

Transition News

North Carolina Department of Correction

Spring 2008

Office Of Transition Services Model For Re-entry Process Gets Approval

The Office of Transition Services (OTS) passed a milestone this fall with the approval of its Transition and Re-entry Model for Prisons and Community Corrections at the quarterly Division Directors' briefing.

North Carolina Department of Correction Chief Deputy Secretary Dan Steineke announced the development of OTS in 2006 to be located within the Office of Research and Planning under the direction of Nicole Sullivan.

OTS will serve as a coordinator of departmental transition and re-entry efforts. OTS staff will coordinate an advisory committee of internal and external stakeholders to assist in shaping new programs, developing policies and procedures and training staff in effective transition and re-entry strategies.

"I am confident that the Office of Transition Services will serve as an important focal point assisting the agency in developing the types of programs, networks and strategies necessary to support our efforts toward a seamless system of

re-entry while promoting the goal of public safety," Steineke said.

Effective transition and re-entry programs require the commitment of DOC employees, the engagement of community networks and resources and effective collaboration with both internal and external partners.

A statewide network of government agencies, community and faith-based organizations, businesses and citizens has been formed to successfully transition released offenders from prisons back into their communities as productive citizens.

The new initiative is patterned after the federally-funded Going Home Initiative (GHI) which officially expired at the end of June 2007.

The GHI targeted adult offenders ages 18-35 released from a prison facility on community service, regular parole, DWI parole and post-release supervision. Through the GHI initiative, the state successfully created a systemic pre-release community transition and re-entry infrastructure. Prior to the creation of GHI many services necessary to successful transition and re-entry were available, but did not offer a seamless system among state and local government agencies, community and faith-based groups, the offender's family, victim advocates or the community at large.

Statistics show that successful tran-

sition and re-entry into any community by offenders, especially serious and violent offenders, requires a commitment by all stakeholders to a common set of goals and objectives. The focus

of North Carolina's process is to develop a substantial infrastructure of shared decision making responsibility and accountability for offering offenders an opportunity to become law abiding citizens, productive members of their communities and responsible family members.

Successful transition and re-entry...requires a commitment by all stakeholders to a common set of goals and objectives.

The OTS model has four phases:

I: Intake & Stabilization:

Goal: Information gathering.

Activities: Assess risk and needs, conduct appropriate screenings, make referrals and request documentation.

II: Case Plan Development:

Goal: Develop strategy to address identified risks, needs and life areas.

Activities: Develop initial case plan based on assessments, screenings and offender input; address risk and criminogenic needs; set goals for life areas.

III: Structured Transition and Monitoring:

Goal: Change thinking and behavior; offender skill development; prepare offenders for life after NCDOC supervision.

Activities: Target interventions, program participation, treatment participation, educational and vocational training, periodic updates and

A periodic publication highlighting the offender transition and re-entry efforts of the North Carolina Department of Correction.

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Project Re-entry Works For Offenders

"Some inmates are going out with no place to live, no job skills, still uneducated and not a clue as to what they are going to do. The program offers help to all who will come and use it to better understand what is going to be expected upon release. There are a lot of people who can, and will help you, if you apply yourself and what you learn in the Project Re-entry program."

Those words assess the Project Re-entry program, a community-based initiative that builds local support for ex-offenders through services and partnerships that address the issues of employment and training, career development, job placement, personal growth and family and community reintegration.

Administered by the Criminal Justice Department of Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, Project Re-entry has been in operation in Forsyth County since 2003. Located in Winston-Salem at the main offices of Goodwill Industries of Northwest NC, Inc., one of its partner agencies, Project Reentry is currently funded by local and state

grants and private contributions.

The program's goals are to promote successful transition of ex-offenders, reduce criminal justice costs and increase public safety through a pre- to post-release system that coordinates the North Carolina Department of Correction (DOC), ex-offenders, community colleges, JobLink Systems, faith-based ministries, employers, community organizations and residents.

