

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

Ted Strickland, Governor

Ernie L. Moore, Director

HB 113 Annual Report

August 2010

Volunteering in Prison

Ohio



Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

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Ted Strickland, Governor

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Ernie L. Moore, Director

June 24, 2010

TO: Correctional Institution Inspection Committee Members
Honorable Senator David Goodman, Acting Chairman
Honorable Senator Shirley Smith
Honorable Representative Robert Hackett
Honorable Senator Tim Grendell
Honorable Representative John Otterman
Honorable Representative Peter Beck
Honorable Senator Ray Miller
Honorable Representative W. Carlton Weddington

RE: House Bill 113 Annual Report Submission

I am very pleased to submit for your review the second annual report regarding the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's (DRC) progress in implementing the recommendations from the Correctional Faith-Based Initiatives Task Force as required by the passage of House Bill 113 in 2008.

The contents of this second annual report concentrate on the current status of each recommendation and provide highlights or explanations as to the indicators of success for completion. The department's efforts to work with the faith community to increase the number of volunteers working with offenders have been updated as well. Finally, the report emphasizes the commitment that DRC has to working toward the full implementation of the Taskforce's recommendations.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction trusts that you will find this report informative and indicative of the agency's efforts to enhance its relationships with Ohio's faith community.

Sincerely,

Ernie L. Moore
Director

CC: Shirley Pope, Executive Director

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Introduction

Ohio House Bill 113 was passed by the 127th Ohio General Assembly and signed by Governor Ted Strickland in March 2008. It requires the Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) and Youth Services (DYS) to permit representatives of nonprofit faith-based, business, professional, civic, educational, and community organizations that are registered with DRC or DYS to enter institutions under their control to provide reentry services. Those services may include, but are not limited to, counseling, housing, job placement, and money-management assistance. The act additionally requires DRC and DYS to post an agency telephone number on its official internet web site that individuals may call to obtain information about providing services related to reentry. The web sites must list the types of organizations that are registered with DRC or DYS to provide reentry services.

While the new law requires DRC and DYS to recruit nonprofit organizations from all faiths and beliefs, it prohibits them from endorsing or sponsoring any faith-based reentry program or any specific religious message. Neither DRC nor DYS may require an inmate or delinquent child to participate in a faith-based program.

Under HB113, each agency is expected to issue an annual report on the Department's progress in implementing the recommendations of the Correctional Faith-Based Initiatives Task Force to members of the Correctional Institution Inspection Committee. The Task Force was created with the enactment of Amended Substitute House Bill 66, the state-operating budget for fiscal years 2006-2007. The Task Force, which included representatives from six state agencies, the legislature, and the faith community, was charged with completing the following duties within one year of its inception (October 2006):

- Study faith-based and community solutions to correctional system problems by focusing on programs and services for incarcerated individuals and their families, diversion programs, and faith-based/nonprofit programs and services.
- Examine existing faith-based/nonprofit programs in Ohio prisons and other states and the possibility of program replication.
- Develop model programs to reduce adult and juvenile recidivism, assist juveniles with incarcerated parents and juveniles sentenced to the adult penal system.

The Correctional Faith-Based Initiatives Task Force concluded its examination and made recommendations of changes in the system in four major areas: 1) alternatives to incarceration, 2) prison programming, 3) reentry programming, and 4) infrastructure.

Additionally, an expanded role was recommended for the faith community in corrections with the expectation that DRC and DYS increase the number of volunteers working with offenders. The recommendations in this report were developed by the Task Force in an effort to increase the base of volunteers.

This annual report to the Governor and legislative leadership is provided by the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction outlining the agency's progress toward implementing the recommendations of the Correctional Faith-Based Initiatives Task Force.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should be encouraged, wherever practical, to utilize faith-based and community programs that address documented criminogenic needs. This agency, in conjunction with the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, should make available to the faith community examples of evidence-based programming that have been shown to impact offenders' lives.

Recommendation 2: The Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should work with wardens to develop programs that will facilitate a cultural change in institutions to encourage collaboration with faith-based and community service providers.

Recommendation 3: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should develop a marketing plan to assist in recruiting volunteers from the community and faith-based institutions. The plan should also discuss educating volunteers about the justice system.

Recommendation 4: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should develop a standard training program for staff, volunteers, and the community to facilitate working in institutions together.

Recommendation 5: Revise Ohio law to remove unnecessary and unreasonable collateral sanctions which inhibit offenders' successful reentry.

Recommendation 6: Improvement should be made in the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction with regard to communication about programs and services between staff and volunteers; staff and the community; and other parts of the criminal justice system and the community.

Recommendation 7: Revise statutes to increase judicial use of community options for non-violent offenders so prison space can be reserved for violent offenders.

Recommendation 8: Encourage faith-based and community programs to supplement existing community and diversionary programs for offenders and provide services that are not currently available.

