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According to City College President Lisa Coico, the newly established school was created to build on the strong record of achievement of the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education.

"The need for more physicians in many communities in our city, particularly in the communities surrounding City College, remains dire," Coico said in a statement. "By establishing this resource, City College is both helping to address this critical need and fulfilling a vital community service."

Maurizio Trevisan, provost of City College, believes the Sophie Davis School is the perfect foundation for the new medical school.

"The new medical school will continue the unique mission by providing young students from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to pursue a medical career that focuses on providing health care to the underserved communities of New York State," Trevisan added.

Scott Cooper, president and CEO of SBH Health System, is excited about the partnership with City College.

"Like City College, we have a congruent mission to provide quality care to underserved communities," he said in a statement. "With our combined resources and commitment, those facing health disparities will have more than good reason to hope."
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The new medical school will focus on recruiting underrepresented people of color into medicine, increasing medical care in historically underserved communities, and boosting the number of primary care physicians.
CUNY Medical School to Open in 2016

A new medical school run by the City University of New York will open with its first class in fall 2016 after receiving preliminary accreditation, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo’s office announced on Tuesday.

The school, the CUNY School of Medicine, to be based at City College in Harlem, will begin with 70 students and have a partnership with the St. Barnabas Health System in the South Bronx, Michael Arena, a spokesman for CUNY, said....
The interim president says becoming a permanent one is living out his dream. (7/15/15)

THE BRONX - Hostos Community College has named a new president, and he's no stranger to the campus.

Dr. David Gomez has been serving as the interim president, but the position will now become a permanent one after receiving the CUNY stamp of approval. He calls it an opportunity to live out his dream.

Hostos recently made a top 10 list from the prestigious Aspen Institute recognizing community college excellence. Gomez says that he and his staff will work toward continuous improvement based on an understanding of the borough itself and the needs of its students.

READ MORE: Education Stories

Along with the new permanent administration, Hostos is launching the Bronx Corridors of College Success Initiative. The school is teaming with nonprofits and other community organizations to get more Bronx residents through college.

Gomez adds of Hostos, "We're not just in the community, we're of the community."
JOHN JAY COLLEGE PRESIDENT JEREMY TRAVIS

BY MICHAEL GARETH JOHNSON | JULY 16, 2015 05:32AM

Jeremy Travis, president of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, discusses Gov. Andrew Cuomo's recent signing of an executive order to create a special prosecutor in cases of police killings of civilians, the impact this move will have on repairing police-community relations and the overall efforts underway to help police forces regain the trust of the public in many communities across the nation.

In the interview with City & State Executive Editor Michael Johnson, Travis highlights the long history of police being on the wrong side of social movements and expressed optimism that the country is now moving in the right direction to address many of the problems created over the years. He specifically addresses the alarming stories coming out of Rikers Island jail and outlines specific steps to address the problem short-term, while ultimately suggesting the facility should be shut down.

"We need a long-term plan that will take people off of Rikers. There's nobody on Alcatraz anymore. The idea that we put people on islands because they have committed a crime or are charged with a criminal offense is just an antiquated, last-century idea. We need to have community-based facilities with good mental health treatment, access to families because everyone in prison comes back to live in our communities."
District Attorney's Plan to Prosecute Upstate Prison Escapee David Sweat Draws Criticism

Some residents question what could be gained from charging convicted murderer who is already serving a life sentence.

By KATE KING
Updated July 15, 2015 8:57 p.m. ET

A district attorney in upstate New York plans to pursue escape charges against the surviving inmate from last month's prison break, prompting some residents to question what could be gained from prosecuting a convicted murderer who is already serving a life sentence.

Clinton County District Attorney Andrew Wylie confirmed this week that he will ask a grand jury to indict David Sweat on charges of escaping from the Clinton Correctional
Facility in Dannemora.

Mr. Sweat, who was discovered missing June 6 and captured June 28, was found guilty of killing a sheriff's deputy in 2002 and isn't eligible for parole.

Mr. Wylie previously defended the decision to prosecute the case, saying he considers it his duty to file charges when a crime has been committed. Mr. Wylie declined to comment further this week. It was unclear Wednesday whether Mr. Sweat has an attorney.

The district attorney’s decision has sparked controversy in the North Country. Malone resident Gordon Wood said he didn’t think the charges would be worthwhile.

“What are they going to do?” Mr. Wood said. “They can’t give him two life sentences—he only has one life.”

Christopher Garrow, who works at a coffee shop called the Bagel Pit in Plattsburgh, said it would be overkill to charge Mr. Sweat. He said Mr. Wylie should focus on prosecuting Joyce Mitchell, a civilian prison worker accused of helping Mr. Sweat and another inmate, Richard Matt, escape by smuggling them tools hidden in hamburger meat. Ms. Mitchell has pleaded not guilty.

Last month, Mr. Wylie used a hypothetical scenario to explain his reasoning for charging Mr. Sweat. Mr. Matt was killed by a federal patrol agent.

“Does anybody have children here?” Mr. Wylie asked at a news conference. “Let’s say Mr. Sweat got out of jail, OK? He escaped and he found your daughter and he raped your daughter. Would you want me to charge him with that?

“Whether it’s escape first degree, whether it’s any other charge, he needs to be charged,” Mr. Wylie said. “That’s how my office always proceeds.”
Mr. Wylie has declined to say how much Mr. Sweat’s prosecution is estimated to cost.

Colin Read, a Democrat and member of the Clinton County Legislature, said he supports Mr. Wylie’s decision to prosecute Mr. Sweat even if it won’t lengthen his prison sentence and the county incurs expenses.

“If somebody commits a crime I think you have to go through the motions,” Mr. Read said. “It’s part of the cost of the judicial system to go through this due process.”

EARLIER COVERAGE

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Ashley Taylor, who owns the Bagel Pit, said the charges against Mr. Sweat might be aimed at providing closure to a community roiled by the manhunt.

“It’s more for the public—a reassurance that they’re doing something now that they’ve got him,” Ms. Taylor said.

Police suspect Mr. Sweat and Mr. Matt, also a convicted killer, broke into several secluded cabins while on the run, but there have been no reports of the inmates harming anyone.