Project Re-entry works from several fronts. First, the program provides a structured 12-week pre-release curriculum for inmates in Forsyth Correctional Center, Dan River Work Farm and Davidson Correctional Center. In 2007-08, under a grant from the NC Governor's Crime Commission, pre-release services will be expanded to Piedmont Correctional Institution, North Piedmont Correctional Center for Women, Buncombe Correctional Center and Rowan Correctional Center. This pre-release program component, the only such effort in North Carolina, is offered to inmates on a volunteer basis. Participants are recruited by internal DOC staff



Rebecca Sauter

who provides the program information to inmates averaging up to 18 months until release. Inmates then begin attending weekly sessions that address topics such as motivation and self-esteem, overcoming barriers to employment, family reintegration, cognitive behavioral instruction (deinstitutionalization counseling), vocational/educational opportunities, health issues, relapse prevention,

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Volunteer Gives Back Love To Others



Beryl Mankins

Beryl Mankins was serving a self-imposed, indeterminate sentence in her personal prison.

Her crime: denial.

She was in denial that she had lost her son, Jonathan, a veteran of the Iraqi War who was killed in a car crash while on leave home to Winston-Salem in 1994. She was in denial not only that he was gone but that she had not allowed donation of his organs. She was in denial that she did not ask for forgiveness from others for not honoring his memory by allowing that donation.

Mankins is Personal Missions program director, a motivational speaker and columnist with a B.A.

from Howard University.

She became an avid volunteer and felt that she was being given some love back from people who were telling her what a good job she was doing to help her community. It was in June 2006 that she met a JobLink section person at Goodwill Industries who asked her to be a motivational speaker for a program called Project Re-entry. She then met its director, Rebecca Sauter, and they discussed her plan to reach out.

Mankins decided it was time to "crawl out of darkness to encourage others to stand in greatness" and to establish "Jonathan's Legacies: I

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Project Re-entry, from Page 2

faith-based networking and post-release service coordination.

In addition to providing valuable information and education, pre-release sessions more importantly allow Project Re-entry staff to build trust and familiarity with inmates as they attempt to reconnect with the "outside" world. Inmates begin to think beyond the prison walls, overcome their own emotional barriers and learn how to build healthy human connections.

A total of 517 inmates have participated in the 12-week program.

"Individuals begin investing in their own transition," said Rebecca Sauter, Project Re-entry Program Director. "Because it's voluntary, the program's integrity is based on the success of each individual."

She said prior to the implementation of Project Re-entry, there were individuals who were being released without any knowledge of services available to them and that service providers didn't know how to help them.

"There was a tremendous disconnect," Sauter said. There was a huge frustration in that they were not getting what they needed which started a destructive spiral that sent them back into criminal activity. "Now, Project Re-entry is serving as a bridge to help develop an active role in pre-release planning," she said.

Along with a pre-release curriculum, Project Re-entry also provides a variety of post-release services to inmates returning to Forsyth County. In 2007-08 the Governor's Crime Commission grant funding will expand post-release services into Davie, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin Counties. Without question, Project Re-entry's most important post-re-

lease service is case management support. Initial post-release visits create an immediate bridge from the pre- to post-release environment that gives participants a sense of structure and safety, "a place to go."

Project Re-Entry Partners

Community partners and volunteer organizations include Eureka House, Forsyth County Day Reporting Center, Darryl Hunt Project, Ivy House for Self-Sufficiency, Forsyth Technical Community College, Friendship-Vision House, Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina, Inc., Hosanna House of Transition, Inc., Imprints for Reconnecting Families, North Carolina Department of Correction, New Light Missionary Baptist Church, Oxford Houses of North Carolina, Partnership for a Drug Free North Carolina, Inc., Winston-Salem Police Department, Winston-Salem State University Center for Community Safety, YWCA of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County.

Funding partners include City of Winston-Salem, Goodwill Industries of Northwest NC, Inc., Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, NC Governor's Crime Commission and Winston-Salem Foundation.

In these meetings, the participant's individual case plan is reviewed and refined and includes specifics related to vocational, educational, counseling, treatment, transportation, housing, family and personal needs. Participants usually remain in post-release services for 6-12 months, though some remain engaged in support groups, etc. longer.

