

Communication Plan

December 17, 2019





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HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

This communication plan is intended to help the Alliance (its board and staff) deliver timely, relevant and engaging information to its members and the public. By delivering consistent and engaging communication, the Alliance hopes to inspire more people to join its collaborative and inclusive work.

This plan is a living document that will change over time as the organization grows. The plan aligns public outreach activities with the goals, objectives and key communication messages of the organization.

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ALLIANCE OVERVIEW

Mission & Vision

OUR MISSION

We support the expansion of quality higher education in prison, empower students while in prison and after release, and shape public discussion about education and incarceration.

OUR VISION

We envision a world in which all people, including those in prison, have access to quality higher education, creating a more just and equitable world.

Access. Equity. Dignity.

The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison (Alliance) is a national network supporting the growth of quality higher education for currently and formerly incarcerated people.





Why We Do This Work

We believe all people, regardless of their location or circumstance, should have access to quality higher education.

Higher education in prison provides the support and human connection that all people need to thrive. It also addresses the lack of resources and systems of injustice that currently exclude some people from getting a college education.

OUR VALUES

- 1. Human Dignity:** We believe in the unequivocal value of every person and their right to be treated equitably, without labels or stigmas.
- 2. Equitable Access to Education:** We believe that all people should have access to the opportunities afforded by higher education, including those incarcerated.
- 3. Resolve:** We believe in maintaining an unwavering commitment to our goals.
- 4. Collaboration:** We believe in bringing together multiple groups to work and share resources for the purpose of rebuilding communities, one generation at a time, through higher education.
- 5. Transparency:** We believe in the critical importance of access to reliable information and the insurance of accountability from and to all our members.

How We Work

We are working collaboratively to advance the field of higher education in prison by supporting practitioners and students, producing reliable data and research, and communicating the need, importance, and value of quality higher education in prison.

WE ADVANCE THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON BY:



Building Community

We are creating opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration, networking and resource sharing. We are providing a forum for discussion, problem solving and exchange of ideas.



Producing Knowledge

We are generating reliable data and metrics that demonstrate the need, importance and value of quality in-prison higher education programs.



Supporting Quality Practice

We are producing reports and toolkits and providing training to anyone seeking to launch, expand or improve upon a program offering in-prison higher education.



Shaping Dialogue

We are challenging stereotypes and stigmas surrounding incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, including shifting away from polarizing and/or dehumanizing language.



Ensuring Sustainability

We are working to frame the most significant issues in the field and to work in partnership with funders to support the sustainability of programs throughout the country.

Our collective work aligns at the annual National Conference on Higher Education in Prison (NCHEP), the Alliance's flagship event that has grown to include more than 500 participants.

ABOUT THIS PLAN

Communication Goals



- 1. Encourage public access.** The general public and our stakeholder community are able to easily find information about: the Alliance’s programs and events, how to become a member and/or participate in programs and events, and the need for, importance and value of higher education in prison.
- 2. Engage the community.** The stakeholder community is engaged in and participates in the Alliance’s programs and events in a number of ways, including: providing input on the Alliance’s key programs and initiatives, participating in opportunities to collaborate on projects, becoming a volunteer, funding/donating to the organization, responding to calls to action, and attending convenings, conferences, and virtual trainings and webinars.
- 3. Be a source of accurate information.**
The Alliance is a reputable and accessible source of compelling content, including research, data and practical tools, about quality post-secondary education in prison programs, and that information is available on the website and is shared in other capacities.
- 4. Build internal capacity.**
The Communication Director, Communication and Community Outreach Coordinator, Alliance Director and Advisory Board Strategic Communication Subcommittee have the tools they need to consistently provide accurate, clear and useful information to the Alliance’s members and stakeholders – including those facing systemic economic, political, social and cultural barriers.

See [page 18](#) for a detailed look at the strategies, tactics, impacts and evaluation metrics for each goal.

