

The Welcomer

The newsletter of PRISON OUTREACH MINISTRY, INC.

Serving the District of Columbia and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland

April 2011
Volume 1, Issue 1

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Welcome to The Welcomer

By-Christine Tyler, Executive Director

We are pleased to offer the community the first edition of Prison Outreach Ministry's newsletter, *The Welcomer*. The name was chosen in the Spirit of our organization—to live the Gospel Mandate to welcome home our brothers and sisters who are returning to their communities from incarceration. This first edition of *The Welcomer* is full of information about the Welcome Home Reentry Program, as well as about Prison Outreach Ministry. You can also find *The Welcomer* on our website at www.prisonoutreachministry.org. I hope you enjoy our inaugural publication!



Mentees take the reins of leadership for their groups

Through a grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), Welcome Home program mentees meet quarterly to provide peer support for one another. According to Joyce Void, Reentry Coordinator, the mentees like to meet to "Chew and chat." Topics of discussion include job openings, upcoming community events, educational opportunities, and family

updates. The CCHD grant provides transportation assistance and other supports for mentees to encourage their participation in the groups. The Archdiocese of Washington Department of Charity and Justice administers the CCHD grant program.

Prison Outreach Ministry receives two new grants

Crowell & Moring Foundation funds GEDs and William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation funds program evaluation

Prison Outreach Ministry received a grant from the Crowell & Morning Foundation to help mentees in the Welcome Home Mentoring Program study for their General Equivalency Diploma (GED). The grant provides funds to eligible participants to purchase text books for the GED class and to pay the GED exam fee. Transportation to GED class and exam is also available for those who are experiencing economic hardship. The GED assistance program is another service provided to returning citizens in the Welcome Home Reentry Program. Prison Outreach Ministry expects to serve 25 adults with this new GED financial assistance this year. In a second grant award, the William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation is funding a program evaluation of the Welcome Home Reentry Program. Prison Outreach Ministry has contracted with Choice Research Associates to conduct the formal evaluation. The evaluation will be finished in the spring of 2012.



The Mission of Prison Outreach Ministry is to live the Gospel mandate to serve men and women returning to their communities from incarceration.



Mentor Spotlight

Married couple inspired by Father Mike

Tim and Gail Trimble of Prince George's County took a leap of faith and signed up to be mentors in the Welcome Home Reentry Program after hearing Father Michael Bryant, founder of Prison Outreach Ministry and Welcome Home, speak at St. Mary of the Mills, their local parish, in the summer of 2009. Gail noted that Father Mike's "devotion to the Ministry rang out loud and clear, which convinced me that this is a worthy cause in which to participate."

Since that time, Gail has mentored one returning citizen and is still very involved with her. Tim is matched with a returning citizen, who violated the conditions of his parole and is currently back in jail. Tim is still hopeful for his mentee's future. He expressed that "I am hopeful that walking together,...we can make that transition as smoothly as possible....I am constantly reminded just how lucky I have been to have avoided the temptations which could have led to my own incarceration and, but for the grace of God, there go I."

If you are interested in becoming a mentor in Prince George's County, please contact Ms. Taliah Williams, Reentry Coordinator, at 301-817-1913.

Mentor training makes a difference

Professional trainer gives 100 hours of volunteer service

Don McCrabb, D.Min., and developer of the Welcome Home Mentor training curriculum, is donating 100 hours of professional services to Prison Outreach Ministry this year. Mr. McCrabb has already completed one round of mentor trainings during the first quarter of 2011.

The Welcome Home mentor training program consists of three sessions. The first session focuses on the essence of a mentoring relationship; the second session concerns effective communication skills; and the final session centers on providing feedback to mentees. All Welcome Home mentors are expected to complete the Welcome Home mentor training within 18 months of becoming a mentor. Mentors who have completed the training have given the program very high evaluation ratings.



New Mentors help build capacity

In the first quarter of 2011, thirteen volunteers signed on as Welcome Home mentors. POM is able to serve more returning citizens with more mentors, thus building the capacity of the organization to impact the community more and to fulfill its mission. We want to recognize the following new mentors for their involvement with the Welcome Home Reentry Program.

