Some correctional facilities also contract with financial companies to place prisoners' account balances on prepaid debit cards when the prisoners are released. The debit cards include the funds wired to prisoners by their families as well as leftover wages from prisoners' jobs. JPay supplies cards to released prisoners in at least 11 states and adds on fees that far exceed normal prepaid card fees.<sup>53</sup> The fees diminish the money on which previously incarcerated people rely to restart their lives. In Michigan, for example, JPay charges \$2.00 for withdrawals, 70 cents for purchases, 50 cents to view the card's balance, 50 cents per month in automatic fees, \$2.99 every two months for no activity, and \$9.95 for cancelling the card.<sup>54</sup>

## Residential Re-Entry Centers

### INDUSTRY LEADER

- **Community Education Centers (CEC):** manages residential re-entry centers (also known as halfway houses) and provides social services for parolees, such as job trainings, job placement, and drug treatment programs. According to a 2012 industry report, CEC's facilities have a capacity of over 17,000 people.<sup>55</sup>

CEC's residential re-entry centers have a history of violence, drug abuse, and escapes. Some of the escapees have committed violent crimes while away from the facility.<sup>56</sup> In December 2010, California inspectors uncovered a series of problems at a CEC facility in Long Beach, where residents would climb the compound's fences at night to buy drugs. Facility staff were both underqualified and poorly trained.<sup>57</sup>

The company's pursuit of revenues has harmed prisoners' and patients' rehabilitation and care. According to the Long Beach facility director, CEC officials discouraged evicting residents who failed drug tests because "they had a hard time keeping the beds full."<sup>58</sup> CEC's operations director in California agreed, stating, "I felt the pressure was more to populate it and make a profit."<sup>59</sup> CEC also secured the Long Beach contract by bidding so low that, in order to meet the contract's requirements for resident care, case managers would theoretically need to work 300 hours per week, according to a health care non-profit that reviewed CEC's proposed budget.<sup>60</sup>

### Corrections Companies Expand Across Multiple Sectors

*Some corrections companies provide services across industries. These companies have much to gain from building influence at professional corrections associations because they can win multiple contracts from the same prison, jail, or detention center.<sup>61</sup>*

*Companies that provide services across multiple industries include:*

- **Aramark:** Provides both food (i.e. meal) and commissary services.<sup>62</sup>
- **CCA:** Manages corrections facilities and purchased Correctional Alternatives, Inc. in 2013 to expand into the residential re-entry center market.<sup>63</sup>
- **Geo Group:** Manages corrections facilities and residential re-entry centers.<sup>64</sup> GEO Group also provides electronic monitoring services (e.g. ankle bracelet trackers for parolees and immigrants) through its subsidiary BI Inc.<sup>65</sup>
- **Jpay:** Provides money transfer services between incarcerated people and their families, as well as email and video message services.<sup>66</sup>
- **Keefe Group:** Sells commissary products, provides money transfer services between families and prisoners' accounts, and operates phone services for prisoners.<sup>67</sup>
- **Telmate:** Manages prisoner phone services as well as money transfer services.<sup>68</sup>

## Commissary Services

**INDUSTRY LEADERS**

- **Keefe Group:** Sells food, clothing, toiletries, and electronics to prisoners.<sup>69</sup> It contracts with 800 prisons and ships more than 25 million pounds of goods and supplies each month.<sup>70</sup>
- **Union Supply Group:** Sells similar commissary products to prisoners. Its subsidiary, Union Supply Direct, which operates in 18 states, allows corrections facilities to control the items sent to prisoners by limiting the products available to certain bundled packages.<sup>71</sup>

Commissary companies sell products to incarcerated people through prison and jail canteens. Many commissary products, including snacks, games, MP3 players, and televisions, provide prisoners with amenities available in the outside world. However, since prisoners are responsible for providing for many of their own basic needs, commissary companies also supply essential goods such as toilet paper, tampons, underwear, and warm clothes.

At times, commissary companies have charged high prices for canteen supplies, which puts essential goods outside the budgets of many prisoners. When Keefe Group renewed its contract with the Florida Department of Corrections in 2009, its price increases sparked outcries and complaints from prisoners and their families.<sup>72</sup>

One reason for the high prices is the for-profit nature of commissary companies. In 2012 Keefe Commissary Network and two other subsidiaries of Keefe Group netted \$41 million in income from \$375 million in sales.<sup>73</sup>

Commissary companies also kick back a portion of the revenue to the corrections facility, which in Florida is deposited into the General Revenue Fund to finance state operations outside the prison.<sup>74</sup> Commissary companies that also manage prisoners' bank accounts (see text box titled "Corrections Companies Expand Across Multiple Sectors" on page 10) charge families when they wire money to the person behind bars.<sup>75</sup>

## SECTION 2

## Corrections Companies Spend Millions to Access Professional Corrections Associations

**Professional corrections associations are non-profit organizations that support corrections officials**, including wardens, administrators, state Department of Corrections staff, sheriffs, and others, through events, trainings, and public policy advocacy.

Professional corrections associations, through annual conferences and other forums, teach decision makers about cutting-edge practices and how to implement new programs and policies in their correctional facilities. These associations also provide opportunities for decision makers to meet executives and marketing staff from corrections companies in health care, prisoner banking, facility management, commissary, and other industries, and to learn about new services and products.

Corrections companies have capitalized on the opportunity to meet and influence potential customers through professional corrections associations. This section (section two) shows how corrections companies spend millions of dollars sponsoring conferences, paying vendor fees, and providing other funding to gain access to professional corrections associations. In total, sponsors, vendors, corporate partners, and other non-individual entities contributed at least \$3 million to five of the largest professional corrections associations in 2014.\* (*For a list and description of these associations, see text box below.*) The following section (section three) then shows how corrections companies leverage this access to benefit their bottom lines.

### The Professional Corrections Associations Reviewed in this Report

**W**hile corrections companies spend resources and staff time building access to numerous professional corrections associations that operate at the national and state levels, this report focuses its review on the influence of corrections companies on five of the largest national associations. These five associations all hold annual conferences and attract corrections officials from across the country. Due to time and resource considerations, other large professional corrections associations, such as the National Commission on Correctional Health Care and the American Probation and Parole Association, were not included in this report.

- **American Correctional Association (ACA)** provides corrections officials with career development training, accredits correctional facilities, and advocates for public policy.<sup>76</sup> ACA members come from different levels of government and have a range of decision-making authority. The wardens and superintendents, which attend ACA conferences in large numbers, have purview over the contracts

Continued next page

\*\$3 million is derived from summing the fees collected by ACA, AJA, ASCA, CTA, and NSA from sponsors, advertisements, vendors, corporate partners, and awards and scholarships in 2014. Information about some types of fees paid to certain associations is not publically available (e.g. the value of the fees paid by sponsors to the NSA is not available). The values of these fees were excluded from the \$3 million figure. Some of the fees included in the \$3 million figure are based on assumptions (e.g. for calculating the value of the vendor fees, researchers assumed that all booth spaces in the exhibition space were sold). The sources, assumptions, and methodology for calculating the fees can be found in the following notes.