ROLES

The Communication Director and Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator will oversee the implementation of the communication plan. The Communication Director receives support from the Alliance’s Director and the Strategic Communication Committee of the Alliance’s Advisory Board for the creation and distribution of content.

This plan serves as a guide for the Communication Director, Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator and Strategic Communication Committee. It also serves as a guide for all members and stakeholders who serve as spokespeople for the Alliance.

Key Audiences

(alphabetical)

PRIMARY

Currently and formerly incarcerated students

Department of Corrections, Federal Bureau of Prisons, and prison administrators

Funders (foundations and individual donors)

Higher education in prison practitioners and program staff

Media/journalists

Researchers/evaluators

Teachers/instructors

SECONDARY

Accrediting bodies

Advocacy organizations/activists

College and university board of trustees

Community supervision/parole

Educational prison vendors

Family members of current and formerly incarcerated students

National policy initiatives

Political leaders and policy experts

Reentry organizations

State and federal legislators

State and regional higher education in prison networks

RELATED AUDIENCES

Arts programs

Correctional officers and unions

Faith-based organizations

Governor's Offices

Health and social service organizations

Higher education institutions

Judicial branch

Law enforcement

Media-makers (film, audio, photo)

Non-accredited programs/institutions

Parents of traditional students

Policy institutes

Pop culture icons

Public at large

State Departments of Education

State Departments of Justice

Student organizations (non-carceral campuses)

Traditional campus students

US Department of Education

US Department of Justice

Victims' rights groups

WHAT TO SAY & HOW TO SAY IT

Key Messages



WHAT IS THE ALLIANCE AND WHAT DOES THE ALLIANCE DO?

The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison, also known as the Alliance, is a national network supporting the growth of quality higher education for currently and formerly incarcerated people.

The Alliance and its members believe all people, regardless of their location or circumstance, should have access to quality higher education. Higher education in prison provides the support and human connection that all people need to thrive. It also addresses the lack of resources and systems of injustice that currently exclude some people from getting a college education.

We are working collaboratively to advance the field of higher education in prison by supporting practitioners and students, producing reliable data and research, and communicating the need, importance, and value of quality higher education in prison. We accomplish this by:

- ▶ **Building Community.** We are creating opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration, networking and resource sharing. We are providing a forum for discussion, collaborative problem solving, and exchange of ideas.
- ▶ **Producing Knowledge.** We are generating reliable data and metrics that demonstrate the need, importance and value of quality in-prison higher education programs.
- ▶ **Supporting Quality Practice.** We are producing reports and toolkits and providing technical assistance to anyone seeking to launch, expand or improve upon a program offering in-prison higher education.
- ▶ **Shaping Dialogue.** We are challenging stereotypes and stigmas surrounding incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, including shifting away from polarizing and/or dehumanizing language.
- ▶ **Ensuring Sustainability.** We are working to frame the most significant issues in the field and to work in partnership with funders to support the sustainability of programs throughout the country.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HIGHER EDUCATION?

The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison considers “higher education” to be a specific teaching and learning experience. The purpose and outcomes of higher education in prison should not be conceived of as distinct from higher education on an outside campus. Higher education in prison includes:

- ▶ courses provided to students who have earned a high school diploma, GED/HiSet, or equivalent secondary credential;
- ▶ courses and programs provided by or in close partnership with a postsecondary accredited institution;
- ▶ instruction provided by two-year and four-year colleges and universities with public, private, or nonprofit status;
- ▶ credit or not for credit coursework;
- ▶ degree, certificate/certification or non-degree granting pathways; and
- ▶ courses for college preparation.

This definition is drawn from years of gathering of practitioners, current and former students, advocates, researchers, higher education administrators, and others at the National Conference on Higher Education in Prison, as well as the outcome of a multi-year stakeholder engagement and strategic planning process. This definition is in alignment with other national organizations, including the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and American Association of Colleges and Universities.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “QUALITY” HIGHER EDUCATION?

