It began with conversations about succession planning. For years, community corrections leaders spoke with distress about their concerns. Who will follow us in this profession as the leaders and visionaries of tomorrow? Generation Xers are retiring. The upcoming generations do not think like we did. They will not stay with one organization. They will want to know what is in it for them. They will be wonderfully diverse and the profession will be richer for it, but how do we ensure there are great leaders for the professional organizations which we have spent our lives developing?
**How it all Began**

For several years, this has been the discussion—the large number of leaders in community corrections and allied professional organizations that are leaving the workforce at the same time. As the Baby Boomers reach retirement age, much of the history and experience in the community corrections industry could be gone, simultaneously, from agencies across the country. The passion for volunteering outside of the workplace and professional networking is waning with new generations skillful and comfortable with electronic communications. Email and internet make us readily available but do not always encourage face to face communications or close relationships.

In 2007 APPA’s Past President Mark Carey, acknowledging this professional dilemma, appointed an ad hoc committee to discuss possible strategies for bridging the gap. APPA and other volunteer organizations were struggling with waning membership. The younger generations in the workforce did not join professional organizations as readily. Similarly, agencies were looking at their bench strength and wondering how to best prepare the workforce for the roles they will step into as they move toward executive leadership.

From this ad hoc committee a proposal was made: Create a Leadership Institute that will prepare future executive leaders, and assist them in developing a passion for volunteering and networking within the profession. Quickly, partners came on board: the Correctional Management Institute of Texas at Sam Houston State University (CMIT), the National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE), and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). Additionally, the past presidents of APPA pledged their active support for the Leadership Institute.

The commitment of the partners was strong. They believed that creation of the Leadership Institute was critical and the timing was right. During the discussions, the steering committee laid out four specific goals around which to develop the program.

- Provide participants with a fundamental understanding of leadership and management within the community corrections arena.

- Increase participants’ critical thinking skills and analytical abilities to sustain the increasing demands of leadership and
management and to further develop the leadership capacity for organizational change.

- Develop participants’ skills for navigating through various levels of the political system in organizations, including organizational units, and sub-service delivery systems to advance the objectives of community corrections.

- Enhance participant’s professional growth through sustained interaction with a national network of community corrections leaders, managers, and executives.

The curriculum design team along with curriculum specialists from CMIT and funding from NIC outlined the core curriculum. The design team left CMIT with additional assignments for themselves and other members of the steering committee but with the knowledge that a very impressive and exciting program had emerged from the thoughts and dreams exchanged between the community corrections professionals and the higher education faculty at Sam Houston State University. The planning session was a unique experience. Though the two groups had met for the first time, the understanding and needs of leadership transcended the boundaries of each area of expertise.

The resulting course explores leadership and management issues from a practical point of view. It uses theory applied in the community corrections arena, requires self exploration and develops problem-solving skills. The design leads the participants to interact directly with the instructors, facilitators, each other, and recognized leaders and executives in community corrections and allied professions. The faculty is selected from expert educators, community corrections leaders and others in allied fields.

APPA’s Leadership Institute is a twelve-month learning series. Participants receive pre-session assignments, meet for three two-day sessions, and respond to facilitated assignments in the two intervals between the three sessions. Each on-site session is held prior to an APPA training institute. The course relies on discussion-oriented lectures, group exercises, homework, project development, readings and book reviews, self assessment evaluations, case studies, and volunteer participation in selected professional organizations. Course content includes social scientific literature on leadership theories, models and processes, organizational development and change, ethics

“This project has been one of the most rewarding things I have worked on in my career. I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend different leadership programs. This was my way of giving back and it is very exciting to see the new leaders of tomorrow benefit from this program. The dividends we gain from this will serve our organizations and profession for the years to come. We need to continue to invest in our future.”

-KATHY WATERS
The following are questions asked of two of the participants, Susan Burke, Assistant Juvenile Court Administrator, Utah Administrative Office of the Courts and Sarah Schmoll, Deputy Chief Probation Officer, Coconino County, State Of Arizona in regards to their participation in the first APPA Leadership Institute.