Recommendation 9: State agencies need to take a more active role in linking with the faith-based community to develop programs to meet the gaps in services to adult and juvenile offenders.

Recommendations (continued)

Recommendation 10: The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction, Youth Services, and Job and Family Services should, in partnership, expand efforts to work with the employment centers and faith community to increase practical employment opportunities for offenders in the community. A job placement program should be implemented, focusing on the following:

- Providing information on job fairs to ex-offenders.
- Education of businesses/employers on the benefits of hiring ex-offenders.
- Incentives for employers to hire ex-offenders (i.e., tax breaks).
- Increased involvement of faith-based and community groups.

Recommendation 11: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should work with the faith community and faith volunteers to develop and expand programs within the institutions.

Recommendation 12: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should expand partnerships with national organizations including faith-based and community organizations to provide programming in state institutions.

Recommendation 13: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should involve the faith community, when appropriate, in the development of release plans for the offender that flow from the institution to community reentry.

Recommendation 14: Develop methods to increase and encourage the involvement of the faith community in various reentry efforts, and to encourage collaboration among faith groups.

Recommendation 15: To address housing issues, the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction should inform offenders of various options before leaving prison or immediately upon release. This could be accomplished through seminars, with free legal or consultation services, along with the increased involvement of the faith community.

Recommendation 16: The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction will partner with grassroots and community organizations in an educational effort towards the general public aimed at decreasing the negative stigma of ex-offenders and making the public aware of the needs involved in the process of reentry.

RECOMMENDATION

1 *The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should be encouraged, wherever practical, to utilize faith-based and community programs that address documented criminogenic needs.*

Reentry Programs should be flexible to address reentry issues for those offenders serving short sentences, as well as quality of life issues for offenders serving longer periods. Any utilization of DRC staff or volunteers to run a program must fit the needs of the agency, as well as provide appropriate intervention, treatment, education, and programming for offenders as they prepare to return to the community, or as they prepare for an extended stay in prison. DRC has selected a small number of core programs that have been implemented by DRC staff and/or volunteers. The programs selected are evidenced-based and have a proven record of impacting recidivism rates. For a complete listing of these programs, please visit: www.drc.ohio.gov.

One such program entitled, *Thinking for A Change (T4C)*, was adopted from the National Institution of Corrections by DRC in 2008. In 2010, the program became available in all prisons, adult parole regions, and used by community providers throughout Ohio. The (program) is an integrated cognitive behavioral curricula that combines cognitive restructuring and social skills interventions. *The Thinking for a Change* program is administered by trained DRC and community volunteers. To date, DRC has trained approximately 265 people consisting of DRC staff, faith-based organizations and community volunteers/providers in the 32-hour T4C Facilitator Training.

In partnership with the Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives (GOFBCI), DRC launched the *Strengthening Families Program* in fifteen counties throughout the state. DRC personnel and community providers, including faith-based organizations, were certified to conduct this 14-session resiliency-based family skills training. The program begins during incarceration with the offender and their children and continues upon the parent's release into the community.

RECOMMENDATION

2 *Directors of the Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should work with wardens and superintendents to develop programs that will facilitate a cultural change in institutions to encourage collaboration with faith-based and community service providers.*

Community volunteers and faith-based organizations are encouraged through DRC's Office of Offender Reentry to submit requests to administer reentry approved programs including, but not limited to, disciplines in education, recovery services, religious, mental health, and recreation services within the institutional setting and adult parole regions. Guidelines and instructions for

completing the request are available on the DRC website, www.drc.ohio.gov.

Faith-based and community organizations are valuable assets to the agency. Efforts are made to express appreciation for their services and programs throughout the year. Each institution and adult parole region sponsors an annual recognition program to honor its volunteers for their contributions.

There are on-going efforts within DRC to promote policies and programs that facilitate cultural change in the institutions. In an effort to promote partnerships, and remove barriers with faith-based and community service providers, revisions were made to the DRC *Recruitment, Training, and Supervision of Volunteers policy*. This policy *currently* allows volunteers to complete one orientation and application process with DRC. This change eliminated the requirement that volunteers go through duplicate processes within the agency to volunteer at different prisons, and/or adult parole regions.

In addition to these changes, the policy encourages DRC staff to assist in the recruitment of volunteers. It also seeks suggestions regarding the volunteer policy and programs from the very individuals who generously donate their services and time to volunteer.

RECOMMENDATION

3 *The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should develop a marketing plan to assist in recruiting volunteers from the community and faith-based institutions. The plan should also discuss educating volunteers about the justice system.*

DRC is committed to recruiting dedicated and resourceful volunteers and reentry mentors to provide rehabilitation and reentry program services to offenders. DRC offers educational training and networking to market volunteer opportunities.