The Alliance and its members believe that the development of the field of higher education in prison must be guided by an unwavering commitment to quality. Higher education in prison programs should adhere to the same high standards and opportunities that exist in other quality higher education contexts, in spite of students’ incarceration status.

- ▶ “Quality” higher education in-prison programs include those that are academically rigorous and student centered, meaning that students have opportunities to cultivate social, professional and civic leadership skills.
- ▶ “Quality” higher education in-prison programs are multidisciplinary, including humanities, social sciences, math, and science, and include intensive college preparatory courses.
- ▶ “Quality” higher education in-prison programs situate creativity, collaboration, critical inquiry and independent thought as the cornerstones of student or academic work.

WHO IS PART OF THE ALLIANCE?

The Alliance is an inclusive network supporting all those working to expand quality higher education for currently and formerly incarcerated people.

Our community includes practitioners, currently and formerly incarcerated students, teachers and many other stakeholders from across the United States.

WHY SUPPORT / JOIN THE ALLIANCE

Together we can raise the quality of all higher education in prison programs.

- ▶ By joining the Alliance, you are joining a community of practice that collectively supports, sustains, and increases quality higher education in prison programs across the country.
- ▶ By joining the Alliance, you gain access to training and support around the key areas that influence higher education in prison programs: administration, planning, student support and program implementation.
- ▶ By joining the Alliance, you become part of a collective voice.

WHY SUPPORT HIGHER ED IN PRISON ACCESS

A significant body of research and countless personal experiences attest to the lasting value of higher education in prison for individuals, families and communities.

Some of the most common arguments that are made about offering higher education in prison focus on: recidivism (preventing return to prison), lowering the cost to taxpayers (because fewer people will be incarcerated), increasing safety and security in prisons, and/or increasing the tax base (increasing the employability of people leaving prison). These are all vital to ensuring a healthy democracy. However, the Alliance's work is focused on improving educational outcomes for currently and formerly incarcerated people.

The Alliance advocates for increasing access to quality higher education because:

Higher education in prison contributes to a person's sense of dignity and purpose. Higher education in prison has positive outcomes for the student, their families and the community. Students who return to their communities are often more motivated to continue attending college and inspire others in their families and neighborhoods to do the same. Students who remain in their prison community are often more likely to encourage others to pursue higher education and to be leaders and mentors within the prison.

In recent years the number of higher education in prison programs across the United States has grown significantly. Yet there continues to be a lack of public knowledge about the field of higher education in prison or a network of support to share expertise and experiences. This leaves many people involved with higher education in prison – from practitioners and teachers to students and program staff – feeling isolated.

Higher education in prison is a first chance at quality education for many people who are currently incarcerated. There is a common misconception that higher education in prison is ‘a second chance’. For many people who are currently incarcerated, this is the first opportunity they’ve had to engage in a rigorous higher education program. This is often the first time they’ve had access to the social, emotional and academic support system needed to thrive. Prior to being incarcerated, many people were subject to “better than nothing” or simply low-quality versions of education and had had little-to-no choice to participate in high quality educational opportunities.

The expansion of access to quality higher education is critical to confronting the persistent inequality of opportunity in higher education, primarily for people of color and people who are economically disenfranchised. Higher education in the U.S. exists within broader dynamics of exclusion and injustice. The majority of people incarcerated in the United States have never had access to quality higher education, with the vast majority coming from under-resourced communities and communities of color. By advancing access and quality, higher education in prison programs can be an example of equity for all institutions of higher education.

Higher education in prison improves students’ quality of life. Students who have access to academically rigorous education programs in prison are more likely to feel empowered, be intellectually engaged, and be capable of fully participating in a high-functioning democratic society. Anyone who is eager to learn and motivated to improve their own life and the lives of their neighbors and families should be given the opportunity to attend college, regardless of their circumstances.

Higher education in prison contributes to a more democratic society. Higher education supports students in becoming active and informed community members. Whether in prison or after returning to their communities, students with access to quality higher education can have a direct and positive impact on the lives of the people around them. For incarcerated students who are parents, their participation in a higher education in prison program can also have a “ripple effect” for their children and might help disrupt intergenerational cycles of incarceration.