A state trooper shot Mr. Sweat two days after the federal patrol agent fatally shot Mr. Matt. Mr. Sweat spent a week recovering at an Albany hospital. He is now at the maximum-security Five Points Correctional Facility in Romulus, N.Y.

On Wednesday, the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision said it filed disciplinary charges against Mr. Sweat in connection with his escape. A hearing will decide whether to impose a penalty.
In Ohio, Allen County Prosecutor Juergen Waldick faced a similar decision last year over whether to prosecute three inmates who escaped prison. One was T.J. Lane, who was convicted of killing three students at Chardon High School in 2012.

Mr. Waldick decided against charging Mr. Lane and one of his fellow escapees, convicted killer Lindsey Bruce. Both men are serving life without the possibility of parole, but they could be released if their convictions are overturned or Ohio’s governor commutes their sentences, scenarios Mr. Waldick described as unlikely.

“We could have had a trial; it would have been a fairly easy trial,” Mr. Waldick said. “Escape is a pretty easy thing to prove. You’re supposed to be in prison—you’re not. But it wouldn’t have added anything to their sentences.”

Mr. Waldick did charge the third escapee, Clifford Opperud, who had been serving a 12-year prison term for burglary and kidnapping. Mr. Opperud pleaded guilty to the escape charge and had five years added to his sentence.

In Iowa, by contrast, the Department of Corrections asked prosecutors to charge escaped inmate Martin Shane Moon even though he was already serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole. Mr. Moon, a convicted murderer, had five years added to his sentence, said Fred Scaletta, assistant director for the Iowa Department of Corrections.

“If the case was to get overturned there would still be the five years, or if the case gets commuted then the five-year sentence would go into effect,” Mr. Scaletta said.

Martin Horn, a professor of corrections at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, said he supports Mr. Wylie’s decision to prosecute Mr. Sweat. Among other reasons, the prosecution will allow prosecutors to further investigate the escape and to potentially identify additional co-conspirators, he said.

“The prosecution is an important element of understanding how this very rare and extraordinary event occurred,” he said.
OPINION: STANDING UP TO THE ANTI-ISRAEL MOVEMENT

BY WALTER MOSLEY | JUL 14, 2015 |

As a New Yorker, I have shuddered with concern as the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement has attempted to influence our students on college campuses around New York.

(Photo: Izhar Laufer)

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In its refusal to recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and its
denunciation of cooperative ventures between Israelis and
Palestinians, the BDS movement undermines efforts to attain a
negotiated two-state solution—the only chance for both peoples to
achieve national self-determination.

At a time where so many regions around the world are ravaged by war,
it seems both laughable and honestly baffling that this movement
singles out Israel for condemnation—a country that has repeatedly
demonstrated willingness for peace and an impressive commitment to
human rights. As a proud supporter of Israel and a progressive myself,
I felt compelled to do something to stand up to a movement that
subverts and corrupts the "progressive" label to mask its shameful
bigotry.

This is why I am so proud to have been the prime sponsor of last week's
New York state Assembly Resolution K705-2015 rejecting
the BDS movement and reaffirming the enduring bond between New
York and Israel. At a time of rampant partisanship, it was truly
heartwarming to see Democrats and Republicans uniting in support of
Israel and I would like to thank the bill's 74 co-sponsors for their
steadfast support for this cause and for the people of Israel.

Resolution K705-2015 represents a necessary first step in opposition
to a prejudicial movement that seeks to delegitimize the state of Israel.
But it is naïve to consider the BDS movement now defeated. In the
coming months and years it is vital that all those who want to see peace in the Middle East and who want to
see a secure state of Israel alongside a viable and responsible Palestinian state continue to stand strong
against BDS and those who wish to back this so-called movement.
Grants Roundup: $200,000 to San Diego Zoo Supports Rhino Conservation and More

By Eden Stiffman

Notable new grants compiled by The Chronicle:

Riverview Medical Center Foundation
The foundation awarded a $10-million grant supporting the creation of an integrative medicine program through Meridian Health Affiliated Foundation in New Jersey. The grant will help support the development of a center for the program and community outreach sessions to introduce services such as medical acupuncture, nutrition counseling, and homeopathy.

Calamus Foundation
The foundation awarded $1 million to SAGE (Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders) to support expansion of the nonprofit’s nationwide housing program for LGBT seniors. The program includes building housing, training housing providers in fair and welcoming treatment of older LGBT adults, and working to change public policy to end housing discrimination.

Andrew Mellon Foundation
The foundation awarded $461,000 over three and a half years supporting student fellowships at the American Folk Art Museum in New York. LaGuardia Community College students will receive paid internships in museum departments including collections management and exhibitions.

**Annenberg Foundation**

The foundation awarded $200,000 to San Diego Zoo Global to support two projects: one with a goal of ending extinction of the Northern White Rhino, the other supporting the distribution of the zoo’s educational closed-circuit television broadcast to children’s hospitals and Ronald McDonald Houses across the country.

**Saint Luke’s Foundation of Cleveland**

The foundation awarded more than $1.4 million to community organizations in its first 2015 grant cycle. Grants include $240,000 over two years for operating support at the Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center and $100,000 over two years to support the Partnership for Evaluation, Research and Implementation efforts at Case Western Reserve University, helping the University’s Begun Center for Violence Prevention and Research evaluate its programs and measure effectiveness.

Send grant announcements to grants.editor@philanthropy.com.

Chronicle of Philanthropy subscribers also have full access to GrantStation’s searchable database of grant opportunities. For more information, visit our grants page.
SEYMOUR SEREBNICK
SEREBNICK—Seymour, 86, of Jackson Township died Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at his home following a brief illness. He leaves his wife of 52 years, Wendie "Joyce" Serenick; his son Steven and wife Dale and their three children, Jordyn, Andrew and Ava; and his son Barry and wife Laura and their two children Jacob and Rachel. He is also survived by his sister, Norma Zweifler. Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1929, he was a graduate of Stuyvesant High School, City College of New York and Brooklyn Law School. He was a Veteran of the Korean War. Seymour met Wendie at his first job, working for a commercial finance company in New York. His career in the commercial finance industry continued for the next forty years. He was considered an expert in the area of secured transactions, and his advice was sought nationally by other lawyers in the field.
You Just Got Out of Prison. Now What?

