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Career Readiness, Connectivity Focus of May Reentry Commission Meeting

On Tuesday, May 17, leaders from State of Alabama entities met for the monthly Commission on Reentry meeting, focusing on the state’s rehabilitation programs and welcoming multiple guests. Secretary of Labor Fitzgerald Washington spoke about a new career transition center program at the Alabama Department of Corrections Limestone Correctional Facility, designed to develop work ready skills for inmates nearing the completion of their sentence.

“It’s so important for them to have that stability when they walk out the door,” said Bureau Director of Parolee Rehabilitation Rebecca Bensema, who emphasized the grant programs and partnerships with various state agencies involving the integration of support services that bolster career readiness of individuals in ADOC custody.

Commissioner Kimberly Boswell of the Alabama Department of Mental Health introduced the group to their new app: Connect Alabama. The app gives information and education about mental health and substance abuse

issues. Boswell emphasized the availability of Naloxone training on the app, which is a medication designed to rapidly reverse an opioid overdose. The app does not require constant internet access, helpful for people in rural areas.

Finally, leaders from Unite Us – Socrates Aguayo, Brenna Batchelor, Jordan Drake and Matthew Hall – provided information to the Commission on using technology to better connect justice-involved individuals to health and social services. More information on Unite Us is available here: <https://uniteus.com/>

The primary goal of the Commission, adapted from Section 3 of Alabama Senate Bill 221, is identifying, implementing, and promoting evidence-based research, policies, strategies, and programming to support successful reentry and reintegration. Members of the Commission include Alabama Department of Corrections Commissioner John Hamm, Ingram State Technical College President Annette Funderburk, Alabama Department of Mental Health Commissioner Kimberly Boswell, Senator Will Barfoot, and Representative Prince Chestnut, along with leaders from the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs, the Alabama Department of Labor, the Alabama Department of Human Resources, Medicaid, and the Governor’s Office.

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Secretary of Labor Fitzgerald Washington discussing a new career transition center program.



Leaders from Unite Us describing technological solutions for connecting services.