- Sponsors paid ACA \$200,000: See note 101.
- Sponsors paid AJA \$75,000: See note 102.
- Sponsors paid CTA \$150,000: See note 103.
- Advertisers paid ACA: \$35,750: See note 107.
- Vendors paid ACA approximately \$800,000: See note 116.
- Vendors paid AJA over \$450,000: See note 117.
- Vendors paid NSA at least \$1 million: See note 118.
- Corporate partners paid NSA \$317,000: See note 119.
- Entities paid ASCA \$38,500 in scholarships: See note 125.

signed with food, health care, and other service companies for their correctional facilities. ACA manages a \$9 million annual budget and has more than 20,000 members.<sup>77</sup>

- **American Jail Association (AJA)** supports officials that manage jails and other local correctional facilities through workshops, seminars, and periodicals.<sup>78</sup> Members include sheriffs, jail administrators, judges, county commissioners, jail inspectors, and others, many of whom can make privatization decisions for jails and probationary services.<sup>79</sup> AJA manages a budget of \$1.5 million.<sup>80</sup>
- **Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA)** represents state corrections department directors and other officials who oversee the administration of correctional facilities and systems in the United States and Canada.<sup>81</sup> The corrections department directors have influence, and often decision-making authority, over awarding contracts to private prison operators. ASCA's budget is \$940,000.<sup>82</sup>
- **Corrections Technology Association (CTA)** provides resources to officials who maintain the technological systems at corrections agencies, departments, and facilities. Members are chief information officers, information technology directors, and other corrections staff, and they have decision-making authority over contracts with prisoner financial service and telecommunication companies.<sup>83</sup> CTA has a budget of \$176,000.<sup>84</sup>
- **National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)** supports sheriffs, deputies, public safety officers, and other law enforcement officials through trainings, education, advocacy, and grant guidance.<sup>85</sup> Many NSA members have the authority to hire health care, food service, and other contractors that provide services to jails. NSA manages a budget of \$5.6 million and has over 20,000 members.<sup>86</sup>

Since some corrections officials are members of multiple professional corrections associations, companies that have a presence at more than one conference have the opportunity to influence and build relationships with the same officials multiple times in a year.

## Conference Sponsorships

Many professional corrections associations hold annual multi-day conferences and trainings, where thousands of corrections employees attend workshops, meetings, speeches, and networking events. For example, AJA's conference averages 1,100 attendees, while NSA's conference averages 2,300-2,800 attendees.<sup>87</sup>

### The Decision Makers Who Attend Professional Corrections Association Conferences

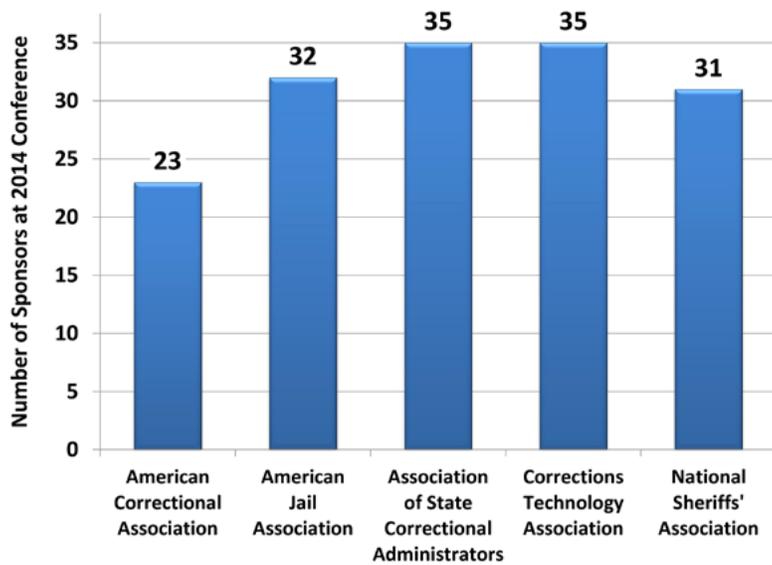
Conference attendees are often managers of corrections departments, offices, and facilities who have purchasing power for services and products. The large presence of decision makers directly benefits corrections companies, whose business models depend on contracts from the government. Often, the majority of attendees can make contracting decisions for the public entity they represent:

- ACA conference attendees are most commonly supervisors, wardens, their deputies, and health care workers. According to an ACA survey, 56% of attendees are "final decision makers."<sup>88</sup>
- 90% of the attendees at AJA's conferences can either purchase or recommend purchases for their agencies.<sup>89</sup>
- According to CTA, "generally attendees are the primary technology 'decision-makers' for their respective organizations."<sup>90</sup>
- The exhibitor prospectus for the NSA's conference explains that the attendees are "sheriffs [who] have buying power... for their counties," "their appointed purchasing agents, and other qualified buyers."<sup>91</sup>

Private corrections companies gain access to these conferences by purchasing sponsorships. For several thousands of dollars, companies can buy the opportunity to build their business through leading workshops, promoting their products through advertisements, and sending staff to build relationships and generate leads. For an analysis of the benefits corporations receive by sponsoring conferences, see section three.

Among the five professional corrections associations assessed in this report, the organizations’ annual conferences in 2014 attracted 31 sponsors on average. (See Figure 2.) Some of these sponsors operate private prisons, jails, and detention centers. Other sponsors provide services, such as health care, telecommunications, banking and commissary, to publicly and privately run facilities.

**Figure 2:**  
**Corrections Companies Sponsor Conferences for Professional Corrections Associations**<sup>92</sup>



Note: Some sponsors provide services to both the corrections industry and other sectors (e.g. Motorola, Harris Corporation). While the majority of conference sponsors are private companies, a few sponsors are non-profit organizations and government entities (e.g. Northwest University Center for Public Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).<sup>93</sup>

A number of corrections companies attend multiple professional corrections associations as corporate sponsors. For example, in 2014, Wexford sponsored conferences for the ACA, AJA, ASCA, and NSA, and Telmate sponsored conferences for the ACA, CTA, and NSA.<sup>94</sup>

Corrections companies purchase different levels and types of sponsorships at professional corrections association conferences. Companies generally pay between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to become sponsors, and can pay as much as \$30,000. Below is a list of corporate sponsorship costs for some conferences.<sup>95</sup>

- **American Correctional Association:** Sponsorship costs range from \$2,500 for advertising on the conference map to \$30,000 for paying for the keynote speech. Six of the sponsorships cost \$10,000 or more.<sup>96</sup>
- **American Jail Association:** Companies purchase sponsorships at bronze, silver, and gold levels for \$2,000, \$4,000,

and \$8,000, respectively. They can also pay for events, promotional merchandise, and other conference items that range from \$500 to \$8,000.<sup>97</sup>

- **Association of Women Executives in Corrections:** Companies purchase sponsorships at gold, premier, and platinum levels for \$3,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000, respectively. All sponsorships give companies opportunities to publicize at conference events.<sup>98</sup>
- **Corrections Technology Association:** Silver, gold, and platinum sponsorships cost \$3,000, \$5,000, and \$7,500 respectively. Platinum sponsorship buys companies a range of advertising and marketing opportunities.<sup>99</sup>
- **National Sheriffs’ Association:** Companies have a choice of 22 different sponsorship types. Costs range from \$2,500 to host an ice cream break to \$30,000 to host the conference itself. Ten of the sponsorships cost \$10,000 or more.<sup>100</sup>

Sponsorship dues, nearly all of which come from private companies, can be large sources of revenue for professional corrections associations.