Carlos and Roby are two ex-convicts with a simple mission: picking up inmates on the day they’re released from prison and guiding them through a changed world.

By JON MOOALLEM  JULY 16, 2015

Two men were sitting in a parked car, waiting to pick someone up. Carlos Cervantes was in the driver’s seat. He was 30, with glassy green eyes — quiet by nature, but with a loaded, restrained intensity about him. He had picked up Roby So at home in Los Angeles around 3 o’clock that morning, and they’d made it here, to this empty parking lot in front of the Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility, on the outskirts of San Diego, just after 6. Now, the sun was rising over the bare, brown mountains in the windshield. A hummingbird zipped around an air-conditioning unit outside. Already, they’d been waiting close to an hour.

Roby was three years older than Carlos but carried himself like a large and joyful child. He was hungry. He wanted biscuits and gravy and was still laughing about how, earlier, he caught himself telling Carlos that, unfortunately, he’d have to wait until tomorrow for biscuits and gravy, because today was Monday, and Monday was pancakes day. Part of his brain still tracked his old prison breakfast menu. “Why do I still know these things, man?” Roby said. “It’s been four years. I was supposed to. ...” His voice trailed off, so Carlos finished his sentence: “Delete.”

Roby started reciting the weekly prison menu, to see if he could still do
it. When he got to Thursday — peanut butter and jelly, four slices of bread, Kool-Aid — Carlos, without turning to look at him, chimed in with “sugar-free gum.”

Roby went on. (Roby tends to do most of the talking.) The trick, he said, is to save those packets of peanut butter and spread it on your pancakes, the next time there are pancakes. It sounds gross, but it’s not. “The only way I eat my pancakes now is with peanut butter — because that’s the way I ate them in there,” Roby explained.

Carlos understood. He still put peanut butter on his pancakes, too. “It does have a different flavor,” he said.

“Yeah! And you can put it in your oatmeal!”

“Oatmeal is real good with peanut butter,” Carlos said.

“I still do that, too!” Roby blurted.

He continued with the menu. After Sunday — eggs, ham, hash browns — he looked at Carlos and said, “You put it all together?” to make sure Carlos knew to heap the whole thing between two slices of toast and squeeze jelly over it. Carlos knew. “That’s a pretty fat sandwich, right?” Roby said.

“Yeah,” Carlos said emphatically.

Roby still puts jelly on his egg sandwiches, too, he explained. Strawberry, grape — he doesn’t care. “People look at me like I’m crazy!”

“People don’t even know,” Carlos said. They were laughing at themselves now. Carlos had done almost 11 years; Roby, close to 12. Now they were free men, sitting outside a prison, waxing nostalgic about prison food.

They waited some more. Waiting came easily to them; incarceration makes you patient. Finally, after three and a half hours, a white corrections-
department van pulled into the parking lot. It was going backward, fairly fast, then made a wide turn — still in reverse — to roll in beside Carlos and Roby, who jumped out of their car to meet it. As the van turned, the prison guard driving it leaned his head through the window and hollered, “I’m doing it on a dare!” He sprang out of the van, grinning and chuckling — he seemed overstimulated, as if he couldn’t believe they were letting him drive the van today — and went to open the back door. But then he stopped short: All the backward driving had confused him about which side his passenger was on.

Eventually, Dale Hammock appeared. Hammock was 65, white, his head shaved completely bald, both arms wrapped in black tattoos. He wore sweat shorts, a white T-shirt, canvas slip-ons and white socks pulled up near his knees. All his clothes were bright and brand-new. As he approached Carlos and Roby, he thrust his chest toward them as far as it would go. Inside, this might have signaled strength and authority, but out here, it looked bizarre, as if he had some kind of back deformity.

Carlos shouted, “Welcome home, Mr. Hammock!” Roby shouted, “How are you feeling, Mr. Hammock?” They introduced themselves and hurried to collect his few possessions — a brown paper bag and a pair of work boots — moving as if they’d done this exchange dozens of times, which they had, while Hammock stood between them, looking stunned.

Carlos handed Hammock the key and asked if he wanted to pop the trunk. But the key wasn’t a key; it was a button. After squinting at it for a second, Hammock handed it back and said, “I wouldn’t know what to do with that.”

He’d been in prison for 21 years.

**Hammock was sent** away in 1994, at a time when stiff sentencing reforms around the country were piling more people into prison for longer amounts of time. These included California’s “three-strikes law,” which took
effect just months before Hammock was arrested. The law imposed life sentences for almost any crime if the offender had two previous “serious” or “violent” convictions. (The definitions of “serious” and “violent” in California’s penal code are broad; attempting to steal a bicycle from someone’s garage is “serious.”) Similar laws proliferated in other states and in the 1994 federal crime bill, becoming signatures of that decade’s tough-on-crime policies and helping to catapult the country into the modern era of mass incarceration. But as the criminologist Jeremy Travis, then head of the Justice Department’s research agency, later pointed out, America had failed to recognize the “iron law of imprisonment”: Each of the 2.4 million people we’ve locked up, if he or she doesn’t die in prison, will one day come out.

It wasn’t until the mid-2000s that this looming “prisoner re-entry crisis” became a fixation of sociologists and policy makers, generating a torrent of research, government programs, task forces, nonprofit initiatives and conferences now known as the “re-entry movement.” The movement tends to focus on solving structural problems, like providing housing, job training or drug treatment, but easily loses sight of the profound disorientation of the actual people being released. Often, the psychological turbulence of those first days or weeks is so debilitating that recently incarcerated people can’t even navigate public transportation; they’re too frightened of crowds, too intimidated or mystified by the transit cards that have replaced cash and tokens. In a recent study, the Harvard sociologist Bruce Western describes a woman who “frequently forgot to eat breakfast or lunch for several months because she was used to being called to meals in prison.” I met one man who explained that, after serving 15 years, he found himself convinced that parked cars would somehow switch on and run him over. So many years inside can leave people vulnerable in almost incomprehensibly idiosyncratic ways, sometimes bordering on helplessness: “Like that little bird, getting his wings” is how one man described himself on Day 1. Many spill out of prison in no condition to take advantage of the helpful bureaucracies the re-entry movement has been busily putting in place.
This became clear in 2012, after California voted to overhaul its three-strikes law and a criminal-justice group at Stanford Law School, the Stanford Three Strikes Project, started filing petitions to have roughly 3,000 prisoners serving life sentences set free with time served. (So far, close to 2,300 have been released.) Many were serial offenders who were sent away for life after one last witless screwup, like Lester Wallace, who was caught trying to steal a car radio on the first morning the law went into effect, or Curtis Wilkerson, who did 16 years of his life sentence after shoplifting a pair of socks from a department store called Mervyn's. When Wilkerson got out, he sounded as if he couldn't believe the whole thing: "Ordinary white socks," he told Rolling Stone. "Didn't even have any stripes."