Higher education in prison creates opportunities to find common ground and engage in shared learning between people who might not otherwise work together. Incarcerated people are often the most geographically and ideologically removed from the resources that have the potential to benefit them the most. People in higher education (faculty, students and staff) often do not have the opportunity to learn from and along with incarcerated people, who have greater insight into the social, political, cultural and economic barriers that perpetuate inequality.

Higher education in prison invites students into the process of lifelong learning. At its core, higher education is not simply about acquiring knowledge. It’s about fostering a sense of curiosity and problem-solving that makes students lifelong learners. Many students in higher education in prison programs continue their academic pursuits after graduating, either in prison or upon returning to their community. It teaches the skills of deliberation, debate and dissention, which are all needed to be an actively engaged community member, whether a student is incarcerated or not.

Language DOs and DON'Ts



Educators, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers working with people involved in the criminal justice system can be guided by key principles that foster constructive and humanizing language: engage people and respect their preferences, use stigma-free and accurate language, prioritize individuals over their characteristics, and cultivate self-awareness.

4 EASY STEPS TO FOLLOW

1. Be conscious of the language you use. Remember that each time you speak, you convey powerful word picture images.
2. Stop using the terms offender, felon, prisoner, inmate and convict. This includes using the prefix “ex” with any of these terms.*
3. Substitute the word PEOPLE for these other negative and dehumanizing terms.
4. Encourage your friends, family and colleagues to use positive language in their speech, writing, publications and electronic communications.

Source: Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions

**The exception to this point is that people who have directly experienced the criminal justice system are able to choose their own labels and terminology. People not directly effected should default to these recommendations.*

“Words matter when describing people involved in the criminal justice system because language can have a significant impact upon health, wellbeing, and access to... information and services. However, terminology used in policies, programs, and research publications is often derogatory, stigmatizing, and dehumanizing. ... Respectful language is a cornerstone of reducing harm and suffering.”

—Excerpt from [Words matter: a call for humanizing and respectful language to describe people who experience incarceration](#)

WHAT TO SAY & HOW TO SAY IT

DO Say	DON'T Say
Person currently in prison/jail Person currently incarcerated	Inmate, offender, convict, prisoner, criminal
Person formerly in prison/jail Formerly incarcerated person Person with experience in the criminal justice system	Ex-offender, ex-prisoner, ex-con, ex-felon, ex-inmate, criminal
Person on parole Person on probation	Parolee Probationer
Person with a substance use disorder Person in treatment	Addict, junkie, dependent
Person who lacks resident documentation	Illegal immigrant, illegal, non-citizen, undocumented alien
Person involved in sex work Person involved in the sale of sexual services Sex worker	Prostitute

Sources: Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions, Words matter: a call for humanizing and respectful language to describe people who experience incarceration

It is important to note that language use is a contested space in the field of higher education in prison and there are some people, specifically formerly incarcerated people, that use “inmate” “ex-con” or other similar language as a political marker and/or a way to “call out” state-sanctioned oppression. While we support the choices of all individuals to make decisions about the language they use to refer to themselves and their experiences, the Alliance, as a matter of policy and practice, follows the language guidelines above as it is the responsibility of the network to most effectively represent the broadest possible stakeholder community and to never assume that we understand the full landscape and diversity of all stakeholder opinions, experiences and preferred forms of expression.



Photography Guidelines

Photos should reinforce your key messages. Other tips to consider are:

PHOTOS OF PEOPLE

- ▶ Use images of people graduating and living everyday lives (not just photos of people in prison in classrooms).
- ▶ Use photos that represent the population the Alliance is serving (show race, gender and culturally diverse population; show instructors, prison staff and students).
- ▶ Whenever possible, capture people with genuine expressions rather than posing for a photographer.
- ▶ Photos of people making eye contact are preferable.
- ▶ Do not use photos from partner programs unless it can be assured that the partner program is not also using the same photos on their website and that permission has been secured by the partner program.
- ▶ Do not “reveal” or “out” someone who is formerly incarcerated without their explicit permission to use the photograph.
- ▶ Any/all identifying photographs used in Alliance media/publications (including website) must have the appropriate permissions.