- Sponsors contributed \$200,000 to ACA's 2014 summer conference.<sup>101</sup>
- Sponsors contributed \$75,000 to AJA's 2014 conference.<sup>102</sup>
- Sponsors contributed \$150,000 to CTA's 2014 conference.<sup>103</sup> In 2013, the most recent year for which CTA's tax filings are available, sponsors contributed \$126,000 to the annual conference, equivalent to 71% of CTA's revenue for that year.<sup>104</sup>

## Conference Program Advertisements

Many corrections corporations pay professional corrections associations for the opportunity to place advertisements in conference program books and manuals. Conference sponsors for some professional corrections associations, such as CTA, receive advertisement space in the conference guide as part of their sponsorship agreements.<sup>105</sup> At other conferences, such as those managed by ACA and NSA, companies can purchase advertisement space in the program book at costs that range between \$500 and \$3,000 depending on the ad size, color, and placement.<sup>106</sup> Companies paid ACA a total of \$35,750 to advertise in its summer 2014 conference program.<sup>107</sup> AJA allows sponsors and other companies to advertise on the conference's mobile app.<sup>108</sup>

## Conference Vendor Fees

Professional corrections associations hold trade shows at their annual conferences to provide corrections officials with the opportunity to learn about products and services. On the show floor, sales representatives and managers from corrections companies meet face-to-face with wardens, police chiefs, corrections department heads, and other officials. For further analysis of the benefits corporations receive as vendors, see section three.

Corrections companies pay professional corrections associations vendor fees for booths at the trade shows. These fees often exceed \$1,000:

- **American Correctional Association:** Companies pay at least \$2,000 per booth.<sup>109</sup>
- **American Jail Association:** Returning companies pay at least \$1,400 per booth. New companies pay at least \$1,000.<sup>110</sup>
- **National Sheriffs' Association:** Companies pay at least \$1,950 per booth.<sup>111</sup>

Companies often make larger payments to purchase booths better suited for meeting corrections decision makers and selling their products. At the ACA conference, companies pay \$2,400 for a booth on the corner of an aisle or between \$4,400 and \$8,600 for additional space.<sup>112</sup> At the AJA conference, companies pay \$2,300 for a corner booth or \$10,000 for a space covering a block of booths.<sup>113</sup> At the NSA conference, companies pay \$2,100 for a corner booth.<sup>114</sup>

Contributions from private companies for exhibit space are a large source of revenue for some professional corrections associations. ACA's conference in August 2014 provided space for over 300 vendors.<sup>115</sup> Assuming all vendors paid corporate rates (non-profit organizations pay discounted rates) and all booth space was purchased, ACA would have received approximately \$800,000 from vendors.<sup>116</sup> Assuming all vendors paid full price (affiliates and non-profit organizations received discounted rates) and all booth space was purchased, AJA would have collected over \$450,000 from 188 vendors at its 2014 conference.<sup>117</sup> Assuming all booth space was purchased, NSA received at least \$1 million from vendors at its 2014 conference.<sup>118</sup>

## General Support Contributions

Private corporations donate money to professional corrections associations to support their general operations. In exchange, these corporations gain opportunities to meet with the association's board members, advertise to its members, and attend annual conferences.

Corporate contributions can be large sources of revenue for professional corrections associations. For example:

- In 2014, 86 companies paid the National Sheriffs' Association \$317,000 in "corporate partnership" dues, equivalent to \$3,700 from each company.<sup>119</sup> NSA's corporate partners include Aramark, Keefe Group, Securus Technologies, and Wexford.<sup>120</sup>
- 102 companies that provide services and products to jails have paid \$350 to become members of the American Jail Association, totaling \$35,700. These companies include Aramark, BI Incorporated (a subsidiary of GEO Group), Corizon, Global Tel\*Link, JPay, Keefe Group, Naphcare, Pay-Tel, Securus Technologies, Telmate, Union Supply, and Wexford.<sup>121</sup>
- Currently, 22 companies support the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, and have paid over \$200,000 in "corporate membership" dues.<sup>122</sup> Alkermes, a pharmaceutical company, paid the NADCP \$50,000.<sup>123</sup> BI Incorporated, a subsidiary of GEO Group that sells electronic monitoring products, paid \$10,500.<sup>124</sup>

## Scholarships and Awards

Many corporations fund awards and scholarships that are managed by professional corrections associations. In return, these corporations receive position name recognition and build their reputation with corrections officials.

For example, in 2014, 15 corporations paid ASCA a total of \$38,500 to finance the Susan M. Hunter Scholarship, which awards \$500-\$1,000 to college students with corrections worker parents.<sup>125</sup> The largest contributors, which were Keefe Group, CCA, GTL, and Union Supply, each contributed \$5,000.<sup>126</sup>

Corrections companies also fund the National Organization of Hispanics in Criminal Justice's (NOHCJ) scholarship program for criminal justice students.<sup>127</sup> In 2014, CCA funded the scholarships, and Keefe Group and Aramark sponsored the ceremony reception.<sup>128</sup>

Every year, the National Sheriffs' Association recognizes officers for their work through various awards funded by private companies.<sup>129</sup> For example, this year Aramark funded the Corrections/Jail Innovation of Year Award, which recognizes an officer for implementing innovative programs to improve operations.<sup>130</sup>

## SECTION 3

## How Corrections Companies Influence Decision Makers in Professional Corrections Associations

The millions of dollars spent by private corporations to access professional corrections associations buy the companies opportunities to build their brands and market their products and services to decision makers. The following section details the myriad ways corrections companies use their access to professional corrections associations to benefit their bottom lines.