There is currently a volunteer 1-800 number and email address on the DRC website for the public to obtain information on volunteering within the institutions and adult parole regions. There are also frequently asked questions about the criminal justice system, examples of volunteer opportunities and a volunteer application form. The website can be found at: www.drc.ohio.gov/web/volunteers.htm.

In addition to the webpage, many of the religious service volunteers are recruited in the local community through Kairos Prison Ministries, Prison Fellowship Ministries, Promise Keepers, local prison ministries, churches and other faith-based organizations. DRC staff also participates in community events and conferences to recruit and educate the general public about volunteer opportunities.

As an example, religious services staff from the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility conducted outreach seminars with ministry leaders from Living Waters Fellowship, Scioto County Ministries, Kingdom Builders Evangelistic Ministries, Son Reign Ministries, New Beginning Assembly of God, Gideon International, New Haven Church of God, Bikers for Christ, Creekside Christian Church, Vineyard Fellowship and First Presbyterian Church.

Warden Margaret Beightler (Marion Correctional Institution), and the religious services staff were featured speakers for several community events held at Reynoldsburg United Methodist Church, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Kairos, Ohio Council of Churches, Columbus Ambassadors for Christ Gathering, Global Gospel Church and the Ohio Reentry Awards Luncheon hosted by the Ohio State Chaplains' Association. Marion Correctional Institution is a leader in providing numerous opportunities for offenders to participate in faith-based programming and activities.

The DRC religious services staff attended the Out4Life Conference in Columbus, and the Search Institute Conference in Cincinnati. Both of these events provided opportunities to network with community faith-based leaders and other program providers.

In a coordinated effort, DRC continues to work collaboratively with the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (GOFBCI) to market volunteer opportunities within the department and the community. DRC continues to be an active participant in GOFBCI's Call to Action forums. Contact information: Regional Nonprofit Alliance @ 740-597-1686 or RNA@ohio.edu.

RECOMMENDATION



The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should develop a standard training program for staff, volunteers, and the community to facilitate working in institutions together.

In November 2009, DRC adopted a department-wide policy that addressed the recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers. It is the policy of DRC to encourage community involvement to enhance offender programs by providing services and programs that promote personal growth, and positive rehabilitative efforts. This process is reflected in DRC Policy 71-SOC-01, which sponsors the development and facilitation of community volunteers and mentors through the efforts of DRC personnel.

As a result of HB113, faith-based training for all newly hired employees is conducted by DRC Chaplains at the Reginald A. Wilkinson Correctional Training Academy. The training focuses on all aspects of religious services, including faith-based reentry programming. In an effort to emphasize the importance of HB113, mandatory training on the recommendations is provided to all DRC employees as part of the annual training curriculum.

RECOMMENDATION

5

Revise Ohio law to remove unnecessary and unreasonable collateral sanctions which inhibit offenders' successful reentry.

The Ohio Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition is supporting an effort to create an online database displaying the full range and impact of collateral sanctions on ex-offenders, as well as persons with a criminal record. The database will be made available to criminal justice system stakeholders, including judges, prosecutors and defense counsel. It will also be accessible to anyone else with an interest in knowing about such sanctions.

Once operational, the database will provide valuable information on hundreds of collateral consequences currently on the books. The goal is to stimulate a much larger political and public dialogue on the implications these sanctions carry for individuals with a criminal conviction. This initiative represents a partnership with the Ohio Public Defender's Office, the Ohio Justice and Policy Center, the Attorney General's Office and DRC. It is anticipated that the database will be fully implemented by March 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

6

Improvement should be made in the Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services with regard to communication about programs and services between staff and volunteers; staff and the community; and other parts of the criminal justice system and the community.

DRC continues to be represented by the Office of Offender Reentry on the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Advisory Board. Per the statute, the responsibilities of the board include providing direction, guidance, and oversight to the office; assist in the dissemination of information about the office; review budget and finances of the office; proposed initiatives and policies; develop strategic plans and provide feedback on modifications; and publish an activity report. Contact information: Regional Nonprofit Alliance @ 740-597-1686 or email RNA@ohio.edu.

RECOMMENDATION



Revise statutes to increase judicial use of community options for non-violent offenders so prison space can be reserved for violent offenders.

Senate Bill 22 and House Bill 386 are currently pending in the 128th General Assembly which, if enacted, will implement a number of sentencing reforms designed to increase judicial use of community options, especially for low level drug and non-support offenders. Senate Bill 22 originally introduced by Senator Bill Seitz in February 2009, is under consideration by the full Senate. The bill passed out of committee by a vote of 5-4.

