

# FUTURE LEADERS TOWN HALLS ON “CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN ARIZONA”

*“It is a great experience for gaining knowledge on important topics and having an opportunity to make your voice heard.”*

Participant, Tucson Future Leaders Town Hall



## FUTURE LEADERS TOWN HALL LOCATIONS

Mesa Community College

City of Phoenix – Burton Barr Central Library

Arizona State University – Downtown Phoenix Campus

University of Arizona – Tucson Campus

Arizona Western College – Yuma Campus

Cochise College – Sierra Vista Campus

Yavapai College – Prescott Campus

# KEY POINTS FROM FUTURE LEADERS TOWN HALL ON “CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN ARIZONA”

## GOALS OF ARIZONA’S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Ensure fairness and justice for all including criminals, victims, and the community.
- Make punishment equitable and specific to the offense.
- Focus on rehabilitation during incarceration.
- Have consequences and accountability for those who commit crimes.
- Provide for the safety of the community.
- Offer programs and services after release that reduce recidivism.
- Consider the return on investment of dollars spent on incarceration vs. rehabilitation vs. crime prevention.
- Create safe environments for learning, work, worship and public gathering.

## WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Create more therapy and rehabilitation programs for substance abusers and people with mental illnesses.
- Give judges more discretion to allow them to make case-specific decisions on sentencing.
- Train police officers on how to focus more on the preservation of peace and better interact with people who have mental health and communication issues.
- Expand diversion programs like drug, mental health and homeless courts that keep people out of prison and rehabilitate them to become productive members of society.
- Reduce the stigma of being a criminal through programs like the pen pal system, community service projects and work-release opportunities.
- Reform the bail system to reflect the severity of the offense and provide alternatives for those who lack financial resources.
- Focus on crime prevention by cleaning up neighborhoods, making social services more accessible, and improving job training and educational opportunities.
- Provide education and counseling to families and students to reduce interaction with the criminal justice system.

*“This program has enlightened me. I feel I can express my ideas and use my voice. I have learned a lot.”*

Participant, Tucson Future Leaders Town Hall

*“I felt heard for the first time and it felt good.”*

Participant, City of Phoenix Future Leaders Town Hall

## MESSAGES FOR ARIZONA'S ELECTED LEADERS

- Strengthen our education system to recognize and address problems to prevent young people from becoming involved with the criminal justice system.
- Increase funding for organizations delivering re-entry programs and services.
- Provide incentives to businesses to hire those with a criminal record.
- Make laws based on what is best to create safe communities and productive citizens vs. a mindset of being “tough on crime.”
- Provide sufficient funding to public defenders and their offices to ensure adequate legal representation for those who cannot afford an attorney.
- Revisit why and how we use private prisons and contractors.
- Consider legislation that looks at changes needed in sentencing guidelines, parole, fees, crime prevention and rights after release.
- Shift resources to focus on building healthy communities and improving trust in the criminal justice system.

## INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

- Contact elected officials to advocate for the issues and ideas we discussed at the Town Hall.
- Get more involved in programs that stop the school to prison pipeline.
- Talk to our peers about the specific issues facing the criminal justice system and the stereotypes of those caught up in it.
- Present our colleagues with statistics and factual evidence that they can share with those in their networks.
- Register to vote and educate myself on the current state of our criminal justice system.
- Support elected officials and other leaders who advocate for fairness for criminals, victims and their family members.
- Learn about available services to help point others to better their situation and avoid a criminal path.
- Seek educational opportunities to better understand the criminal justice system such as internships, explorer programs and interactions with those who work in the system.



Participants at the Yavapai College - Prescott Campus Future Leaders Town Hall