

For Immediate Release

West Virginia Statistical Analysis Center receives national recognition for outstanding technical innovation



The Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), one of 12 divisions of the West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety, recently took home a national award for exemplary work by its Statistical Analysis Center.

The SAC was this year's winner of the *Technical Innovation Recognition Award* given by the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA). The award goes to the SAC that has played a key role in developing and implementing technology and other innovative projects that advance the goals and administration of the justice system. The award is for a project titled *Development and Implementation of WV's Community-Based Offender Management and Research Information System*. The system, referred to as the WV Community Corrections Information System or CCIS, is designed to assist DCJS in meeting its responsibility of administering and monitoring community corrections programs in the state.

As a web-based application that can be accessed via the Internet, the CCIS provides near real-time information that has value to both practitioners at the program level and state and local policymakers. The system facilitates timely access to data to inform policymaker decision-making, allows for agency and program staff to assess program performance, and provides users with a set of reports that are relevant to each program site. Importantly, the CCIS also contains the information necessary for the systematic evaluation of programs established under the authority of West Virginia's Community Corrections Act.

Under Dr. Haas' leadership, the West Virginia SAC has distinguished itself as a nationally recognized research and analysis center. In 2006, the SAC was the recipient of the highly competitive Phillip Hoke National Publication Award for Excellence for its report, *Establishing the "Statistical Accuracy" of Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) in West Virginia*.

"The criminal justice research and statistical analysis work consistently accomplished by SAC Director Dr. Stephen Haas and DCJS Director Norb Federspiel is something the state of West Virginia should be particularly proud of," said DMAPS Cabinet Secretary James W. Spears. "This award represents

a significant accomplishment on a national stage and shows West Virginia's ability to produce high quality work."

Statistical Analysis Centers are the state agencies responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating justice data. The association works closely with the Bureau of Justice Statistics and other federal agencies to promote the effective use of criminal and juvenile justice information.

Dr. Haas said, "Such significant accomplishments would not be possible without agency support and the hard work and dedication of SAC staff." Currently, the West Virginia SAC is comprised of two research analysts, Erica Turley and Sara Withrow, and one data entry operator, Monika Sterling.

Information about the West Virginia SAC and its publications can be viewed online at <http://www.wvdcjs.com/statsanalysis/index.html>.

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