

William Ring:

To serve the public interest and to promote the public trust. And so that's the key ideas that we bring into prosecution of cases is the ability to serve the community. Crime often isn't criminal intent, but is social indicators of health such as substance abuse or mental health deficiencies. It can be a lack of housing or a lack of employment. To restore relationships that individuals have with their community, with their family. To have the opportunity through our intervention to gain stability in their lives. And one thing that I often see in terms of success is just community relief, family relief. There's a certain comfort that comes from knowing that a person has made an effort to get their life in order, finding control in their life, autonomy, self-autonomy. And there's great success that comes with seeing an individual be relieved even of their own burdens.

What I'd like people to know about people with mental health needs inside and outside the criminal justice system is simply that they're humans just like we are. We formed a criminal justice coordinating committee. These are all the stakeholders in the field because it's going to take every stakeholder to participate to have a successful Pathways Program, for instance. Wherever you can get the funding from the stakeholder community, you've got to have a good narrative to explain to them why investment in this type of infrastructure is necessary and beneficial. I can address those in law school. I would say consider public service. Consider a public practice. You serve your community. You also do good. Good is something that needs doing in the world. Justice is something that needs doing in the world.