### Corrections Companies Build Relationships with Key Officials

When companies pay to become sponsors or exhibitors at a professional corrections association's conference, their executives and staff can attend and build relationships with officials who make purchasing and contracting decisions. Benefits of corporate sponsorship often include tickets to the conferences. For example, CTA's platinum sponsors, including GTL and Securus Technology, received five conference passes as part of their sponsorships.<sup>131</sup> Professional corrections associations also provide their sponsors with opportunities to purchase additional passes. At ACA's 2014 summer conference, CCA sent nearly 70 of its own employees.<sup>132</sup>

Corporate sponsors also receive lists of attendees before and after the conference, allowing them to target certain corrections officials and follow up. ACA, AJA, CTA, and NSA all send sponsors attendee lists.<sup>133</sup>

In addition, companies that sponsor specific events at conferences gain opportunities to meet with corrections officials and give speeches to attendees. For example, at NSA's conferences, the staff of the corporate sponsor of two events, the welcome reception and the deputy symposium reception, greet attendees. The corporate sponsor also speaks at four events, including the keynote speech, board of directors' dinner, first time attendees reception, and the reception for National Sheriffs' Institute graduates.<sup>134</sup>

#### How Corrections Companies Explain their Involvement in Professional Corrections Associations

**C**orrections companies view their involvement in conferences as a benefit to their brand and the industry as a whole. An article in CCA's magazine states, "CCA's presence at [ACA's 2014 summer] conference was as strong as ever" and goes on to profile the workshops and presentations led by the prison operator's staff.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, at the end of ACA's 2014 winter conference, Keefe Group, which sells food, clothing, toiletries, and electronics to prisoners, reported "as always, our booth received a lot of traffic from conference attendees," and "we hosted an evening reception where customers, prospects and partners enjoyed a nice evening of ood [sic], refreshments and plenty of networking."<sup>136</sup>

## Corrections Companies Lead Conference Workshops

Corrections association conferences provide their attendees with professional development opportunities through classroom-style lectures and discussions. These workshops teach corrections managers and staff new skills and programs they can take back to their facilities. Content covers every aspect of corrections work, such as security, prisoner health care and rehabilitation, staff management, and operations.

Many conference workshops are led by corrections companies. For example:

- **American Correctional Association:** Corrections company representatives moderated or presented at 36 of the 99 workshops held at the ACA's summer conference in 2014. Five workshops were led by CCA, seven were led by Corizon, and three were led by Management and Training Corporation, all of which were conference sponsors.<sup>137</sup>
- **Corrections Technology Association:** Corrections Technology Association: Company representatives made presentations at 18 of the CTA conference's 24 workshops in 2014. Seventeen workshops were led by companies that sponsored the conference.<sup>138</sup>
- **National Sheriffs' Association:** Seven companies presented one-hour seminars at the NSA's 2014 conference.<sup>139</sup>

Corrections companies that sponsor conferences or provide general support contributions gain opportunities to create and lead trainings, workshops, presentations, and briefings. For example:

- **American Jail Association:** Corporations pay \$750 for a 25-minute time block to showcase their product or service at the vendors' stage on the trade show floor.<sup>140</sup>
- **Corrections Technology Association:** Every corporation that pays \$3,000 to be a conference sponsor can present a 50-minute workshop. Corporations that are willing to pay an additional \$4,500 can also present a "3.5 minute TED-like presentation of innovative concepts that will benefit corrections."<sup>141</sup>
- **National Association of Drug Court Professionals:** Companies that pay \$10,500 or \$25,000 to become "members" are granted opportunities to present a 75-minute or three-hour training workshop, respectively.<sup>142</sup>
- **National Sheriffs' Association:** Companies that pay between \$10,000 and \$30,000 in sponsorship fees are granted the opportunity to present a one-hour seminar (during the conference, attendees choose to attend one of four or five concurrent seminars).<sup>143</sup>

At the workshops they lead, corrections companies promote their products and identify new customers. Often times, companies will directly market goods and services through demonstrations, explaining the product's benefits, and reviewing the pricing. Other times, companies present best practices, tools for adhering to government standards, and new technologies to increase the likelihood that decision makers turn to them when looking to make improvements to their facilities. For example:

- **Corizon:** At ACA's 2014 summer conference, Corizon staff led an hour-and-a-half workshop on the success of the company's weight loss program in improving prisoners' health.<sup>144</sup> At ACA's 2015 winter conference, Corizon staff also led a workshop on "key elements" in managing prisoner health care services.<sup>145</sup>
- **HomeWAV:** At CTA's 2014 conference, the president of HomeWAV, which provides video call services to prisoners and their families, paid \$3,000 in sponsorship fees and led a 50-minute training session on how the company's services rehabilitate prisoners.<sup>146</sup>
- **Jpay:** At CTA's 2014 conference, the vice president of marketing for JPay, which paid \$5,000 in sponsorship fees, led a 50-minute training session on the benefits of the company's VideoGram service that enables prisoners and their family and friends to send short video messages.<sup>147</sup>

- **Telmate:** At NSA's 2014 conference, Telmate's chief marketing officer led an hour-long seminar to promote the company's wireless tablets designed for prisoners.<sup>148</sup> Telmate also sponsored the conference.<sup>149</sup>
- **GEO Group:** At ACA's 2015 winter conference, a GEO Group warden spoke at a workshop promoting computer kiosks for prisoners that allow them to purchase commissary products, correspond with their families, and access music and other media.<sup>150</sup>

### Corrections Companies Influence Professional Associations that Support Officials Who Oversee a Range of Government Programs

This report focuses on the influence of corrections companies on professional corrections associations. However, corrections companies also spend resources to access other professional associations, such as the National Governors Association and the National Association of Counties, that support officials who oversee a range of governmental programs, not solely corrections. These officials may be responsible for a range of decisions, including purchasing, policy, and programmatic, that affect corrections companies' bottom lines. Below are examples of corrections companies that have gained influence to these other professional associations.

- **Corrections Corporation of America** is a "corporate fellow" with the National Governors Association (NGA).<sup>151</sup> Corporate fellowship benefits include a luncheon series with NGA senior executives, registration for NGA's biannual conferences, and opportunities to contribute to the Center for Best Practices (NGA's public policy incubator).<sup>152</sup>
- **Geo Group** contributed \$25,000 to the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) to qualify as a "premier partner."<sup>153</sup> Benefits include a customized business plan for California counties developed with CSAC staff, brand promotion on CSAC's social media, registrations for the annual meeting and legislative conference, and dinner with CSAC's Board of Directors.<sup>154</sup> **BI Incorporated** (a subsidiary of GEO Group), **Corrections Corporation of America**, and **Union Supply Group** contributed \$3,000 to qualify as "associate partners."<sup>155</sup> Benefits include registrations for the annual meetings and legislative conference, newsletters, and discounts to attend CSAC events.<sup>156</sup> CSAC issues recommendations on how state funds for corrections should be allocated.<sup>157</sup>
- **Correctional Healthcare Companies, Inc.** was an exhibitor at the **National Association of Counties'** 2014 summer conference.<sup>158</sup> Booth space cost ranged between \$1,600 and \$2,250.<sup>159</sup>

### Corrections Companies Promote their Brands

Companies that sponsor professional corrections associations receive opportunities to promote their brand at associations' annual conferences. Corporate sponsors can place advertisements in conference program books and print their logos and names on conference materials, such as signs, banners, keycards, and tote bags.