Unlike typical parolees, third-strikers are often notified of their release just before it happens, sometimes only a day in advance. (It can take months for a judge to rule after papers are filed.) They're usually sent out the door with $200, a not-insubstantial share of which they often pay back to the prison for a lift to the nearest Greyhound station: An inmate might be released from a prison outside Sacramento and expected to find his way to a parole officer in San Diego, 500 miles away, within 48 hours. Stanford's Three Strikes Project was setting up transitional housing for its clients, but initially, a lot of the third-strikers weren't making it there — they were just blowing away in the wind. Then, Carlos and Roby started driving around the state and waiting outside to catch them.

The job started as a simple delivery service, to carry some of these discombobulated bodies from one place to another. In late 2013, the director of the Three Strikes Project, Michael Romano, contacted a nonprofit called the Anti-Recidivism Coalition, which has built up a close community of formerly incarcerated people in Los Angeles. (Romano, who is also an A.R.C. board member, is a friend of mine.) Romano asked if A.R.C. could dispatch one of its members to pick up third-strikers and drive them to their housing near the Staples Center in Los Angeles. A.R.C. recommended Carlos, a
dependable young man just three years out of prison himself, who — most important — also had his own car and a credit card to front money for gas. Carlos was hired, for $12 an hour, to fetch an old man named Terry Critton from a prison in Chino. On the way back, Critton asked if Carlos wouldn’t mind stopping at Amoeba Records, so he could look at jazz LPs — he’d been a big collector. They wound up spending almost two hours in the store, just looking. Then, Critton wanted a patty melt, so Carlos found a place called Flooky’s, where they ordered two and caught the end of a Dodgers game. It was extraordinary: All day, Carlos could see this man coming back to life. He wanted to do more pickups, and he wanted to get his friend Roby involved. He told his bosses he needed a partner.

By now, Carlos and Roby — officially, A.R.C.’s Ride Home Program — have done about three dozen pickups, either together or individually, waking up long before dawn and driving for hours toward prison towns deep in the desert or up the coast. Then they spend all day with the guy (so far they’ve picked up only men), taking him to eat, buying him some clothes, advising him, swapping stories, dialing his family on their cellphones or astonishing him by magically calling up Facebook pictures of nieces and nephews he’s never met — or just sitting quietly, to let him depressurize. The conversation with those shellshocked total strangers doesn’t always flow, Roby told me. It helps to have a wingman.

“The first day is everything,” Carlos says — a barrage of insignificant-seeming experiences with potentially big consequences. Consider, for example, a friend of his and Roby’s: Julio Acosta, who was paroled in 2013 after 23 years inside. Acosta describes stopping for breakfast near the prison that first morning as if it were a horrifying fever dream: He kept looking around the restaurant for a sniper, as in the chow hall in prison, and couldn’t stop gawking at the metal knives and forks, “like an Aztec looking at Cortez’s helmet,” he says. It wasn’t until he got up from the booth and walked to the men’s room, and a man came out the door and said, “How you
doin’?” and Acosta said, “Fine,” that Acosta began to feel, even slightly, like a legitimate part of the environment around him. He’d accomplished something. He’d made a treacherous trip across an International House of Pancakes. He’d peed.

But what if Acosta had accidentally bumped into a waitress, knocking over her tray and shattering dishes? What if that man had glared at him, instead of greeting him, or snapped at him to get the hell out of the way? Ann Jacobs, director of the Prisoner Re-entry Institute at New York’s John Jay College of Criminal Justice, told me that even the smallest bungled interactions on the outside leave recently incarcerated people feeling “like they’re being exposed, like they’re incompetent. It’s feeding into their worst fear, their perception of themselves as an impostor who’s incapable of living a normal life.” Carlos and Roby have learned to steer their guys through that perilous newness — and to be nonchalant about it, to make the sudden enormity of life feel unthreatening, even fun. On one ride home earlier this year, I watched a third-striker venture inside a convenience store, alone, to buy a candy bar while Roby pumped gas. The man seemed emboldened after a few hours of freedom, actually hopping a bit as he walked. But then he tripped over the curb and tumbled forward, arms thrashing, nearly face-planting in front of the door. Roby just shrugged and said, “Well, you’ve got to get that one out of the way.”

“There’s been a long time since I looked at a menu,” Dale Hammock said. He was sheltered in a corner of a booth at a Denny’s near the prison. The restaurant was overcrowded, loud and full of the kind of hyperdifferentiated nonsense that ordinary Americans swim through every day, never assuming it can or should be fully understood. But Hammock was having trouble sorting the breakfast menu from the lunch menu, and the regular Denny’s menu from the Denny’s Skillets Across America limited-time menu. There were two kinds of hot sauce and four different sweeteners on the table. On the Heinz ketchup bottle, it said: “Up for a Game? Trivial Pursuit Tomato
Ketchup.”

The first meal after a long prison sentence is an ostensible celebration laced with stress. The food tastes incredible. (Roby gained 60 pounds after his release, desperate to try the Outback Steakhouse Bloomin’ Onion and other fast-casual delicacies he’d seen commercials for on TV.) But ordering — making any choice — can be unnerving. Waiters are intimidating; waitresses, especially pretty ones, can be petrifying. So at Denny’s, Roby started things off, ordering a chocolate milk. Hammock ordered a chocolate milk, too. Then he reconsidered and said: “I want a milkshake! I’ll just have that!” He ordered a Grand Slam. Then he changed it to a Lumberjack Slam. And when the waiter shot back with “Toast: white, wheat or sourdough?” Hammock went stiff momentarily, then answered: “Toast, I guess.”