Some of the core proposals contained in Senate Bill 22 were debated in the House in the Spring of 2009 after inclusion by the Governor in House Bill 1, during the FY 2010-2011 budget deliberations. However, these provisions were removed from the budget bill prior to House passage. Representative Tyrone Yates, formerly Chair of the House Criminal Justice Committee, gave Senate Bill 22 a preliminary hearing in the fall of 2009, and subsequently introduced House Bill 386. This house bill is identical to Senate Bill 22 with the exception of earned credit, which is increased to 7 days rather than 5 days.

RECOMMENDATION



Encourage faith-based and community programs to supplement existing community and diversionary programs for offenders and provide services that are not currently available.

Community Corrections

The Ohio Community Corrections Act Jail and Prison Diversion programs are a partnership between the State of Ohio and local Community Corrections Planning Boards. In FY09, there were 43,830 offenders served with DRC funded community correction programs. These programs provide various community benefits, including committing 25% of income earned by Transitional Control offenders to rotary funds for communities throughout Ohio. These funds, in turn, support local programs and volunteer initiatives to better serve offenders and their families.

Reentry Grant Programs

On March 15, 2010, the Department of Public Safety, through the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS), and in collaboration with state agency partners, including DRC as the program monitor, selected fourteen sites across the state to receive Justice Assistance Grant Reentry Program Awards totaling nearly \$4.7 million in federal economic stimulus funds focusing on offender reentry initiatives. The awards represent a significant investment in Ohio's communities,

enhancing key priorities that are inclusive of the faith community. Investments in community-based reentry programs such as these contribute to a reduction in recidivism, as well as the reintegration of citizens into Ohio's communities. The coalitions represented within this initiative have faith-based community partners providing mentoring and housing services.

RECOMMENDATION



State agencies need to take a more active role in linking with the faith-based community to develop programs to meet the gaps in services to adult and juvenile offenders.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

The Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, awarded \$1.62 million in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families for fiscal years 2010 - 2011. These programs offer unique and distinctive projects that provide ex-offenders and their families with comprehensive, integrated family case management. They target the reduction of recidivism for adult ex-offenders, and seek to decrease the incidence of inter-generational incarceration for their children. The programs have adopted best practices strategies to engage newly released offenders in family strengthening and reunification programs beginning inside prison and continuing up to 6 months following release into the community. The grant awards were made to:

- Alvis House (Franklin County Women's Program)
- Alvis House (Franklin County Men's Program)
- Lucas County Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime (TASC)
- Mansfield Urban Minority Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Outreach Program
- Opportunities Industrialization Center of Clark County
- Talbert House – Butler and Warren County
- Talbert House – Hamilton County

A Call to Action

The Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives (GOFBCI), in partnership with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and other agencies, began work on the Governor's "A Call to Action" in 2008. GOFBCI's Americorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) and its partners have conducted outreach in Ohio communities to recruit faith-based and community organizations to volunteer in a number of good works initiatives. Through the partnership with DRC and DYS, community members are educated and encouraged to volunteer in correctional institutions and with those individuals reentering the community. Outreach for "A Call to Action" continues through GOFBCI's recently awarded Community Engagement Partnership Grant (CEPG). The CEPG grantees outreach is regionally focused to promote involvement with these services while tracking participation progress. Additional information is

available by calling the Regional Nonprofit Alliance at 740-597-1686 or RNA@ohio.edu.

Community Partners for Reentry

DRC is partnering with the Montgomery County Reentry Taskforce, and the Reentry Coalition of Northwest Ohio, based in Lucas County, as the intermediate agents to identify, mobilize, and train an extensive network of faith-based and community organizations and volunteers to provide offenders with the access to transitional support services. This collaboration allows offenders the opportunity to access or obtain transitional support services, and to connect with integrated support systems within the community to reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

Grant sites began accepting applicants into the program in January 2010 with a target population of 50 participants. To date, approximately 60 individuals from Montgomery and Lucas counties have enrolled into the program.

As neighborhoods continue to face economic uncertainties, community volunteers play a vital role in offender reentry. The success of these projects will provide support to phase-in the expansion of Community Partners for Reentry, eventually to all eighty-eight counties across the state. This will be accomplished over several years as DRC engages community volunteers through policy changes and public outreach.

House Bill 479 and Senate Bill 246

DRC, in collaboration with *WinWin Inc*, has worked with Representative Carlton Weddington and Senator Tom Sawyer on the introduction of House Bill 479 and companion Senate Bill 246. This legislation calls for a research-based, non-traditional educational model for short-term youthful offenders between the ages of 18 to 21 years of age.

The *WinWin Academy* will be a non-profit community school enabling inmate students to earn high school credits in prison and complete their high school diploma at the *WinWin Academy* in the community, along with a certification in a career-technical or vocational program. There will be two prison campuses: one at the Pickaway Correctional Institution for males; and a campus at the Ohio Reformatory for Women for females. The Education Center of Central Ohio will serve as the sponsor of the program, and will provide oversight, transparency, and accountability. This drop-out recovery and reentry high school will be the first in the country of its kind. *WinWin Academy* partners include Alvis House, Phoenix Theatre, Ohio State University, Columbus State Community College, and a host of potential employers and faith-based community partners.

