

PRESS RELEASE



**CENTRAL FLORIDA
FOUNDATION**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE, INC.

ALL PEOPLE. ALL VOICES. ALL MATTER.

Central Florida Leaders Taking Brightline to Miami to Attend Program on Improving the Court and Community Response: Decriminalizing Mental Illness

Who: Judges, nonprofit executives, city and county government, public safety, and criminal justice officials.

When: December 13-15, 2023

Where: Camillus House 1603 NW 7th Ave, Miami, FL 33136, and The Miami Center for Mental Health and Recovery 2200 NW 7th Ave., Miami, FL 33127

Convened by the Peace and Justice Institute's (PJI) Resilience Network, top-level stakeholders and community leaders from across sectors will be taking a trip to Miami on the Brightline to participate in a program "Improving the Court and Community Response Decriminalizing Mental Illness: The Miami Model."

The program facilitated by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) is designed to provide an overview of evidence-based and trauma informed practices at each point in the Criminal Justice System Sequential Intercept Model, how individuals with mental and substance use disorders come into contact with and move through the criminal justice system.

Participants will learn about how best practices have been implemented in Miami and engage in Q&A sessions with Judge Leifman, who recently spoke as a keynote in Winter Park, FL for the PJI's 5th Annual [Creating a Resilient Community Conference](#). The program will take place at Camillus House with a site visit to tour [The Miami Center for Mental Health Recovery](#).

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It takes a community-wide integration to solve a complex social issue. The goal of this program, which grew out of the 5th Annual Conference and successive meetings, is to improve indicators for public safety, mental health, social supports, and community engagement. The Miami Model presents the possibility of improving community safety, saving critical tax dollars, and a life of hope and recovery for people with mental illness. In Miami-Dade, due to this work, annual arrests decreased from 118,000 to 53,000. Due to decreased arrests, Miami-Dade closed one of three jails, saving the county \$120 million to date. In the post-arrest aversion system, the recidivism rate went from 75% to 25%.

Through this trip, central Florida community leaders will explore how such a program might be a possible next step to revolutionize our mental health care system in Central Florida.

This project was made possible in part by a grant from the Eisenhower and Herakovich Funds at the Central Florida Foundation.

The **Peace and Justice Institute's (PJI)** vision is “to develop individuals, leaders, organizations, and communities to cultivate the culture of peace, resilience, and belonging where all people, all voices, all matter.” PJI is an innovative, award-winning organization recognized by the United Nations, Orlando Sentinel, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, the Orlando Business Journal, Orlando Magic, Florida Humanities, and the U.S. State Department.

The **Resilience Network**, a facet of PJI, has partnered across nine sectors to advance a trauma informed Central Florida, with the mission to transform our region into one of prevention, hope, healing, and resilience. In this last year the work of the Network has focused on public safety and criminal justice, with the goal of reforming our criminal justice sector to move beyond punishment and arrest to restorative, trauma informed practices of healing and recovery.

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