One morning 21 years ago, Hammock was pulled over for not wearing a seatbelt, and the cop found a half-pound of methamphetamine under the passenger seat. (Hammock was driving a friend’s car and claims he didn’t know the drugs were there, but the police report also notes that he had a small amount of meth in his pocket and was carrying close to $1,000.) He’d been an addict most of his life, flying in and out of prison with some 30 arrests and a dozen other drug or drug-related charges behind him. In 1973, he shot and injured a man while trying to rob him, and in 1978 he snatched a 19-year-old woman’s purse. (There was $2 inside.) Those two charges both counted as “strikes.” The meth in the car was Hammock’s third. He was given a sentence of 31 years to life.

He moved through 10 different prisons and watched firsthand as the age of mass incarceration took hold. In the 42 years between his first strike and his release, the state’s prison population quintupled. Facilities started running at 135 percent capacity, gyms were converted into dorms, all kinds of privileges were discontinued (some prisons even outlawed fresh fruit, to crack down on homemade alcohol) and everyone, Hammock said — the inmates and the guards — started walking around with more abrasive
attitudes. Hammock, meanwhile, had mellowed somewhat, become an old man. For the last five or six years, he’d been the prison barber, which required him to shuttle among the different housing units and stay on good terms with everyone; a supervisor’s report praised him as an “asset” who mentored younger, more volatile inmates. He was too worn out to be menacing anymore. Gabbing with Carlos and Roby while they waited for their table, he explained wearily that, years ago, “I stabbed two guys in Soledad. But you know how that goes, those situations arise sometimes” — either them or you.

Freedom hadn’t instantly re-energized him. From the moment he hopped into Carlos and Roby’s car that morning, he’d seemed less gung-ho than accepting — a good sport. “Oh, boy, it’s going to be different,” he kept saying, or, “It’s going to be an experience, brother, I swear to God.” Several times, he told them: “I was thinking about trying to get into barber college,” latching onto that phrase like a handrail on a shaky train. This was the one thing Dale Hammock knew right now: “I’ve been thinking about barber college, if I could get enrolled in barber college.”

His milkshake came. He took a tentative sip, then removed the straw and started gulping. Roby took a picture on his phone, showed it to Hammock, then zapped it off to the team at Stanford. Hammock was amazed. “Everything now, you just touch it, and it shows you things?” he asked. It was like having breakfast with a time traveler. Was he correct in noticing that men didn’t wear their hair long anymore? Was it true that everyone had stopped using cash? Later, in the restroom, he wrenched the front of the automatic soap dispenser off its base instead of waving his hand under it.

Carlos and Roby had been careful so far not to overwhelm Hammock, but with his milkshake in place, they eased into discussing some practicalities. They talked about cellphone plans and how to get two forms of ID, so Hammock could register for welfare and other assistance. This was
the beginning of Carlos and Roby’s signature re-entry crash course, rooted in their own experiences coming home, which they casually threaded through the duration of every ride. Hammock seemed determined to figure it all out. He didn’t see an alternative. “I’m too tired of prison,” he told them. “I know that.”

If he was serious about cutting hair, Carlos said, there was a government rehabilitation program that might pay for his licensure classes. Roby offered to buy him a set of clippers so he could get a little business going right away, giving haircuts to the other third-strikers at the housing facility where they were heading. In fact, Carlos added, he commuted past there every day. “I was thinking you could hook me up, and I’ll pay you to cut my hair.”

“No problem, no problem at all,” Hammock said, tilting his head to size up Carlos’s fade. “You keep it short like that?” He sounded just like a barber.

Carlōs encouraged him: He’d have to hustle and find a niche, just as prisoners are accustomed to doing inside. “You already have the tools,” Carlos explained. “It’s just about applying them now to a different environment. You know how to dictate how people treat you. You know how to tell who’s going to scam you and who’s not. Using that same psychology, you’re going to be all right.”

Hammock nodded. This seemed to make sense to him in a way that nothing else had so far. “I’ll be all right — it’s just going to take a minute, that’s all,” he said. “Looks like it’s time to eat.”

His breakfast took up three separate plates. He ate inelegantly and quickly, working the food over with his half-set of dentures and toothless lower gums. When he was done, he bellowed, “Well, I’m not hungry no more!” Then, with that out of the way, he looked across the table at Carlos and asked, “How long you been out?”
The first ride home Carlos and Roby did together was in February 2014. They were dispatched for an early-morning pickup at San Quentin, seven hours from Los Angeles in Marin County, and Michael Romano, the director of the Three Strikes Project, suggested they drive up the day before and stay at his house in San Francisco. He expected to take them out to dinner — get to know them, spoil them a bit. Instead, Carlos and Roby rolled in after midnight and unceremoniously bedded down on a couple of couches.

Lying there, it hit them how unusual this was: They were both still on parole at the time, but here they were, welcomed into this white lawyer's home in the middle of the night, while his wife and two little children slept upstairs. “That really changed everything,” Carlos remembers. “It changed our perspective of how people actually viewed us.” He and Roby had been locked up so young that they’d never lived as regular, trustworthy adults. This, they told each other before falling asleep, must be what it feels like.

Carlos grew up in the San Gabriel Valley, east of downtown L.A. His father walked out on his mother while she was still pregnant with him, and Carlos had the misfortune of reminding her of his dad, he says, which made her resentful and abusive. Soon she remarried, but while her new husband bought his own two sons new clothes and Super Nintendos, Carlos and his older brother got none of that. Once, when Carlos was 11, his father mailed him $50 — $100 actually, but his mother took a cut — and Carlos immediately picked up the phone and ordered a medium pizza. When the doorbell rang, he paid the delivery guy, took the pizza inside and ate it out of the box, very methodically, in front of his family. He remembers the scene clearly — how shocked everyone was that he had something of his own and wasn’t giving any of it to them. “And I was like: ‘Yeah, but it’s my pizza. I’m going to sit here and enjoy this pizza.’” He liked the feeling of satisfaction money brought. So he started stealing bikes and breaking into houses. “After that, my life was thieving,” Carlos says. “I was a thief, for sure.”