RECOMMENDATION

10

The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction, Youth Services, and Job and Family Services should, in partnership, expand efforts to work with the employment centers and faith community to increase practical employment opportunities for offenders in the community.

Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition

House Bill 130 called for the formation of an Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition (hereafter the “Reentry Coalition”) to serve as a guiding hub for expanding and improving reentry efforts across the state. The Reentry Coalition currently supports the efforts of approximately 30 local reentry task forces. It’s statutory membership is comprised of the following agencies: the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, Aging, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, Commerce, Development, Education, Health, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, Public Safety, Youth Services, and the Ohio Board of Regents, the Governor’s Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives, the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, and a representative from the Ohio Health Care Licensing Board. Community and faith-based organizations, service providers, local governments, and individuals interested or involved in the reentry of offenders are invited to participate in the mission and actions of the Reentry Coalition as at-large members.

The local task forces hold employment fairs and legal clinics throughout the year for offenders and their families. Employment Fairs continue to take place in counties such as Franklin, Montgomery, Lucas, Sandusky, Marion, and Cuyahoga. Representatives from the state level member agencies attend these job fairs and serve as a marketing outlet. Additionally, representatives from DRC have informational booths to provide materials on the Federal (Fidelity) Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Offenders interested in taking advantage of these programs are directed to contact DRC to obtain a Fidelity Bond, and to provide the information to employers on how to acquire the tax credit for employing formerly incarcerated individuals.

Ohio “One Stop” Program

The Ohio Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction, and Job and Family Services are developing a proposal to introduce the “*One Stop*” concept at three prison sites. The goal is to realign the working relationship between “*One Stop*” staff and DRC offenders returning home by providing continuity and employment assistance, training and support services before and after an offender’s release. The objective is to ensure that DRC offenders have a solid understanding of the job market, and available opportunities within specific markets, and are better prepared to search and connect to work immediately upon release. Research has demonstrated a nexus between lack of employment and recidivism. Preparing offenders for the job market prior to integration is designed to have a direct impact on reducing recidivism.

Ohio Benefit Bank

The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives leads the important work of the Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB). In partnership with the Ohio Association for Second Harvest Food Banks, the OBB has trained more than 4,650 counselors, most of whom are volunteers from the faith-based and community organizations. At the end of FY 2009, OBB services were available at more than 1,046 sites across the state helping more than \$7,500 Ohioans claim in excess of \$123 million tax credits and other work supports. Each of the 31 correctional facilities and six adult parole regions has registered OBB sites that provide benefit referrals services for offenders and their families.

The Correctional Reception Center (CRC) served as the pilot site for this unique partnership that guides the development of collaborative efforts statewide. Chaplain Arthur Baron (CRC) reached the \$1 million in annual allotment for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in August 2009, and has completed 150 applications this calendar year, which included \$364,620 in SNAP assistance alone.

RECOMMENDATION



The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should work with the faith community and faith volunteers to develop and expand programs within the institutions.

In an effort to meet the religious service needs of offenders, various faith-based programming opportunities are made available. Along with reentry-related programs, offenders can participate in spiritual development programs and activities that provide religious instruction, including such as: Bible or literature study, Catholic Mass, reconciliation/confession services, praise and worship services, revival meetings and prayer/devotional services. Religious instructions are currently provided to the following religious affiliations: Protestant, Jehovah's Witness, Catholic, Native American, Jewish, Buddhist, Wiccan, Astrau and Muslims Religious Affiliations. DRC utilizes volunteers from the faith community to facilitate programs and services across all religious affiliations.

In 2000 Congress enacted the *Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUPA)*. The Act states: "No government shall impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person residing in or confined to an institution," unless the burden furthers "a compelling governmental interest," and does so by "the least restrictive means". It is the policy of DRC that inmates have the freedom of conscience to subscribe to any religious belief, and to seek individual and congregate religious accommodations.

DRC works closely with the faith community and faith volunteers to develop and increase the diversity of faith-based programs available to offenders. DRC is expanding the Horizon Inter-

Faith residential community to the Chillicothe Correctional Institution (CCI), and the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). This multi-faith initiative assists offenders in spiritual growth and development, and preparation for successful reentry. Volunteers are utilized from Prison Fellowship Ministries and other community organizations to provide the faith-based reentry programming and faith instruction programming.