#### Logo and Name Publicity in Conference Materials

Companies that sponsor professional corrections association conferences buy opportunities to display their corporate logo or name on the conference signs, programs, posters, banners, and websites that list the sponsors. This publicity builds companies' name recognition among corrections officials who make purchasing and privatization decisions.

Companies that sponsor the National Sheriffs' Association's conference, for example, receive broad name publicity. The exhibitor prospectus for the 2015 conference lists the ways sponsors receive name recognition, including through "the conference program, event signage when applicable, NSA website and conference issue of *Sheriff* magazine, and floor sticker at booth."<sup>160</sup> Similarly, corporate sponsors for the Association of Women Executives in Corrections that pay more than \$3,000 can have their name displayed on all publicity materials printed by the conference.<sup>161</sup>



**Business Partners**



PLATINUM LEVEL

abilis it mi-case MARQUIS SOFTWARE SYSCOM JUSTICE SYSTEMS hp

GTL SECURUS TECHNOLOGIES RKV TECHNOLOGIES

GOLD LEVEL

Microsoft Dynamics software Jpay Corrections Services TRIBRIDGE

SILVER LEVEL

RENOVO UNILINK Telmate PCG Technology Consulting Tecore networks capital ease J.G. Technologies, LLC

esri UNION SUPPLY Group TouchPay BerryDunn SHAWNTECH IMS Guarded Exchange inTime

UNISYS EXLORATECH ARGUS Sierra Systems saadian J. Keefe Group HOMEWAY gellisense

Left: Corporate sponsors receive publicity at ACA's August 2013 conference.<sup>162</sup>

Above: Corporate sponsors receive publicity in CTA's 2014 conference program manual.<sup>163</sup>

Companies pay special sponsorship fees to display their logos and names on items used by corrections officials at the conference. For example, at conferences for the National Sheriffs' Association and American Correctional Association, companies pay to place their name, logo, and/or booth number on attendees' hotel key cards, nametag holders, and conference floor guide.<sup>164</sup>

At ACA's 2014 summer conference, companies spent thousands of dollars to print their names on conference materials. For instance:

- **MTC** paid \$6,000 to print its name on attendees' hotel keycards.<sup>165</sup>
- **Wexford** paid \$6,000 to print its name on attendees' nametag holders.<sup>166</sup>
- **HDR**, which designs correctional facilities, paid \$3,500 to print its name on pocket-sized event guides.<sup>167</sup>

Companies also paid thousands of dollars to print their name on AJA's 2014 conference materials. For instance:

- **Paytel** paid \$3,000 to print its name on attendees' nametag holders.<sup>168</sup>
- **CGL**, a corrections construction company, paid \$3,000 to print its name on attendees' hotel keycards.<sup>169</sup>

Companies also pay to print their logo on items that attendees take home. For instance:

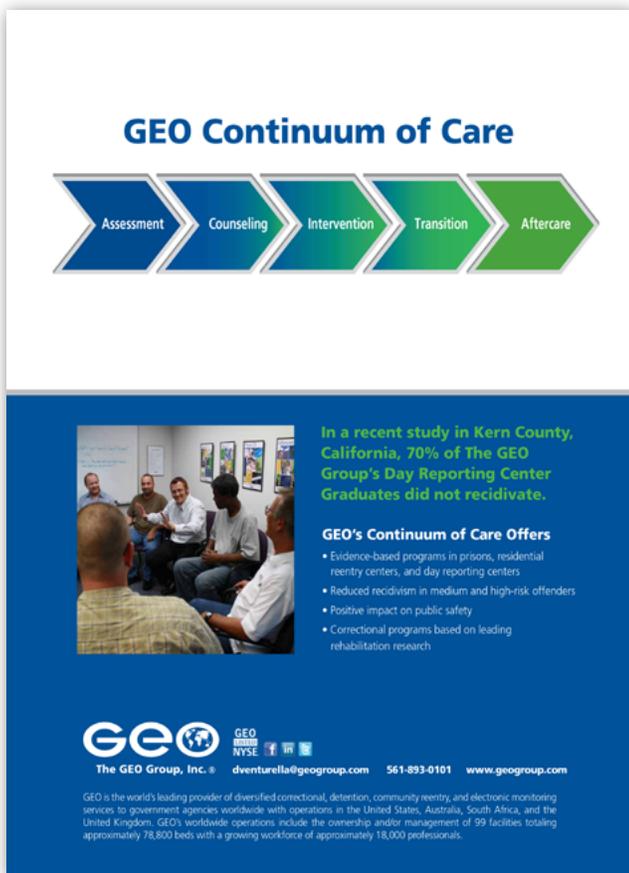
- At NSA conferences, companies sponsor take-home mugs and pens.<sup>170</sup>
- At AJA conferences, companies sponsor duffel bags and water bottles.<sup>171</sup> In 2014, Armor Correctional Health Services and Diamond Pharmacy were the duffel bag sponsors.<sup>172</sup>

**Advertisements in Conference Program Materials**

Companies market their products and services to corrections officials through advertisements in conference programs, planning guides, websites, mobile phone applications, and subscription magazines. In 2014, the program manual for ACA's summer conference contained 31 advertisements, including 26 full page ads.<sup>173</sup> JPay placed four full-page advertisements in the program's first 15 pages.<sup>174</sup> CTA's 36-page program book for its 2014 conference contained 35 corporate advertisements.<sup>175</sup>

Advertisement examples include:

- In ACA's 2015 planning guide sent to corrections officials before the conference, Corizon marketed its corrections health care services in a full-page advertisement.<sup>176</sup>
- GEO Group also placed a full-page advertisement in ACA's 2015 conference planning guide marketing its day reporting centers.<sup>177</sup>
- GTL placed a full-page advertisement for its prison services in the program book for ACA's 2014 conference.<sup>178</sup>
- Community Education Centers, Inc. also placed a full-page advertisement in ACA's 2014 program book for its residential re-entry centers and in-prison treatment programs.<sup>179</sup>
- In CTA's 2014 conference program manual, JPay promoted its prisoner VideoGram service in a half-page advertisement.<sup>180</sup>
- In CTA's 2014 conference program manual, Union Supply Group promoted its prisoner U-TAB7 tablet in an advertisement.<sup>181</sup>
- Keefe Group placed a full-page advertisement in the March/April 2014 edition of the magazine *Sheriff* for its commissary and video call services.<sup>182</sup>



Above, left: GEO Group advertises its day reporting centers in ACA's 2015 winter conference planning guide.<sup>184</sup>