His childhood turned even more formless and reckless. He had started
smoking pot at 9, and by 15 he was a heavy meth user who spent all day in
the street. His mother warned him he would end up in jail — sort of. “She
said, ‘I hope you [expletive] end up in jail,’” Carlos remembers. “And in
Spanish, trust me, it sounds even worse. Two weeks later, I was arrested.”

One afternoon, some older gang members jumped Carlos, knocking him
off his bike and beating him, and Carlos enlisted two friends to drive around
with him, looking to retaliate. One of them wound up shooting at a young
man from the car, Carlos explained, injuring him; Carlos was the only one
arrested. After waiting in a county jail for nearly two years, he says, he was
finally offered a deal: He could plead guilty to attempted murder and be
sentenced as an adult to 12 years, or he could fight the charge and get 35 to
life if he lost. Carlos took the deal. He was 16.

Carlos floundered in prison but found a mentor after a few years — an
older cellmate, also named Carlos. Under the older Carlos’s influence, he
began willing his way into adulthood: studying, reading, examining his
anger. A girl from his neighborhood started driving out to see him, and they
eventually married. After a few conjugal visits, they had a baby, a daughter
Carlos met one Saturday morning in the prison visiting room. Over the years,
Carlos saw inmates go home and then wind up back inside; the system
seemed to offer little preparation for release, setting them up for failure. He
started mailing away for details about advocacy groups, housing, Social
Security, driver’s licenses — not just in Los Angeles, where he’d be living
when he got out, but in counties around California, so he could share what
he learned with other inmates. He made packets of information and put a
notice on the prison bulletin board, next to the day’s menu: If you’re getting
out and need any “resources,” as he called them, come talk to Carlos in Bunk
28 Low. The prison’s chaplain told me, “He was basically a social worker
behind bars.”

By that point, Carlos was housed at the California Rehabilitation Center,
not far outside L.A. He was part of a small circle of more mature inmates
who, having done time at high-security prisons, were taking college classes, looking for calm in the last years of their sentences. Among them was a wisecracking Asian guy whom everyone knew as Big Head. His real name was Roby So.

Roby’s story was less gothic than Carlos’s, but it had led him to the same dismal place. His parents escaped the killing fields in Cambodia and opened a Laundromat and a bargain store in Los Angeles. He grew up in Echo Park, near Dodger Stadium, a dangerous neighborhood in the 1980s, where he fell in with a gang of other Cambodian kids called the Oriental Boys. Roby was seven years into a 13-year sentence when he met Carlos, having pleaded guilty to second-degree attempted murder in 1998. (Roby says he drove four friends to a party in San Diego, and one fired a handgun at a rival there and missed; the gun was still in Roby’s trunk when they were all arrested at a gas station the next day.)

Prison society is usually strictly segregated, so it was no small thing when Carlos, a Mexican, and Roby, an Asian guy, struck up a friendship. Roby would walk across the dorm to Carlos’s bunk and sit down on the other bed — oblivious to, or uninterested in, whether he was welcome on it — and they’d fall into long conversations about books and life. Breaking bread with another race is especially taboo, but Carlos and Roby frequently cooked meals for each other anyway, improvising with ingredients pocketed in the dining hall or bought from the commissary. Roby made the first one for Carlos on the floor of his bunk, cooking rice, canned mackerel and rehydrated bean soup in a bucket of water, which he heated with a “stinger” — a metal rod resembling a curling iron. Then he puréed all of it, piled it in an egg-roll wrapper and topped it with sriracha. (In retrospect, the dish was symbolic: an Asian-fusion burrito.) On Saturdays, Carlos and Roby would sit side by side watching a block of cooking shows on PBS: “Yan Can Cook,” “Simply Ming,” “Mexico — One Plate at a Time With Rick Bayless.” They picked up techniques and gathered ideas. “Like, instead of onions, let’s try a
little more ginger,” Roby explains.

“Once we started talking, it was like I knew this guy already,” Carlos remembers. “He had the same energy, the same mentality.” They discovered they were scheduled to be paroled one day apart, and plotted their re-entry into Los Angeles together. Then, once they were out, they started executing the plans they’d assembled on Carlos’s bunk. They went to file for government relief payments together. They waited at the D.M.V. together, wondering why everyone else there seemed so impatient and aggravated. And they held each other accountable to their respective to-do lists. Eventually, Carlos found a job as a contractor, and he now works for a nonprofit that guides kids through the juvenile justice system. Roby started fiddling with a GoPro and taught himself video editing. Last year, he lucked into a job on a show that streams on Yahoo.

Waiting outside the prison for Hammock that morning, Roby got an email on his phone that The New York Times had just published the first review of the show, “Sin City Saints,” online. He started reading it out loud to Carlos. But the knocks came pretty quickly — “a disjointed and not particularly funny series” — and his excitement curdled. “Blah, blah, blah. You’re just giving your opinion,” Roby finally said to his phone. “Let’s let the viewers decide.” Then he put the thing away and started digging idly through the glove box.

The opening riff of “Good Times, Bad Times” kicked in on the stereo as they hit Los Angeles County, just before 2 p.m. Carlos bobbed his head in the back seat. The mood in the car was up — for a minute or two. Then, construction work narrowed Route 101, and Roby grumbled as they slowed nearly to a stop. “See that, Dale?” he asked Hammock. “I’m complaining about traffic. You know what that’s called?”

“No,” Hammock said.

“That’s called ‘free-man problems,’” Roby said.
They fought through the congestion to their next stop, a Target in
downtown L.A., where Roby put Hammock in charge of the big red shopping
cart. “There you go, pushing a cart!” he shouted as they set off into the aisles.
“Who would’ve thunk it!”

Every ride home includes a stop to get the third-striker out of his sweats
and buy him some real clothes and basic toiletries. It’s typically the last thing
Carlos and Roby do; walking into a crowded big-box store asks a lot of these
guys. Roby was released on Presidents’ Day weekend, and his father and
cousins took him straight to an outlet mall. The swarm of bargain-seeking
humanity overwhelmed him. In prison, people move slowly, drag their feet
and keep their distance; all of a sudden, Roby was being jostled and
bumped. And after 12 years in the same state-issued clothing, he had no idea
what to buy. When his father asked him what size he was, Roby told him: “I
don’t have a size.”