What is your overall opinion of the Leadership Institute?

**SUSAN**

Having worked in the justice field for 18 years now, I thought I knew what it took to be a good leader. I had observed both good and bad leaders. I knew what characteristics I wanted to emulate and which ones I did not want to follow. The APPA Leadership Institute, however, had me questioning what I knew, introduced me to new concepts about leadership, and ultimately helped me put into action some changes. The APPA Leadership Institute is the only one of its kind that focuses on developing future leaders in the area of probation and parole by using experts from the field. The program was definitely worth the time and expense.

**SARAH**

Participation in the APPA Leadership Institute was an incredible experience. In addition to great classroom training, the Institute provided the opportunity to network with many of the most recognized leaders in the field and a chance to bond with many of my peers from across the country. On a personal note, the biggest benefit was meeting great people who share common interests. Today, I know I can pick up the phone to chat about issues of mutual concern with up and coming leaders, as well as any of the expert faculty and my assigned coach.

How do you believe this program benefited you and your agency?

**SUSAN**

I have benefited personally and professionally from my participation in the Leadership Institute. I gained a lot of insight into my strengths as a leader and have identified areas that need additional attention. I also gained a new perspective about leadership and how to cultivate it at all levels of my organization. I have personally benefited from the friendships I have developed and look forward to maintaining them throughout my career and beyond.

During the Leadership Institute, participants provided an evaluation following each session to assist in refinement of the curriculum. A final evaluation of the series was completed by participants, agency heads, and coach/mentors. This feedback was

and legal issues, workforce and generational issues and political forces within the workplace. Each participant completes a large project that provides leadership in a needed area in their home agency. An APPA mentor is partnered with each participant to provide introductions and networking opportunities with national executives and leaders in the profession.

To introduce the first APPA leadership class, letters were sent to agency heads across the country soliciting support and applicant nominations. Their commitment was to invest in, to have the nominated staff attend the next three APPA training institutes and be involved in the intra-session work that would be required. The first class of 22 graduates graduated from the APPA Leadership Institute in August 2008.
SARAH
I view this project and my participation in the Leadership Institute as highlights of my career in probation. Further, my involvement in the Institute allowed me to take the next step in my career, by helping me achieve a recent promotional opportunity. I am truly grateful for my agency and sponsor’s support and encouragement in the program. I challenge anyone seeking to enhance their leadership skills and knowledge of community corrections to pursue attendance at the Leadership Institute.

Can you describe your leadership project and how that was helpful to you and your agency?

SUSAN
My Leadership Project was the development and implementation of a vision and mission statement for the Utah Juvenile Court. Such a project was timely as we had undergone many changes to our management structure due to retirements. At the same we were overwhelming staff with new evidence-based models for probation, model courts for child welfare and delinquency and a new statewide information system. The project involved a planning committee that represented staff at all levels of our organization and culminated in a statewide Leadership Conference. This project has unified the staff of our organization and given us a clear direction. With the downturn in the economy and budget cuts to our organization, it has been helpful to refer to our vision and mission.

SARAH
As a component of the program, participants were required to lead a change effort at their home agency. For my project, I led a workgroup to revise our statewide probation supervision policies to move away from a strict contact driven model to one that incorporates the principles of Evidence Based Practices. Because of my participation in the Institute, I had access to many subject matter experts and to established leadership principles to assist in the implementation of this major change initiative in Arizona. Although the road to statewide EBP implementation is long and winding and requires the dedication of many players, this policy change is a much needed component for systemic change. Since the completion of the Institute, the policies have moved forward for statewide adoption. Additionally, NIC has become involved in Arizona’s project and is providing technical assistance to each of the counties in order to complete strategic plans in line with new protocols.

Selection Process
Individuals interested in applying to participate in the next APPA Leadership Institute or in nominating an applicant can do so by visiting APPA at www.appa-net.org or contacting Kimberly Mills at (859) 244-8204 or kmills@csg.org. All applications must contain a letter of agency support. Visit the professional development options at https://www.appa-net.org