PHOTOS FROM PARTNERS

The following programs have granted exclusive use of photos:

- Community Education Project, Stetson University
- Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
- Tennessee Higher Education Initiative
- Saint Louis University Prison Education Program
- University of Utah Prison Education Project

Photos from these programs are not exclusive. Use them less often and in low profile places to avoid duplication:

- Freedom Education Project Puget Sound
- Prison University Project

PHOTOS OF PLACES

- ▶ Use photos that capture the hope and confidence building infused in in-prison education programs.
- ▶ Do not use photos that seem to glorify or romanticize prison, people in prison and/or people working in prison.
- ▶ Do not use photos of “prison imagery” – bars, barbed-wire, etc., unless there is an explicitly stated purpose/rationale.
- ▶ Do not use photos that use common tropes of prison education (e.g., trying to represent “transformation”: birds, bridges, blooming flowers, clouds/sky, etc.,).

COMPOSITION

- ▶ Photos should fill the frame and the subject should be a significant portion of the image.
- ▶ Existing photos can and should be cropped to fit the frame after they are taken.
- ▶ Photos for print need to be high-resolution and follow the guidelines provided by the publication.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- ▶ Don't use copyrighted photos without permission.
- ▶ If using professional photos, always abide by usage rights from the photographer.
- ▶ Use photos of people known to the organization rather than stock photos.
- ▶ In the event that original photography does not exist, it's okay to use stock photography. Always abide by usage rights from the stock photography provider.
- ▶ Do not overuse the same image.
- ▶ Always ask people to complete a photo release form.
- ▶ If using an online file-sharing platform to share images, “retire” older images and/or images for which you no longer have usage rights by placing them in a clearly labeled folder, so others know not to use them.
- ▶ If you are creating messaging on behalf of the Alliance and are unsure about a word choice and worry you are possibly using dehumanizing language (without or without intention), don't hesitate to ask someone else in the office.

STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

Recommended, royalty-free resources:

- shutterstock.com
- offset.com
- istockphoto.com
- stocksy.com
- gallerystock.com

Free resources:

- #WoCinTech Chat
- unsplash.com
- www.nappy.co
- search.creativecommons.org
- flickr.com/creativecommons/

Communication Channels



WEBSITE

The Alliance's website (higheredinprison.org) is its primary communication tool. The Alliance's website will be an important tool – perhaps THE most important tool – for increasing public awareness about the need, importance and value of higher education in prison. The website should elevate students' voices and help people involved in this movement connect with one another, share tools and resources, and improve their collective impact.

NEWSLETTER

The Alliance does not at this time send out a newsletter, but has set a goal to launch an e-newsletter by 2020.

PRESS RELEASES AND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members of the press are important partners for helping the Alliance meet its communication goals. The Alliance aims to provide consistent, proactive news releases to achieve accurate coverage by members of the press.

SOCIAL MEDIA

As of 2019, there are 3.48 billion social media users. To meet the communication preferences of our audience, the Alliance is committed to inviting people to join in the conversation via social media. The Alliance has a presence on the following social media channels:

- ▶ **Twitter**
[@allianceforhep](https://twitter.com/allianceforhep)
- ▶ **Instagram**
[@allianceforhep](https://www.instagram.com/allianceforhep)
- ▶ **Facebook**
[@AllianceforHEP](https://www.facebook.com/AllianceforHEP)
- ▶ **LinkedIn**
[@allianceforhep](https://www.linkedin.com/company/allianceforhep)

The Alliance hosts a live Twitter chat once a week (every Tuesday at 11 a.m. CST). The Alliance refers to this session as #HEPTwitterTuesday. The Alliance also maintains a social media account for the National Conference on Higher Education in Prison. Each year the Alliance updates the NCHPEP Facebook and Twitter accounts to reflect the current year of the event (e.g., @NCHPEP2019; @NCHPEP2020, etc.).

