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Leaders in Police-Treatment-Community Partnerships Headline International Summit on Deflection and Pre-Arrest Diversion

Bureau of Justice Assistance Director Karhlton F. Moore to Offer Summit Keynote; Former New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas and Chapel Hill Police Chief Celisa Lehew are also Featured Summit Speakers

(Chicago) – Confronting a national epidemic of overdose and behavioral health crises, law enforcement and local service providers across the country have been actively partnering to assure that people in need can quickly access treatment and recovery support.

Their partnership initiatives—known as pre-arrest diversion, or *deflection*—will be the centerpiece of the 2023 Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC) international summit taking place October 3-6 in Denver, Colorado, with featured remarks to be delivered by standout leaders at federal, state, and local levels.

Karhlton F. Moore, who leads the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), will deliver the summit keynote address on Wednesday, October 4. One of the key programs administered by BJA is the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP), which provides financial and technical assistance toward efforts that identify, respond to, treat, and support those impacted by illicit opioids, stimulants, and other drugs. COSSUP's efforts are instrumental in supporting the growth and development of deflection and pre-arrest diversion across the country. In addition to his federal leadership, Director Moore also has deep experience leading deflection efforts in the early days of the field at local and state levels through his prior role as executive director of Ohio's Office of Criminal Justice Services.

As the summit's featured speaker on October 3, Northern New Mexico College President **Hector Balderas**, who previously served for two terms as New Mexico's attorney general and also currently serves as PTACC National Strategy Advisor, will offer lessons for the field based on his expansive political perspectives and legal expertise. After serving as Bernalillo County Assistant District Attorney and being elected to the New Mexico House of Representatives, Balderas was elected New Mexico's State Auditor in November 2006, becoming at age 33 the youngest Hispanic statewide elected official in the United States. A champion of under-served people and a proponent of accountability in state and local government, in 2010 Balderas was awarded the New Frontier Award by the Harvard Institute of Politics and the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, among numerous awards received before and since.

Bringing forth on-the-ground experience of local law enforcement agencies, Chapel Hill Police Chief **Celisa Lehew** will share insights based on 19 years' experience in professional policing and her vision for reimagining policing into a holistic service that supports the overall health of a community. Named a [Champion of Recovery](#) for COSSUP deflection work, Chief Lehew will be the summit's featured speaker the morning of October 4. As the Town of Chapel Hill's staff liaison for its Community Policing Advisory Committee and Justice in Action Committee, she collaborates with community partners to create safe spaces for all. In 2019, Chief Lehew was named a Woman of Achievement by Chapel Hill Magazine, which recognized her innovative and progressive leadership.

"At a time when families and communities are looking to address behavioral health crises and overdose deaths, we are grateful for the hands-on leadership of our respected colleagues," said PTACC Executive Director **Jac Charlier**. "Director Moore, President Balderas, and Chief Lehew each offer unique perspectives that can inform and inspire deflection initiatives across the United States and beyond. Having worked with each of these leaders personally, I know their messages will be well received for their urgency, importance, and direct relevance to deflection programs."

Cited as a [model intervention](#) by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, deflection programs connect people to substance use treatment and other community-based services as an alternative to arrest, thereby saving lives, saving money, and reducing the burden for first responders. For instance, as featured this week by [Arizona Public Media](#), a recent University of Arizona [study](#) of the Tucson Deflection Initiative found that deflecting individuals to treatment was more effective than arrest at decreasing use of illicit drugs over time, and reduced Tucson Police Department patrol officers' time per incident from 73.9 minutes to 48.5 minutes, thereby saving costs and allowing more efficient use of officers' time.

The PTACC Deflection & Pre-Arrest Diversion Summit draws professionals from across the United States and internationally who represent law enforcement and other first responders, substance use and mental health treatment providers, recovery support providers, policymakers, funders, and others committed to providing access to services and alternatives to arrest. Learn more about the [PTACC 2023 Summit](#).

About PTACC

The Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC) is the global voice for the field and movement of deflection and pre-arrest diversion. PTACC is an alliance of deflection partners dedicated to providing vision, leadership, advocacy, and education to facilitate the growth and practice of deflection and pre-arrest diversion in all its forms—including initiatives that incorporate co-responder and community responder models—nationally and internationally. Learn more at www.ptaccollaborative.org.

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