The Ridge Project, Inc. is another example of a faith-based organization providing a variety of classes and activities specifically designed to build strong family relations. The Ridge Project is currently providing programming at Allen Correctional Institution, Dayton Correctional Institution, Montgomery Education Pre-Release Center, Mansfield Correctional Institution, Mansfield Correctional Institution-Honor Camp, Richland Correctional Institution, Trumbull Correctional Institution, Toledo Correctional Institution, Pickaway Correctional Institution and London Correctional Institution.

Warren Correctional Institution (WCI) hosts numerous faith-based programs for offenders. “*Operation Timothy*” is a mentoring session designed to address unresolved issues and unhealed hurts experienced by offenders. This program is facilitated by volunteers from several different church affiliations. “*Experiencing the Divine through Poetry*” is another program facilitated by Embarke Ministries at WCI. This course is designed to teach virtues in connection with classic poetry. Participants are introduced to the elements of poetry and explore the literary use of grammar, figures of speech and rhyme. Pastors Frank and Stacie Johnson facilitate a program called, “*Family is First,*” to assist incarcerated offenders and their spouse/partner sustain healthy and strong relationships.

In addition to the religious instruction programs, Lake Erie Correctional Institution (LaeCI) provides a unique faith-based program titled “R U” (*Recovery Unanimous*). This program is facilitated by volunteers to address substance abuse, sexual and gambling addictions.

Franklin Pre-Release Center (FPRC) is an active prison for faith-based programming. There are currently over twenty five (25) different programs facilitated by staff and volunteers. Along with *Kairos Ministries*, the religious services department provides “*Epiphany*” and an “*Epiphany Monthly Reunion,*” for young women under the age of twenty five. “*The Family Love and Worship*” program provides a network and support system for offenders and their families. This program allows the offenders opportunities to strengthen, restore and establish a spiritual foundation prior to release from prison.

The Chaplains at London Correctional Institution (LoCI) adopted a “*Reentry Mentorship*” program facilitated by Pete Winston Ministries. This ministry seeks to help inmates discover their spiritual gifts, talents and potential through small group interaction and Bible study. One-on-one mentoring is also available. The mission of the program is to ease the transition from prison life to the community. The “*Yokefellowship*” is another opportunity provided at London to stimulate spiritual growth and community awareness.

Madison Correctional Institution (MaCI) held a “Family Day Worship Service” for juvenile offenders and their families through the use of volunteers and staff. Earlham College of Richmond performed two musical concerts; seventy (70) volunteers attended, another eighty-five (85) juvenile offenders and three hundred (300) adult offenders were present for the concert and Christian witnessing.

In addition to regular religious service programming, Montgomery Education Pre-Release Center (MEPRC) regularly hosts a “*One Day with God*” summer camp facilitated by the Forgiven Ministry Organization. This camp is for fathers and their children to spend quality time together reading, singing, face painting, and creating arts and crafts.

Richland Correctional Institution (RiCI), in partnership with the Roman Catholic Community, sponsors a bi-annual one day retreat. Approximately thirty (30) volunteers from the Toledo area participate in these events to encourage the development of faith and provide assistance to offenders upon release from prison. RiCI also has an active *Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)* organization, which continues to impact the lives of offenders. There are three (300) hundred members and twelve (12) volunteers that meet weekly for Bible Study and Prayer. In addition to these weekly events, FCA host recreational activities such as softball games, horseshoe tournaments and basketball games.

North Coast Correctional Treatment Facility (NCCTF) continues to host events in religious services to meet the needs of the offenders. The Rock of Ages Ministry conducts 3 day Revival Services. Steve Heugel, a motivational speaker, presented “*A Seasoned Man for All Reasons.*” In addition, Reverend. J. Howard Timmons conducted an 8 week workshop on the topic of “*My Brother’s Keeper*”.

Belmont Correctional Institution (BeCI) provides the following programs to offenders through Religious Services. *Safe People, Boundaries in Marriage, Boundaries in Kids* are three programs facilitated by Karen Eddy, a volunteer. These programs focus on developing a balanced, healthy approach to relationships; accessing the *Ten Laws of Boundaries* and teaching parenting skills to develop children who take responsibility for their actions, attitudes and emotions. Religious Services also sponsor workshops throughout the year on the following: *What’s So Amazing about Grace* by Philip Yancey, *Reflections from Within* by Ron Sharp and Prison Impact Ministries, *Alcoholics for Christ 12 Step Program* (www.alcoholicsforchrist.com), *Walk of Repentance* by Steve Gallagher, *Blooming in the Valleys* (Biblical Principles for Handling Depression and Despair), and a *Healing Care Group* program developed by Dr. Terry Wardle. BeCI also hosts a “*Dad’s Coaching Clinic*, an eight week interactive video-based learning experience that teaches offenders a comprehensive model of fathering from prison; and hosts a “*Men of Purpose*” workshop which encourages men to become better sons, husbands, fathers, and friends.