- ▶ The Alliance maintains a record of all social media (Twitter) followers and has a standard template for the HEP Twitter Session.
- ▶ The Alliance uses the following hashtags: #HEPTwitterTuesday; #higheredinprison; #HEPSummerReading; #HEPReadingProject
- ▶ The Alliance frequently references @NCHPEP2019 in postings related to the conference. The NCHPEP Twitter and Facebook should be updated annually with the year's title (NCHPEP2020, NCHPEP2021, etc.,) and branding. During the NCHPEP the hashtags: #nchep[year] and #higheredinprison should be used.
- ▶ The Alliance's External Communications Policy includes expectations for how staff engage communication and messaging on external platforms, including social media, Prison_Ed Listserv, website, media requests, video and photography consent form requirements, etc.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Channel	Person/People Responsible	Frequency of Updates	Messages	Tools & Resources
Website higheredinprison.org (including blog)	Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator	As needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the Alliance and its staff and advisory board Information about key programs Stories from the field Ways to engage, including donate 	Website Style Guide and Standards Website content management platform Google Analytics Translation <i>Website embeds a Google Translate module, allowing users to translate it into many different languages</i>
Social Media				
Twitter @AllianceforHEP and @NCHEP2020	Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator	2-3 xs / week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voices who inspire us Articles about programs and higher ed in prison generally Announcements Photos/video 	Buffer
Facebook @AllianceforHEP and @NCHEP2020	Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator	2-3 xs / week		Buffer
LinkedIn @allianceforhep	Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator	2-3 xs / week		Buffer
Electronic Newsletter <i>Not active at this time</i> <i>(print newsletter to be available for currently incarcerated members)</i>	Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator	Monthly, starting in Q1 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voices who inspire us Announcements Photos/video Ways to engage, including donate 	Mailchimp

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES & TACTICS

Goal #1: Encourage public access.

The general public is able to easily find information about: the Alliance's programs and events, how to become a member and/or participate in programs and events, and the need, importance and value of higher education in prison.

Strategy 1: Utilize a variety of communication channels (web, social media, print) to deliver information in a timely and thoughtful manner.

TACTICS – HIGH LEVEL

1. The Communication Director develops and follows an annual Editorial Calendar that serves as a framework for delivering information in a timely and thoughtful manner.
2. The Communication Director has access to translation services and other tools to improve access for people facing language and cultural barriers.
3. Use the Alliance's brand guidelines to help ensure people can easily recognize information coming from the Alliance and relate to its consistent look and voice.
4. Use people-first language (and other terms from the DOs list).
5. Regularly survey members and key stakeholders about their communication preferences and respond/adapt accordingly.
6. Keep the External Communication Policy up to date and relevant.

TACTICS – WEBSITE

1. The Communication Director or designee updates information on higheredinprison.org as needed to ensure members and key stakeholders receive information in a timely manner.
2. Utilize the Style Guide to ensure information is shared in a thoughtful, consistent manner.
3. Complete a website audit annually to ensure consistency and accuracy, and to ensure that people facing systemic economic, political, social and cultural barriers can access information. The audit would include recommendations to make the website more user friendly (i.e., improve website usability and accessibility).

GOAL #1: ENCOURAGE PUBLIC ACCESS.

TACTICS – SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Post to Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn 3 times a week.
2. Host a 30-minute live Twitter chat once a week (every Tuesday at 10amMT/11amCT).
3. Maintain high responsiveness ratings on social media.
4. Utilize the Alliance's Social Media Policy to ensure information is shared in a thoughtful and consistent manner.
5. Keep the Alliance's External Communication Policy up to date and relevant.