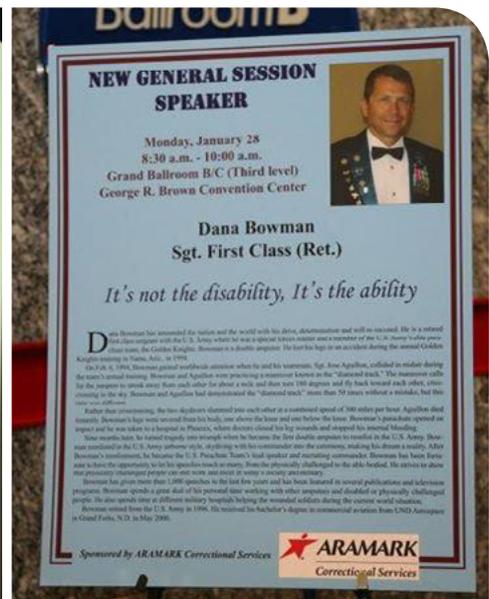
Above, right: Corizon advertises its correctional health care services in ACA's summer 2014 program book.<sup>185</sup>

**Logo and Name Publicity at Events**

Corrections companies sponsor events at professional corrections associations such as dinners, receptions, and keynote addresses. In addition to providing corporations with opportunities to meet and give speeches to corrections officials as discussed earlier (see section titled “Corrections Companies Build Relationships with Key Officials” on page 17), these events allow the sponsors to publicize their name and logo on event signs.

In 2014, companies that stood to win contracts from corrections officials sponsored a range of events at professional corrections association conferences.

- At ACA’s conference, Aramark sponsored the general session, which was attended by 1,500 corrections professionals according to ACA’s projections.<sup>186</sup> In addition, Correct Rx (a pharmaceutical company) sponsored a welcome reception for health care officials, MHM sponsored a special session and luncheon for health care officials, and CCA and GEO Group co-sponsored the farewell reception, banquet, and awards ceremony.<sup>187</sup>
- At AJA’s conference, Keefe Group sponsored a reception for sheriffs, Aramark sponsored a refreshment event, and Multiview (a digital marketing company) sponsored a networking event.<sup>188</sup>
- At the conference for the Association of Women Executives in Corrections, Keefe Group sponsored the reception on the first evening, MTC sponsored the reception on the second evening, and Union Supply sponsored the lunch reception.<sup>189</sup>
- At CTA’s conference, Syscon Justice Systems (a software provider for corrections facilities) sponsored the golf tournament.<sup>190</sup> In 2013, GTL joined Syscon in sponsoring the event.<sup>191</sup>
- At the Michigan Sheriffs’ Association conference, Corizon sponsored the dinner cruise, and Wexford and Securus Technologies co-sponsored the banquet.<sup>192</sup>
- At NSA’s conference, CCA hosted a reception for first-time attendees, Telmate hosted a reception for deputies and law enforcement personnel, and Wexford sponsored an ice cream break in the exhibit hall.<sup>193</sup>



Above, left: MHM Correctional Services and Centurion (two partner correctional health care companies) sponsored a luncheon and special session at ACA’s 2014 winter conference.<sup>194</sup>

Above, right: Aramark sponsored the general session speaker event at ACA’s 2013 winter conference.<sup>195</sup>

## Corrections Companies Generate Leads at Vendor Booths

Hundreds of companies attend conferences as vendors where they directly market their products and services to correctional decision makers at trade show booths. For example, about 330 vendors attended NSA's conference in 2015, and 188 vendors attended AJA's conference in 2014.<sup>196</sup>

At AJA's conference, companies directly market and sell their products and services for 9.5 hours on the show floor.<sup>197</sup> At the NSA conference, companies sell their products and services for 10 hours.<sup>198</sup>



At the booths, companies market a range of products, such as uniforms, software, and commissary food, as well as services, such as health care, money transfers (between prisoners and their families), and rehabilitation programs. Corrections facility operators, such as CCA, Geo Group, and Community Education Centers, attempt to identify new opportunities to win contracts for managing entire facilities.

Companies become passport sponsors as a way of maximizing lead generation. As a passport sponsor, a company stamps attendees' "passports" when they visit the booth. For attendees to qualify for the raffle drawing at the end of the conference, they must collect stamps from all the passport sponsors.<sup>199</sup> At ACA's 2014 summer conference, five exhibitors, including the Community Education Centers, each paid \$5,000 to become passport sponsors.<sup>200</sup> The raffle prize that year was a new Fiat 500.<sup>201</sup> At AJA's 2014 conference, 18 exhibitors, including Union Supply Group and Correctional Health Companies, Inc., each paid \$500 to become passport sponsors.<sup>202</sup>



At NSA's 2014 conference, Armor Correctional Health Services sponsored a "relaxation station," which provided massage chairs to attendees. In order to use the chairs, attendees needed to obtain a ticket from Armor's booth.<sup>203</sup>

Above, top: Union Supply Group markets commissary and other products at ACA's 2013 summer conference.<sup>204</sup>

Above, bottom: Wexford markets health care services at ACA's 2013 summer conference.<sup>205</sup>

## SECTION 4

### Conclusion

**This analysis shows how corrections companies have capitalized on the opportunity to meet and influence government decision makers** through professional corrections associations. First, these companies spend millions of dollars sponsoring conferences, paying vendor fees, and providing other funding to gain access to the associations. Then corrections companies leverage this access in ways that can benefit their bottom lines.

Considering corrections companies' track records of providing low-quality services that harm prisoners, communities, and taxpayers, the influence they exert on government officials through professional corrections associations is cause for concern. To protect the public interest, the public should be able to monitor companies' involvement in the associations. With transparency, watchdog groups, government officials and others can prevent contracts, programs, and policies that benefit corrections companies' bottom lines but harm other stakeholders.

This report tabulates several of the contributions made by corrections companies to professional corrections associations and lists some examples of how corrections companies leverage these contributions to influence decision makers. However, the findings in this report constitute only a portion of the total contributions made by companies and the subsequent opportunities they receive to influence decision makers. To achieve full transparency, professional corrections associations should publish complete reports that provide details on the contributions from private companies and the benefits the companies receive in return. Only then can the public more fully monitor the influence of corrections companies and protect the public interest.

#### The Need for More Research on the Effects of Corporate Influence on Professional Corrections Associations

**A**s this report shows, corrections companies lead workshops and trainings, market their brands, and find new customers through their involvement in professional corrections associations. Research is lacking, however, on the extent to which this involvement allows the companies to win contracts and affect corrections officials' policy and program decisions.

What is known is that private corrections companies are expanding and gaining market share. According to corporate tax filings, from 2005 to 2014, GEO Group's annual revenues grew from \$580 million to \$1.7 billion, and CCA's revenue grew from \$1.2 billion to \$1.6 billion.<sup>206</sup> While revenues for privately-held companies are proprietary information, various companies have reported on the number of incarcerated people they serve and facilities with which they work. Between 2010 and 2015, Wexford grew from serving 91,000 prisoners and patients in 100 facilities to serving 112,000 in 175 facilities.<sup>207</sup> From 2011 to 2015, Telmate grew from servicing 100 facilities to servicing 240.<sup>208</sup> Considering that the majority, if not all, of corrections companies' revenues come from government contracts, this growth is largely attributable to new contracts from government officials.

