

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 28, 2017

## **The Yoga Service Council & Omega Institute Announce Publication of “Best Practices for Yoga in the Criminal Justice System”**

### ***Third Book in “Best Practices” Series Synthesizes Knowledge & Experience of 29 Experts into User-Friendly Guide***

RHINEBECK, NY – Yoga is rapidly gaining acceptance as a valuable resource for physical, psychological, behavioral, and spiritual health in the U.S. criminal justice system and worldwide. The Yoga Service Council and Omega Institute for Holistic Studies today announced the publication of *Best Practices for Yoga in the Criminal Justice System*, a resource guide that explains how to develop, implement, and sustain high-quality yoga programs appropriate for jails, prisons, youth detention centers, and court-ordered programs.

“Offering people sincere pathways to rehabilitation, and improving the overall system is essential to the health and well-being of the communities we share,” said Robert “Skip” Backus, chief executive officer at Omega. “Yoga offers profound benefits for physical and mental health, and in building emotional resilience and promoting nonviolence. We are honored to support this important endeavor.”

*Best Practices for Yoga in the Criminal Justice System* synthesizes the knowledge and experience of 29 experts dedicated to sharing yoga and mindfulness practices with incarcerated people, correctional officers, and others in the criminal justice system. Together, the book’s contributors have expertise not only in yoga, but also corrections, probation, nursing, behavioral health, forensic psychology, trauma therapy, recovery from addiction, criminology, juvenile justice, and more.

“We are proud to be part of this path-breaking work, and part of a growing movement to maximize accessibility to yoga,” said Dr. Carol Horton, editor of the book and Yoga Service Council vice president. “This book is a must-have resource for anyone interested in yoga in the criminal justice system, including yoga teachers and yoga service organizations, correctional officers and other criminal justice professionals, and physical and mental health providers.”

Key topics covered in *Best Practices for Yoga in the Criminal Justice System* include problems of mass incarceration, institutional context and culture, teacher training requirements, curriculum and teaching guidelines, adapting trauma-informed yoga to correctional facilities, staffing and developing yoga service organizations, and establishing yoga teacher training programs for incarcerated individuals “on the inside.”

*Best Practices for Yoga in the Criminal Justice System* is the third annual Yoga Service Best Practices Guide Book. The series launched in 2015 with the publication of *Best Practices for Yoga in Schools*, and was followed by *Best Practices for Yoga with Veterans* in 2016. *Best Practices for Yoga with Sexual Trauma Survivors* is in development for publication next year.

The partnership of the Yoga Service Council and Omega Institute began in 2009, when Omega offered space for a group of yoga teachers to come together and talk about ways to support those

who worked with vulnerable and underserved populations. The council emerged from this initial gathering and offered the first annual Yoga Service Conference at Omega in 2012. As a result of the shared commitment to yoga and service, the Yoga Service Council and Omega decided to formally partner in 2014 to bring yoga and mindfulness practices into the lives of more individuals and communities who have limited access to these vital teachings.

**About Yoga Service Council**

*The Yoga Service Council is a collaborative community that welcomes yoga and mindfulness teachers, therapists, social service providers, educators, health professionals, researchers, and all others who share our mission and vision. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, dedicated to maximizing the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of individuals and organizations working to make yoga and mindfulness practices equally accessible to all.*  
YogaServiceCouncil.org

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**About Omega Institute for Holistic Studies**

*Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation's most trusted source for wellness and personal growth. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change. Located on 250 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York, and at exceptional locations around the world.* eOmega.org

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