TACTICS – TRADITIONAL PRINT AND DIGITAL MARKETING

1. Purchase print and digital advertising as needed to invite people to participate in events such as the national conference.
2. Share information through flyers – in Spanish and English – posted in popular locations on college campuses, correctional institutions, social service organizations, etc.
3. Develop an informational brochure that can be shared digitally and in print. Goals:
 - a. Ensure multiple stakeholders (internal and external) have access to shared language about the Alliance.
 - b. Build awareness about what the Alliance is, why it exists, and what it is setting out to do.
 - c. Be able to easily share information about the Alliance (during program visits, at conferences or convenings and other face-to-face opportunities).

AUDIENCE:

All stakeholders—mainly two key categories (listed above). In addition, the brochure would reach people who have never heard of the Alliance, people who are interested in the field of higher education in prison, and students who are seeking higher education opportunities.

HOW IT WOULD GET SHARED:

On the Alliance website; social media; at the NCHEP; brought to any convening and/or meetings Alliance staff attend; mailed to all members.

IMPACTS

1. There is an increased awareness about the Alliance's mission and purpose.
2. There is increased awareness about the need, importance and value of

GOAL #1: ENCOURAGE PUBLIC ACCESS.

quality higher education in prison.

- 3.** Members and key stakeholders have a positive identification with the Alliance as a whole and feel a strong sense of pride and community around the work they are collectively doing.

EVALUATION METRICS

- 1.** Increased participation in the NCHEP.
- 2.** Increased participation in webinars and trainings.
- 3.** Increased followers on all social media channels.
- 4.** Increased engagement from social media followers (sharing posts and events).
- 5.** Increased participation in the weekly live Twitter chat.
- 6.** Increased level of satisfaction among Alliance members, as measured by an annual survey.
- 7.** Increase in membership.
- 8.** Increased traffic to the website.
- 9.** Increased subscribership to newsletter.
- 10.** Increase in number of people involved with the Alliance – as volunteers, as project and/or program partners, and promoting the Alliance on their program website (as a “member of the Alliance”).

Goal #2: Engage the community.

The community is engaged in and participates in the Alliance's programs and events in a number of ways, including providing input on the Alliance's key programs and initiatives, participating in opportunities to collaborate on projects, becoming a volunteer, funding/donating to the organization, attending convenings, conferences and virtual trainings and webinars, and responding to calls to action.

Strategy 2: Invite members of the community to provide input on programs, policies and projects.

TACTICS

1. Ensure members of the community – including people facing systemic economic, political, social and cultural barriers – have access to information in a timely manner and know how to engage in decision-making (i.e. location and cost of the NCHEP, advisory board membership and other announcements).
2. Use people-first language (and other terms from the DOs and DONTs list).
3. The Communication Team has access to translation services for meetings, flyers, letters, etc. to improve access for people facing language barriers.
4. Convene people when seeking input about projects and initiatives.
5. Communication Director, Director and Advisory Board respond to concerns in a timely and thoughtful manner.
6. Keep the External Communication Policy up to date and relevant.

IMPACTS

1. There is an increased awareness about the Alliance's mission and purpose.
2. There is an increased awareness about how the Alliance is relevant to people's work—practitioners, currently and formerly incarcerated students, teachers, policymakers, and others.
3. Members and key stakeholders feel that their input is sought and valued.

GOAL #2: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY.

- 4.** Members and key stakeholders have a positive identification with the Alliance as a whole and feel a strong sense of pride around the work they are collectively doing.
- 5.** Members and stakeholders are more informed and empowered to participate in decision-making. They feel that their input is sought and valued.

EVALUATION METRICS

- 1.** Increased participation in the NCHEP.
- 2.** Increased participation in webinars and trainings.
- 3.** Increased participation in the weekly live Twitter chat informing decision-making.
- 4.** Increased participation in surveys (e.g., NCHEP Exit Survey, Annual Survey).
- 5.** Increase in membership.
- 6.** Increased followers on all social media channels.
- 7.** Increase in number of people involved with the Alliance – as volunteers, as project and/or program partners, and promoting the Alliance on their program website (as a “member of the Alliance”).
- 8.** Increase in the number of people who participate in “calls to action.”
- 9.** Increased participation among people facing systemic economic, political, social, and cultural barriers in Alliance initiatives and events.