Now, Roby tends to take the lead at Target, working as a kind of
unflappable personal shopper for the third-strikers, like a kid eager to do
tricks on a piece of playground equipment that once scared him. “You look
like a 34,” he told Hammock. He led him to a dismaying large wall of jeans:
several different brands; slim, boot cut, carpenter. When Hammock finally
reached for a pair, Roby told him to gauge the waistline by stretching it
around his neck.

“Around my neck?” Hammock asked.


Soon, they moved on to shirts. Then underwear. Then socks. It was like
marching Hammock through the stations of some consumerist cross. He
peered into the racks of razors with names like military fighter jets: Schick
Xtreme, BIC Hybrid Advance 3. He confronted the toothbrushes: Colgate 2X
Whitening Action, Colgate 360 Degree Whole Mouth Clean, Oral-B Indicator
Contour Clean. In the deodorant aisle, there was an entire section of Old
Spices named after wild animals. Carlos always likes to recommend AXE — he believes in the company's products — and this time, he gasped slightly when he noticed the apparently rare AXE White Label antiperspirant on a high shelf. He took off the cap to smell it — Forest Scent — then extended it to Hammock. "Are you an AXE man?" Carlos asked. When Hammock decided to go another way, Carlos seemed hurt.

They got toothpaste. They got soap. Roby upsold Hammock on a reversible belt. Often, as they arrived in front of the next expanse of products, Roby and Carlos would shoot each other side-eyed glances, eager to see what Hammock would do. Their policy was to throw the third-strikers into these challenges, rather than coddle them. This was ordinary life. It was safe; it was fun. "Take this and slide it," Roby now told Hammock, handing him his credit card at the register. Hammock dragged the card through the slot methodically, formally, turning to face Roby's camera, as though at a ribbon-cutting ceremony. But it didn't catch. "I think you gotta go faster," Roby said. And so Hammock slid it again. The machine gave off a satisfying beep: success.

There was one more thing, though. Carlos was already in line at the Starbucks kiosk near the entrance, ordering Hammock what he described to him as a "Cadillac" — prison slang for sweet, milky coffee. Soon came the announcement: "Grande caramel macchiato for Dale!"

Hammock took a sip. He looked nearly as stunned as he had the moment they met him that morning, when he was driven out of prison backward after 21 years. "Wow," he said. Carlos and Roby burst out laughing. But Hammock was not laughing. He was very serious. "Wow," he said again. "Coffee's come a long way! This here's the Rolls-Royce of Cadillacs!"

He took another sip. He shook his head and peered down, through the sip hole in the lid, trying to understand what this stuff was and how it came
to be his. Someone had even written his name, “Dale,” on the side of cup.

It was a short drive through downtown from Target to their final destination. Everyone seemed drained. Carlos said almost nothing, while Roby crammed a few last bits of acclimating information into the conversation, seemingly as they occurred to him. (Some parking spots downtown cost $192 a month. “There’s this thing called a Keurig.”) He turned to Hammock and asked, “How you feel so far?”

Hammock didn’t know what to say, so Roby rephrased the question: “Are you free yet?”

“I’m getting there,” Hammock told him.

Soon they were all climbing out of the car in front of the Amity Foundation, the housing and rehabilitation center where Carlos and Roby have been delivering most of their third-strikers for the last year and a half. One of them, Stanley Bailey, was meeting them downstairs to help Hammock get settled.

All day, Carlos and Roby had been slipping inspirational details about Bailey into their conversations with Hammock. He was a solid role model: a 53-year-old longtime heroin addict who had been locked up for 25 years. Carlos had picked him up at Ironwood State Prison in October. Now, five months later, he was doing public speaking at criminal-justice nonprofits and universities and working doggedly to get his truck driver’s license. Recently, he’d run the Los Angeles Marathon. “He’s the story I always tell,” Carlos said.

Bailey met them at Amity’s registration desk, dispensing big, wholehearted bro hugs. “Hey, Running Man!” Roby shouted. Like Hammock, Bailey had zero hair on his head and a full, black sleeve of indecipherable tattoos on each arm. But he was slimmer, healthier-looking — glowing, comparatively, in a light blue polo shirt. When he introduced
himself to Hammock, it was like watching him shake hands with some wrinkled and diminished alternate self.

The two third-strikers sidled into an easy back and forth, comparing which prisons they’d been in, finding some overlap. Hammock took another sip of his Starbucks drink — he was still nursing it — and lifted the cup to show Bailey. “This thing here,” he said, and made a whistling sound. He still couldn’t put it into words. Then, after a while, Carlos and Roby wrote their phone numbers on a slip of paper for Hammock and said goodbye — nothing dramatic; they’d stay in close touch. They always did. Hammock corralled each of them into a hug, one at a time. “Thank you, brother,” he told Carlos.

Bailey followed Carlos and Roby into the hall. He wanted a word, in private. He’d called Carlos earlier that day to ask for advice and wanted to finish the conversation. (They still texted and spoke frequently; whenever Carlos was downtown, he’d take Bailey out for tacos.) The truth was, Bailey was struggling and frustrated; he was being held up as a re-entry success story, but his situation was precarious. He seemed to be hustling in all the right ways, volunteering at several nonprofits and now at a trucking company down the street too — sweeping up, or doing odd chores, just so he could sit in their truck cabs with his driver’s manual and study. But things still weren’t coming together. He’d gotten stalled for months, trying to track down a copy of his birth certificate, without which he couldn’t get other forms of ID, access to government aid or his learner’s permit. All the celebrated speaking gigs he did were unpaid, and his funding to stay at Amity was almost up. He wasn’t sure where he’d go. Though he’d reconnected with a woman in Colorado, one condition of his release was that he wasn’t allowed to leave the state. It was as if Bailey were swimming determinedly away from some monstrous undertow, trying to keep the distance he’d put between himself and his past from closing. “To be honest, I’m not looking for a big, big life,” he said. “I just want to be remembered for more than what I was.”
Carlos slipped some money into Bailey’s hand as he shook it and said goodbye. (That night, he’d start emailing people on Bailey’s behalf, even asking if Stanford and A.R.C. would consider hiring Bailey to ride along with him and Roby sometimes.) Down the hall, meanwhile, Hammock was finishing his intake interview and getting to know a couple of former lifers in the building. An older man who was paroled last Christmas Day after 31 years asked how his day had gone. “You been inside a store yet?” the man said.