Corrections companies' continual involvement in professional corrections associations coupled with their growing revenues from government contracts suggests that they have achieved a return on their investments in the associations, but more research is needed that describes and measures this return.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> For a synopsis of “tough on crime” federal policies in the 1980s and 1990s, see Arit John, “A Timeline of the Rise and Fall of ‘Tough on Crime’ Drug Sentencing,” *The Wire*, 22 April 2014.
- <sup>2</sup> E. Ann Carson, Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Imprisonment rate of sentenced prisoners under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities per 100,000 U.S. residents, December 31, 1978-2013” (Excel spreadsheet), 7 August 2014, downloaded from [www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT\\_imp%20rate\\_tot.xlsx](http://www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT_imp%20rate_tot.xlsx) on 25 June 2015.
- <sup>3</sup> In 1980, the private corrections industry was nonexistent: American Civil Liberties Union, “Banking on Bondage: Private Prisons and Mass Incarceration,” November 2011. By 2013, corrections companies were managing the incarceration of 133,000 people: E. Ann Carson, Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Number of prisoners held in private prisons under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities, December 31, 1999-2013” (Excel spreadsheet), 6 August 2014, downloaded from [www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT\\_privates\\_tot.xlsx](http://www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT_privates_tot.xlsx), downloaded on 25 June 2015. 133,000 is 8 percent of the total prison population: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, “Prisoners in 2013,” 30 September 2014.
- <sup>4</sup> Founded in 2002: Alan Johnson, “Inmates To Get E-mail, But No Web Access,” *The Columbus Dispatch*, 26 January 2010. 1.7 million inmates (nearly 70 percent of all people incarcerated): Daniel Wagner, “Prison Bankers Cash in on Captive Customers,” *The Center for Public Integrity*, posted on 30 September 2014, updated on 11 November 2014.
- <sup>5</sup> E. Ann Carson, Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Number of prisoners held in private prisons under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities, December 31, 1999 – 2013” (Excel spreadsheet), 6 August 2014, downloaded from [www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT\\_privates\\_tot.xlsx](http://www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT_privates_tot.xlsx), downloaded on 25 June 2015.
- <sup>6</sup> Contribute to campaigns: National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Showing Correctional Facilities Construction & Management/For-Profit Contributions to Candidates and Committees” (data tool) downloaded from [www.followthemoney.org](http://www.followthemoney.org), 18 May 2015. CCA lobbies: National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Corrections Corp of America” (data tool), downloaded from [www.followthemoney.org](http://www.followthemoney.org), 28 April 2015. GEO Group lobbies: National Institute on Money in State Politics, “GEO Group” (data tool), downloaded from [www.followthemoney.org](http://www.followthemoney.org), 28 April 2015.
- <sup>7</sup> At least seventeen states and the federal government have partially repealed or lessened the severity of mandatory sentences: Ram Subramanian and Ruth Delaney, Vera Institute for Justice, “Playbook for Change? States Reconsider Mandatory Minimum Sentences,” February 2014. Voters in California overturned the state’s three strikes law: Tracey Kaplan, “Proposition 36: Voters Overwhelmingly Ease Three Strikes Law,” *San Jose Mercury News*, 6 November 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> Between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of people in prisons fell from 506 to 478 prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents: See note 2. From 2009 to 2013, the number of people in prisons fell from 1,615,487 to 1,575,434: E. Ann Carson, Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Prisoners under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities, December 31, 1978-2013” (Excel spreadsheet), 7 January 2015. The number of probationers has increased: Christopher Hartney and Caroline Glesmann, National Council on Crime & Delinquency, “Prison Bed Profiteers: How Corporations Are Reshaping Criminal Justice in the U.S.,” May 2012.
- <sup>9</sup> Corrections Corporation of America, “The CCA Story: Our Company History,” downloaded from [www.cca.com/our-history](http://www.cca.com/our-history), 23 June 2015.
- <sup>10</sup> About 330 businesses were exhibitors at NSA’s 2015 conference: Eric Markowitz, “Baltimore Is Hosting America’s Largest Police Expo This Week and Military-Style Tanks and Grenade Launchers Are On Display,” *International Business Times*, 29 June 2015.
- <sup>11</sup> American Correctional Association, “Exhibitor Prospectus: 144th Congress of Correction,” 15 – 20 August 2014.
- <sup>12</sup> Corrections Technology Association, “2014 Summit Sponsor Guide,” 1 – 4 June 2014.
- <sup>13</sup> For further discussion on how private prison operators use campaign contributions, lobbying, and relationships and associations to influence policy, see Justice Policy Institute, “Gaming the System: How the Political Strategies of Private Prison Companies Promote Ineffective Incarceration Policies,” June 2011.
- <sup>14</sup> National Institute on Money in State Politics, “Showing Correctional Facilities Construction & Management/For-Profit Contributions to Candidates and Committees” (data tool), downloaded from [www.followthemoney.org](http://www.followthemoney.org), 18 May 2015. \$4.7 million constitutes contributions to candidates at the federal, state, and local levels.
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## How Corporations Influence Decision Makers at Corrections Conferences, Trainings, and Meetings

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## How Corporations Influence Decision Makers at Corrections Conferences, Trainings, and Meetings

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- <sup>106</sup> ACA: See note 11. NSA: See note 91.
- <sup>107</sup> See notes 11 and 137. "\$35,750" derived from tabulating the advertisements in the program book with the advertisement prices from the exhibitor prospectus.
- <sup>108</sup> See note 97.
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- <sup>110</sup> American Jail Association, "2015 AJA Exhibitor Prospectus: AJA's 34th Annual Conference & Jail Expo," 19 – 22 April 2015.
- <sup>111</sup> See note 93. Note: Platinum-level corporate partners receive a complimentary booth at the conference. Gold-level corporate partners receive a 30% discount on the booth. Silver-level corporate partners receive a 10% discount on the booth. Source: National Sheriffs' Association, "Corporate Partnership Information," downloaded from [www.sheriffs.org/content/corporate-partnership-information](http://www.sheriffs.org/content/corporate-partnership-information), 20 January 2015.
- <sup>112</sup> See note 11.
- <sup>113</sup> See note 110.
- <sup>114</sup> See note 111.
- <sup>115</sup> See note 11. "Over 300" derived from tallying the number of booth spaces from the exhibit hall map on page 10.
- <sup>116</sup> See note 11. Researchers used the map on page 10 and the costs on page 7 to deduce "\$800,000." Researchers considered all booths along the perimeter of the exhibit space as "inline" booths, which cost less than corner booths. Researchers also assumed that a block of six booths cost the equivalent of a 20' x 20' "bulk space" (\$8,600) and two inline booths (\$2,000 each).
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- <sup>131</sup> See notes 12 and 138.
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*How Corporations Influence Decision Makers at Corrections Conferences, Trainings, and Meetings*

<sup>139</sup> See note 93.