Northeast Pre-Release Center (NEPRC) provides a “*Grief and Loss Support Group*” and a faith-based Domestic Violence Group. Both of these programs are facilitated by the Religious Services department and community volunteers. The Cleveland Catholic Diocese provides speakers for a Family Worship Service and a Women Spirituality Program. Volunteers from the Buddhist and Jehovah Witness community also provide religious services to offenders at NEPRC.

All of these activities are provided to develop individuals in their faith and teach offenders life skills to live productive lives in and out of prison.

RECOMMENDATION

12 *The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should expand partnerships with national organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, to provide programming in state institutions.*

DRC continues to expand partnerships with national organizations to provide programming opportunities in the prisons. In addition to the Horizon Inter-Faith Dorm at Marion Correctional Institution (MCI), DRC launched a Horizon Inter-Faith Dorm at the Chillicothe Correctional Institution (CCI) and the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). Prison Fellowship Ministries, a national organization that ministers to offenders, ex-offenders and their families, plays a crucial role in the implementation of programs and services in the Horizon Inter-Faith Dorms. Prison Fellowship is solely responsible for the design of the program, and the provision of all training curriculum and operations manuals.

In November 2009, DRC Religious Services participated in the National Search Institute Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. Search Institute is a leading global organization that focuses on children and adolescents (www.search-institute.org). Drawing on extensive research, the Search Institute has identified 40 Developmental Assets to assist children in becoming caring, healthy and responsible adults. Ann Edenfield, Founder and Executive Director of W.I.N.G.S, utilizes these 40 Developmental Assets in teaching life skills and addressing the needs of family members. She facilitated a workshop during the National Conference and conducted a W.I.N.G.S event at WCI utilizing volunteers from the Search Institute Conference and local faith community.

DRC maintains valuable partnerships with Bill Glass Ministries, Trinity Broadcast Network (TBN), Kairos Prison Ministries, American Bible Society, Joyce Meyers Ministries, Promise Keepers, T.D. Jakes Prison Ministries and Radio Bible Class Ministries. These national ministries are important resources in Religious Services. They play an integral role in the quality of life for those offenders seeking spiritual guidance and support.

RECOMMENDATION

13

The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should involve the faith community, when appropriate, in the development of release plans for the offenders that flow from the institution to community reentry.

DRC embraces faith and community organizations in supporting the reentry process for offenders. As stated in recommendation 12, Prison Fellowship facilitates a Reentry Program at the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW) Horizon Inter-Faith Dorm. This voluntary holistic program consists of Pre-Release and Post Release components. Prison Fellowship provides programs curricula, workbooks, volunteer training and operations manuals. The program provides evidence-based classes designed to address the criminogenic needs of offenders. The value-added aspect of the program is based on the life and teaching of Christ. Offenders receive no special privileges or early release advantages by participating in this program.

In an effort to make this valuable connection with the faith community, resource fairs are conducted at each prison and parole region. Faith and community organizations are invited to display program information and address release plans with offenders. Some organizations provide programming that begins at the institution, and resumes in the community upon an offender's release.

Noble Correctional Institution (NCI), for example, hosted a Reentry Workshop with faith-based volunteers from local communities throughout the State of Ohio. Several volunteer groups submitted program proposals resulting in increased opportunities for offenders to successfully transition back into these communities. The work of the volunteers has been valuable to the reentry process at NCI, as more offenders continue to enroll in the faith-based programs. Some of the current programs include City Mission from Cleveland, Alvis House from Columbus and Chillicothe, Forever Dads from Zanesville, and Prison Praise Pals from Columbus Ohio.

RECOMMENDATION

14

Develop methods to increase and encourage the involvement of the faith community in various reentry efforts, and to encourage collaboration among faith groups.

DRC is actively involved in engaging the faith community in various reentry efforts. In addition to staff recruitment of local, national and international faith-based organizations, Director Ernie L. Moore is the chairperson of the State of Ohio Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition (www.reentrycoalition.ohio.gov). This coalition provides valuable resource information to educate and encourage collaboration with faith-based and community organizations. The Reentry Coalition maintains M.U.S.C.L.E (*Making Use of Services can Lead to Empowerment*), which is a centralized resource guide for DRC staff, offenders, families and community partners. This guide provides

assistance in locating community resources and information to foster strong, safe communities.

The Ohio Reentry Coalition also provides reentry funding initiatives, meeting schedules and minutes, Crime and Justice Institute Webinar Series, and a link to The National Reentry Resource Center (www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org).

OUT4LIFE Conference

The OUT4LIFE Conference was launched by Prison Fellowship in 2009 in Louisiana. Prison Fellowship has more than 30 years of experience working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families nationwide. Strategic partnerships, like the one with DRC, support positive change in the lives of offenders, their families and their communities. An Ohio conference was held in May 2010. It was successful in raising the awareness of offenders needs and addressing obstacles facing those released from confinement. It also connected stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector businesses, and faith-based organizations to collaborate in reintegration efforts.