Montgomery County

- Mike Doherty
- Mary Glenshaw
- Yvonne Griffin
- Tony Lawrence
- Allison Lawruk
- Patricia Prather
- Lawrence Tremonti

Prince George's County

- Tiffany Daniels
- Sylvia Flegler
- Sherra King
- John Molineaux
- Glady's Robinson
- Masood Saeed

Mentoring Minute

Number of current mentors: 112

Number of mentoring matches: 104

Services that mentors most often help their mentees secure are basic necessities, housing, employment, and education.

Most often, mentors rate the relationship with their mentees as *Excellent*.

Where we serve

Three jurisdictional program coordinators bring energy and resources to the Welcome Home Reentry Program. They are responsible for the recruitment, orientation, training and support of the Welcome Home Mentors. In addition, they are many times the first face of the outside world that returning citizens encounter, as

returnees come to the coordinators for reentry kits and other immediate needs. The coordinators are dedicated and passionate about their ministry to others. If you need assistance for yourself as a returning citizen, or if you know of a returning citizen who could benefit from our program, please feel free to contact one of the coordinators. The returning citizen must be a resident of one of the following jurisdictions.

District of Columbia

Joyce Void
Catholic Charities Anchor Mental Health Center
1001 Lawrence Street NE
Washington, DC 20017
202-481-1414

Montgomery County

Melissa George
Montgomery County Pre-Release Center
11651 Nebel Street
Rockville, MD 20852
240-773-4206

Prince George's County

Taliah Williams
Adams House
5001 Silver Hill Road
Suitland, MD 20746
301-974-1283



Volunteers needed

Prison Outreach Ministry has many volunteer opportunities for

individuals or groups. Projects include participation in the May Phone-athon, preparing refreshments for mentor and mentee support groups, being a guest speaker at support groups, and collecting and organizing personal toiletries for the Reentry Kits project. We also welcome individuals or groups willing to assist mentees with job seeking skills, resume writing, computer skills, and GED tutoring. Everyone has a talent they can offer—call us if you are willing to donate your time and talent in service to returning citizens. Our number is 202-347-3218.



Mentee equips himself with new skills

Eric, currently a Welcome Home mentee in Montgomery County, recently graduated with his certificate from a Forklift Operator's Training Class. Not only did he complete the class, but he obtained his forklift operator's license and that should greatly increase his ability to find the right job. ***Congratulations, Eric!*** We are proud of you!

Upcoming Events

April 28, 2011

Mentor Orientation

Orientation for adults interested in being a mentor in our Welcome Home Reentry Program.

Adams House
5001 Silver Hill Road
Suitland, MD

For more information, call Ms. Taliah Williams at 301-817-1913.

May 23, 2011

Mentor Orientation

6:00 PM at the Montgomery Pre-Release Center

11651 Nebel St
Rockville, MD

For more information call Ms Melissa George at 240-773-4206.

June 18

Mentor Orientation

10 a.m. - 12 noon

Anchor Mental Health
1001 Lawrence St. NE
Washington, DC

For more information call Ms Joyce Void at 202-481-1414.

Saturday, November 5, 2011

The Blessing of Mentors

10:00 a.m. Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
Michigan Avenue

Saturday, December 3, 2011

Reentry Kits

9:00 a.m. Mount Vernon Place
United Methodist Church
900 Massachusetts Ave.
Washington, DC

Thank you to the Social Concerns Committee of The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament Parish for a recent gift of \$1,000 to support the work of Prison Outreach Ministry.

Congratulations to....



Bruce Jordan, Welcome Home mentee, who is getting married on April 29, 2011! His mentors, MJ and Jerry Parks, who he calls his "Mom" and "Dad," will be his Best Man and Matron of Honor.



Kevin Davis, Welcome Home mentee, who will graduate in June from SOME's Employment and Training Center!



Rodolfo Griffiths, Welcome Home mentee, who will graduate from the D.C. Central Kitchen program on June 17, 2011!

Wish list

Personal toiletries for Reentry Kits (soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc.)

Metro fare cards for mentees

All occasions greeting cards that we can distribute to incarcerated persons

Office supplies

Please call the main office at 202-347-3218 to arrange delivery of donated items.

Jesus said, *"And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another"* (John 13:34).

Prison Outreach Ministry, Inc.
P.O. Box 51583
Washington, DC 20091