<sup>140</sup> See note 110.

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<sup>142</sup> National Association of Drug Court Professionals, "Corporate Member Benefits," no date on source, downloaded from [www.nadcp.org/sites/default/files/2014/New%202014%20Corporate%20Benefits\\_1.pdf](http://www.nadcp.org/sites/default/files/2014/New%202014%20Corporate%20Benefits_1.pdf), downloaded on 16 March 2015.

<sup>143</sup> See note 91.

<sup>144</sup> See note 137, page 67.

<sup>145</sup> American Correctional Association, "2015 Winter Conference Program Book," 6 – 11 February 2015, page 62.

<sup>146</sup> See note 12. Also see note 138, page 20. While the Sponsorship Guide states "under no circumstances are you allowed to market or promote specific products or services in breakout sessions;" CTA likely uses very narrow definitions of "market" and "promote," as the program guide for the conference indicates that companies lead sessions on the benefits of their products.

<sup>147</sup> See note 12. Also see note 138, page 25.

<sup>148</sup> See note 93, page 5.

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<sup>150</sup> See note 145, page 66.

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<sup>153</sup> GEO Group: California State Association of Counties, "Corporate Member Program: Premier Partners," downloaded from [www.counties.org/premier-partners](http://www.counties.org/premier-partners), 24 March 2015. \$25,000: California State Association of Counties, "CSAC Premier Partnership," no date on source, downloaded from [ddcache2.net/csaccounties.SE310/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2014\\_premier\\_partnership\\_0.pdf](http://ddcache2.net/csaccounties.SE310/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2014_premier_partnership_0.pdf), downloaded on 24 March 2015.

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<sup>157</sup> For example, see California State Association of Counties and County Administrative Officers Association of California, "Final Recommendation of Realignment Allocation Committee (RAC): Distribution of AB 109 Funds: Community Corrections and District Attorney/Public Defender Subaccounts," October 2014.

<sup>158</sup> National Association of Counties, "2015 Annual Conference and Exposition: Exhibitor Prospectus," 10 – 13 July 2015.

<sup>159</sup> National Association of Counties, "2014 Annual Conference and Exposition County Solutions and Idea Marketplace: Exhibitor's Prospectus," 11 – 14 July 2014.

<sup>160</sup> See note 91.

<sup>161</sup> Association of Women Executives in Corrections, "Sponsor Program," downloaded from [www.awec.us/sponsor-program](http://www.awec.us/sponsor-program), 14 January 2015.

<sup>162</sup> American Correctional Association, "143rd Congress of Correction – August 2013" Facebook album, downloaded from [www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151605761336966&set=a.10151293906156966.460486.26897531965&type=3&theater](http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151605761336966&set=a.10151293906156966.460486.26897531965&type=3&theater), 19 May 2015.

<sup>163</sup> See note 138.

<sup>164</sup> See notes 11 and 91.

<sup>165</sup> See notes 11 and 137.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.* HDR designs correctional facilities: HDR, "Justice," downloaded from [www.hdrinc.com/markets/architecture/justice](http://www.hdrinc.com/markets/architecture/justice), 26 January 2015.

<sup>168</sup> See note 97. Also see American Jail Association, "The American Jail Association would like to thank our 2014 Sponsors & Exhibitors!," downloaded from [www.americanjail.org/education/annual-training-conference/2014-sponsors-exhibitors-2](http://www.americanjail.org/education/annual-training-conference/2014-sponsors-exhibitors-2), 16 January 2015.

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<sup>170</sup> See note 91.

<sup>171</sup> See note 97.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* Also see American Jail Association, "The American Jail Association would like to thank our 2014 Sponsors & Exhibitors!," downloaded from [www.americanjail.org/education/annual-training-conference/2014-sponsors-exhibitors-2](http://www.americanjail.org/education/annual-training-conference/2014-sponsors-exhibitors-2), 16 January 2015.

<sup>173</sup> American Correctional Association, "Program Book: 144th Congress of Correction," 15 – 20 August, 2014.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> See note 138.

<sup>176</sup> American Correctional Association, "Planning Guide: ACA's 2015 Winter Conference," 6 – 11 February 2015.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> See note 137.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> See note 138.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> National Sheriff Association, *Sheriff* (magazine), Volume 66, Number 2, March/April 2014.

<sup>184</sup> See note 176.

<sup>185</sup> See note 137.

<sup>186</sup> Aramark sponsored the general session: *Ibid.* 1,500 attendees: See note 11.

<sup>187</sup> Event sponsors: see note 137. Correct RX is a correctional pharmaceutical company: Correct RX Pharmacy Services, "Why Choose Correct Rx?" downloaded from [correctrxpharmacy.com/about-correct-rx/why-crx](http://correctrxpharmacy.com/about-correct-rx/why-crx), 30 April 2015.

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<sup>189</sup> Association of Women Executives in Corrections, "Boundaries, Barriers and Beyond" (program schedule), 26 – 28 September 2014.

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- <sup>191</sup> Corrections Technology Association, "Golf Tournament: 2013 Player Registration Form," no date on source, downloaded from [www.correctionstech.org/meeting/2013/2013\\_Golf.pdf](http://www.correctionstech.org/meeting/2013/2013_Golf.pdf), downloaded on 8 July 2015.
- <sup>192</sup> Michigan Sheriffs' Association, "2014 Summer Training Conference," 8 – 10 June 2014.
- <sup>193</sup> See note 93.
- <sup>194</sup> American Correctional Association, "2014 ACA Winter Conference – Tampa, FL" Facebook album, downloaded from [www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10152026829321966&set=pb.26897531965.-2207520000.1404828771&type=3&theater](http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10152026829321966&set=pb.26897531965.-2207520000.1404828771&type=3&theater), 26 March 2015.
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- <sup>196</sup> NSA: Eric Markowitz, "Baltimore Is Hosting America's Largest Police Expo This Week and Military-Style Tanks and Grenade Launchers Are On Display," *International Business Times*, 29 June 2015. AJA: see note 110, page 12.
- <sup>197</sup> See note 140.
- <sup>198</sup> National Sheriffs' Association, "2014 Annual Conference & Exhibition" (exhibitor prospectus), 20 – 25 June 2014.
- <sup>199</sup> See note 97.
- <sup>200</sup> Five companies: See note 137. \$5,000: See note 11. Note: these sponsors are considered "Grand Prize" sponsors by the ACA.
- <sup>201</sup> See note 137.
- <sup>202</sup> American Jail Association, "The American Jail Association would like to thank our 2014 Sponsors & Exhibitors!" downloaded from [www.americanjail.org/education/annual-training-conference/2014-sponsors-exhibitors-2](http://www.americanjail.org/education/annual-training-conference/2014-sponsors-exhibitors-2), 16 January 2015. Also see note 97.
- <sup>203</sup> See notes 91 and 93.
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