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MEDIA

Texas Lyceum fellowship research project reveals new findings on Texas prison system, offender reentry



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Wesson

A-J Media

DALLAS – The Texas Lyceum hosted its inaugural virtual conference Texas Prisons: The Business of Incarceration this week, featuring Texas Tech graduate student Abigail Wesson’s presentation of her policy research and brief examining the economic and public policy implications of leveraging partnerships within the Texas Prison Systems to support successful offender reentry.

“My goal was to create a policy brief focusing on the business of incarceration to provide practical policy recommendations for Texas lawmakers to consider during the upcoming legislative system,” said Abigail. “The Texas Lyceum Fellowship has provided me with an incredible opportunity to conduct interviews with professionals across the state, including Texas Lyceum directors and alumni, who shared valuable insight into the Texas Prison System.”

Advised by Dr. Nathaniel Wright, Assistant Professor and Director of the Master of Public Administration Program, Abigail is pursuing a master’s degree in public administration at Texas Tech University. Originally from Tyler, Abigail graduated from Dallas Baptist University in 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in psychology.

After working in Dallas’ nonprofit sector, Abigail moved to Abilene, where she started a small business with her husband and developed a career in real estate. Selling their business allowed them to begin graduate school in Lubbock, where Abigail studied social work.

“When The Texas Lyceum Fellowship started in 2018, it was a way to get the organization back into public policy,” said Sarah Jackson, Vice President of Policy Fellowships, The Texas Lyceum. “These fellowships are an opportunity for The Texas Lyceum to partner with institutions across the state and have a policy arm to examine the most pressing policy issues at the forefront of the agenda for many of our elected officials.”

The Texas Lyceum is an independent, nonpartisan institution dedicated to cultivating the state’s young leaders and promoting research-driven solutions to policy issues in Texas. Individuals who are selected to receive The Texas Lyceum Fellowship analyze and interpret statistical tests and trends from original data, which is culminated in the production of a high-quality written policy brief. The fellowship recipient then shares their research at a Texas Lyceum meeting, a unique opportunity to represent their school and network with Texas Lyceum members and guests.

“We are proud to welcome the Texas Lyceum and its members virtually to our campus this year,” said Tech President Lawrence Schovanec. “Texas Tech has a long history of representation in the Lyceum through the contributions of employees and alumni, and students like Abigail Wesson, who presented on incarceration in Texas today. Thank you for allowing Texas Tech to play a role in this year’s conference.”

Abigail’s pre-recorded presentation is available online to view at <https://tel.memberclicks.net/fellowships>.

For more information about The Texas Lyceum Fellowship, visit www.texaslyceum.org.