RECOMMENDATION

15

To address housing issues, the Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services should inform offenders of various options before leaving prison or immediately upon release.

Ohio Reentry Coalition

One of the more significant accomplishments of the Ohio Reentry Coalition has been support for the establishment of 30 local reentry coalitions, some of which cover one county, others more regional in focus. It is anticipated that these counties will continue discussions with key stakeholders about addressing the barriers faced by offenders and their families on a daily basis. For more information about this initiative, please visit the website at www.reentrycoalition.ohio.gov.

Legal clinics sponsored by the local task forces range from monthly to quarterly events in such counties as Franklin, Montgomery, Lucas, Sandusky, Marion, and Cuyahoga. These clinics assist offenders with legal issues such as housing, domestic relations, and expungement. Furthermore, several of the established local reentry coalitions have the Directors of local housing authorities and landlord associations as members of their task force's executive committee to provide guidance on housing-related issues, and to assist with removing the barriers that offenders face when trying to acquire housing.

Independent Housing

DRC has committed funds to independent housing resources to reduce the cost of transitional housing for low risk homeless offenders. Instead of halfway housing, under this alternative, DRC reimburses these facilities for housing eligible offenders up to 90 days. The majority of the independent housing contractors are faith-based organizations. The following housing contractors are partnering with DRC to provide this service: The Exit Program, Build-A- Bridge, Good Samaritan Home and Mary Alice's House.

Returning Home-Ohio Supportive Housing Pilot

The Returning Home-Ohio Supportive Housing Pilot is the first of its kind, dedicated to providing housing and support to offenders released from state correctional institutions who had been homeless prior to incarceration, or who are at risk of homelessness upon their release. In addition to homelessness, the released offender also has a diagnosed or qualifying disability that is a barrier to the individual accessing and maintaining housing putting him or her at risk of re-offending. The project provided funds from a state corrections department for rental subsidy and support services for this population, and offers post-incarceration assistance equally to individuals under post release supervision and those that are not. This new venture brings together partners who have a common goal: keeping disabled people from returning to state prison and keeping them from becoming homeless. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), faced with a growing prison population, recognized the need to better address reentry barriers facing offenders as a way of reducing recidivism. In working with the Corporation for Supportive Housing – Ohio office (CSH-OH), DRC recognized that supportive housing could be a practical solution to addressing the needs of offenders considered to be at high risk to re-offend, if not provided with stable housing and supportive services.

DRC Reentry Centers

The Department Rehabilitation and Correction is in the process of constructing a Reentry Center on the grounds of the Chillicothe Correctional Institution. The Reentry Center will help to address the ongoing needs of offenders who will benefit from intensive services. Services include treatment for severe substance abuse and mental health disorders, as well as sex offender programming. The Reentry Center will house approximately 15 female beds, 20 transitional control beds, 12 sex offender beds, 28 treatment beds, and supportive housing opportunities for approximately 10 individuals who are temporarily homeless. The planning is well underway with projected ground breaking for the Reentry Center slated for mid-2010 and opening in mid-2011.

RECOMMENDATION

16

The Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services will partner with grass roots and community organizations in an educational effort towards the general public aimed at decreasing the negative stigma of ex-offenders and making the public aware of the needs involved in the process of reentry.

Staff persons representing statutory member agencies of the Reentry Coalition have been providing technical assistance to the local communities to establish and implement local reentry task forces. Technical assistance ranges from information sharing, identifying community needs and service gaps, uniting non-traditional service providers with government funded agencies, and offering assistance in developing a five-year strategic plan. This growth at the local level has fostered coordinated efforts and community investments addressing service delivery for adults and juveniles and their families involved in the criminal justice system, aimed at reducing the duplication of services while promoting public safety. Through the support of the Reentry Coalition, local jurisdictions and state agencies have become better positioned to apply for and receive federal funds appropriated under the Second Chance Act. This collaborative endeavor is about bringing dollars to the state, building safer communities, and investing in the welfare of Ohio's families.

The efforts targeting local reentry coalitions are due, in part, to the collaborative efforts between the Office of Criminal Justice Services, DRC, DMH, DYS, and ODADAS and the issuance of a Reentry Grant RFP totaling \$4.7M utilizing Justice Assistance Grant American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The monies will support established local reentry coalitions with the implementation of their strategic plans, and assist other counties in developing local coalitions.

CONCLUSION

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction is eagerly encouraging faith and community organizations to become actively involved in the work of preparing offenders to return to communities successfully. There are many ongoing efforts throughout the agency to collaborate resources to meet this challenge. The faith community has always been a valuable contributor in this process. DRC will continue innovative efforts to reduce recidivism and help offenders and families build productive lives.