“Yeah,” Hammock told him. It sounded like nothing, but it wasn’t. He’d made it all the way here, to the beginning.

Jon Mooallem is a contributing writer for the magazine and the author of “Wild Ones” and “American Hippopotamus.” He last wrote for the magazine about the earthquake in Nepal.

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TAMIU ranks high among schools providing best value for tuition dollar

Special to the Times | Posted: Wednesday, July 15, 2015 12:14 pm

Texas A&M International University was one of two Texas A&M University System institutions that made it into Money Magazine’s newly released list of “736 Schools that Provide the Best Value for Your Tuition Dollar.”

The two A&M System universities that were included in the list are Texas A&M University and TAMIU. See national list here: https://best-colleges.time.com/money/full-ranking/#/list

TAMIU was ranked fifth in Texas and is one of only two of the 10 Texas schools ranked where the net price of a degree according to Money Magazine is under $90,000. For the Texas list, visit the following link and select Texas: https://best-colleges.time.com/money/search-colleges/#/filter

John Sharp, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, congratulated TAMIU President Ray Keck and TAMIU on the recent accomplishments.

“Congratulations to Dr. Ray Keck and everyone at Texas A&M International University on this significant achievement,” Sharp said. “Unlike some other college rankings, this one focuses on the true value of an education and on the return on investment for parents and students, which matches up with the Texas A&M System’s focus on accessibility and affordability.”

In addition, TAMIU was the only institution in the state that received a grade of “A” for value-added, based on “how well students at each school did versus what would be expected given their economic and academic backgrounds and the institution’s mix of majors.”

Texas schools that were ranked in order with their national ranking in parenthesis, their “value added” grade in brackets and Money Magazine’s calculation for the net price of a degree at each university are the following:

1) Rice University (14) [B-] $157,824

2) Texas A&M University-College Station (20) [B+] $84,732

3) The University of Texas at Austin (82) [B+] $120,844

4) Texas Tech University (221) [B-] $102,144
5) Texas A&M International University (237) [A] $85,504

6) The University of Texas at Dallas (254) [C+] $92,434

7) Southern Methodist University (284) [C+] $199,272

8) Trinity University (307) [C+] $146,509

9) Texas Christian University (354) [B-] $181,120

10) University of Dallas (380) [C+] $145,370

Keck said the ranking is a testament to TAMIU’s commitment to making higher education affordable and accessible.

“‘Best value for tuition dollar.’ Is there any topic related to higher education more frequently discussed today? To share the Texas short list with College Station, Austin and Rice is quite an honor,” Keck said. “And to be the only Texas university with an ‘A’ for ‘value added’ demonstrates how well our students perform in their studies.”

TAMIU is blessed with a faculty and staff whose unstinted efforts create the “best value for tuition dollar,” Keck said.

“A university education isn’t free, but in Laredo it is the lowest cost with the highest return,” Keck said.

TAMIU offers a Fixed Tuition and Fee Plan, with undergraduate, Texas resident students able to lock in the cost of their higher education with fixed tuition and fees. The Plan guarantees tuition and fees for four years for most majors for a total of 12 consecutive semesters.

Just last week, U.S. News and World Report listed TAMIU as No. 1 among 10 colleges with the highest percentage of Hispanic student enrollment in the nation. TAMIU is followed by St. Mary’s University of San Antonio, University of the Incarnate World, California State University – Los Angeles, Mount Saint Mary’s University (Calif.), California State University-San Bernardino, University of La Verne (Calif.), CUNY – Lehman College, California State University Stanislaus, and University of New Mexico. The list can be found here: http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/slideshows/10-colleges-with-the-highest-hispanic-enrollment

Fall registration is underway at TAMIU. Classes start Wednesday, Aug. 19. Late registration continues through Tuesday, Aug. 25.
Student-led campaigns pushing universities to divest in for-profit prisons

Omar Etman
Deseret News
July 16, 2015

A student-led campaign led to Columbia University becoming the first university in the United States to divest from prison corporations.

Columbia has sold off two holdings, according to CNN: G4S, the largest private security firm in the world, and Corrections Corporation of America, the largest private prison company in the U.S. The university will sell its shares in both companies, which comprised a small fraction of Columbia’s $9 billion endowment.

Columbia Prison Divest, the student group founded in 2013 that pushed the university toward this move, has inspired similar divestment initiatives around the country.

“Prison divestment has been our demand not because we see private prisons as the primary problem or because we see financial investment as the only (or even primary) way that universities like Columbia participate in systems of criminalization and control,” the group wrote on its Facebook page. “For us, prison divestment has been an entry point for addressing the ways in which students at elite colleges and universities are directly and specifically in the privileged positions that we are because of systems of inequality.”

The fear among students is that their elite education (and the comfortable life it provides) is made possible by the struggle of an out-of-sight population, according to the Columbia Spectator.

“In some ways, we are here because other people are locked up,” senior Asha Ransby-Sporn told the school’s paper. “There are people back home, there are people uptown, who are policed and incarcerated in ways that Columbia students are not.”

The university echoed the feelings of students.

“This action occurs within the larger, ongoing discussion of the issue of mass incarceration that concerns citizens from across the ideological spectrum,” university spokesman Robert Hornsby said to USA Today. “We are proud that many Columbia faculty and students will continue their scholarly examination and
civic engagement of the underlying social issues that have led to and result from mass incarceration."

Prison population has grown 80 percent over the past decade, a report by the Center for Health and Justice shows. During that same period, CCA's stock prices tripled and G4S's doubled. In 2012, CCA's revenue topped $1.7 billion.

But officials stand by the facilities they operate.

"Our company helps keep communities safe and enrolls thousands of inmates every year in re-entry programs that reduce recidivism," a CCA spokesman wrote to CNN. "It's unfortunate that activists would advocate against those benefits without themselves providing any solutions to the serious challenges our corrections systems face."

Still, Columbia Prison Divest is marching on.

"We hope this victory opens doors to more campaigns, to more organizing, to more victories. ... We want to see more schools divest," they wrote.

The passion seems to be catching on. Similar student-led campaigns are underway at Brown, CUNY, Cornell and several UC schools.