Goal #3: Be a source of accurate information.

The Alliance is a reputable and accessible source of compelling content, including research and data and practical tools, about high quality postsecondary education in prison programs, and that information is available on the website and is shared in other capacities.

Strategy 3: Provide the media and key partners, including funders, with accurate information about the Alliance’s programs and events and the importance and value of higher education in prison.

TACTICS

1. Distribute consistent, timely, and accurate news releases to media and partners.
2. Working with students as spokespeople, share success stories (on the Alliance website and through public events) from quality higher education in prison programs.
3. Use people-first language (and other terms from the DOs list).
4. Communication Director/Coordinator, Director and/or Advisory Board responds to media inquiries in a timely manner.
5. Host webinars and/or Twitter chats upon the release of reports, toolkits and other resources.

IMPACTS

1. There is an increased awareness about the Alliance’s mission and purpose.
2. There is an increased awareness about how the Alliance is relevant to people’s work—practitioners, currently and formerly incarcerated students, teachers, policymakers, and others.
3. The stakeholder community has a positive identification with the Alliance as a whole and feel a strong sense of pride around the work they are collectively doing.
4. Stakeholders receive increased buy-in and credibility around their prison higher education programs.

GOAL #3: BE A SOURCE OF ACCURATE INFORMATION.

- 5.** Communication Director/Coordinator, Director and/or Advisory Board has a good relationship with media and partners, including funders, and there is good two-way communication between the Alliance and the media.

EVALUATION METRICS

- 1.** Increased followers on all social media channels.
- 2.** Increased engagement from social media followers (sharing posts and events).
- 3.** Increased participation among people facing systemic economic, political, social, and cultural barriers in the Alliance's programs and events.
- 4.** Increased thought-provoking coverage of the Alliance—the organization as well as its programs, members and events— and of current and formerly incarcerated students in various online, print, and broadcast media outlets and channels.

Goal #4: Build internal capacity.

The Communication Director/Coordinator, Director and Advisory Board Strategic Communication Committee have the tools they need to consistently provide accurate, clear, and useful information to the Alliance's members and stakeholders – including those facing systemic economic, political, social and cultural barriers.

Strategy 4: Staff has access to sustainable, cost-effective and current communication tools/technology.

TACTICS

1. The Communication Director/Coordinator develops and follows an annual Editorial Calendar that serves as a framework for delivering information in a timely and thoughtful manner.
2. The Communication Director/Coordinator has access to translation services and other tools to improve access for people facing language and cultural barriers.
3. The Communication Director/Coordinator has access to consultants (i.e. content experts, graphic designers, web developers, photographers, videographers, etc.) who can assist with compelling storytelling.
4. The Communication Director/Coordinator and other staff and board members have access to trainings that improve their ability to effectively reach diverse stakeholders.

IMPACTS

1. The Communications Director/Coordinator feels confident in their communications skills and ability to publicly represent the Alliance.
2. More people can access the Alliance's valuable resources.

EVALUATION METRICS

1. The amount of time it takes Communications Director/Coordinator to create social media, newsletter and website content is reduced, and they have more time to spend on other work.
2. Increased participation in the NCHEP.
3. Increased participation in webinars and trainings.

GOAL #4: BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY.

- 4.** Increased followers on social media channels.
- 5.** Increased engagement from social media followers (sharing posts and events).
- 6.** Increased participation in the weekly live Twitter chat.
- 7.** Increased level of satisfaction among Alliance members, as measured by an annual survey.
- 8.** Increase in membership.
- 9.** Increased traffic to the website.
- 10.** Increased subscribership to newsletter.
- 11.** Increase in number of people involved with the Alliance – as volunteers, as project and/or program partners, and promoting the Alliance on their program website (as a “member of the Alliance”).