Sauter says employment is another key factor for determining positive re-entry into the community and reducing recidivism. She noted that Project Re-entry's success rate is extraordinary, with 115 felons gaining employment in 2006. This number has already been surpassed in 2007.

"Employment, housing, food, clothing and transportation are just some of the issues that are addressed utilizing the over 23 partner agencies and volunteers that make up Project Re-entry," Sauter said. "Post-release participants are seen within 24 hours or the next business day by community partners."

She said participants who successfully complete the projects' pre-release groups are usually employed within two weeks, a tremendous

success story compared to over 30 days until employment for those not in the pre-release programming.

She noted that about 80 percent of the program graduates stay part of the program in some capacity

after release, speaking to groups and inmates, serving as mentors for juveniles and other adults and giving testimonials to community groups. They also assist by volunteering for various community services.

Sauter says participants are taking ownership of the program's successes and are becoming self-policing to ensure integrity.

"Something is happening, she said. "Participants are taking respon-

sibility for themselves and they are starting to believe in themselves. There are very few places they can get this kind of support."

In the community, Project Re-entry also provides both training/education on Re-entry issues and planning for local and state agencies such as the NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, NC Workforce Development Institute and NC Department of Correction facilities/agencies. Considered the prototype for reentry programming by DOC, the Project Re-entry model is currently being requested by DOC facilities throughout North Carolina.

Sauter says it is important for the community to be educated on prisoner re-entry issues, noting that North Carolina ranks 12th in the nation for prison population and releases about 81 percent of its inmates without any kind of supervision.

"We are trying very hard to make the community aware and get their support to offer and expand proactive approaches to these re-entry issues," she said.

Meet The Transition Staff

Nicole Sullivan

Nicole Sullivan began working with the North Carolina Department of Correction (NC DOC) in 1992 as a Social Research Assistant in the Office of Research and Planning. Over the past 15 years, she has held numerous positions within the Office of Research and Planning and was promoted to the manager's position in 2005.



Nicole Sullivan

In this capacity, Ms. Sullivan and her staff provide research, planning, decision-support, and program development services to the Secretary of Correction, DOC executive management team and departmental staff, the Governor's Office, members and staff of the General Assembly, other state agencies, and the general public. Throughout her ca-

reer with the NCDOC, Ms. Sullivan's work has focused on integrating evidence-based research in correctional interventions which includes the development of NC model for offender management, cognitive behavioral interventions, and transition and reentry policy and program development.

Working on transition and reentry efforts has enabled Ms. Sullivan to explore new avenues

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Roshanna Parker

Roshanna Parker graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. She received a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice from North Carolina Central University. Ms. Parker began her career with the North Carolina Department of Correction in 1994 as a Correctional Officer at North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women. During her career with the Department she has served in many capacities to include: Probation/Parole Officer, Correctional Case Analyst Community Development Project Manager, Correctional Planner and Cor



Roshanna Parker

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Monica Artis

Monica L. Artis currently serves as Community Development Specialist for the Office of Transition Services and has held this position since June 2005. Prior to joining the Office of Transition Services, She served as a Probation/Parole Officer for the Division of Community Corrections. She has also worked as a Programs Case Manager and Correctional Officer for the Division of Prisons. She is a graduate of Fayetteville State University with a B.S. in Criminal Justice. Her solid work experience along with her academic background and training, communications and commitment to the agency's mission and goals are of great value to the OTS.



Monica Artis

Vincent Gaddy

Vincent Gaddy is a native of Pinehurst, N.C., and the youngest of nine children. He is a graduate of Shaw University with a degree in Criminal Justice. He began his career with the North Carolina Department of Correction in August of 1993 at Polk Youth Center as a Correctional Officer. He later transferred to Wake Correctional Center as a Program Assistant I & Program Assistant II.

He was promoted to Program Supervisor at Durham Correctional Center and then later promoted to program director at Central Prison. He joined the Office of Research and Planning in August of 2003 as a community development specialist under the Job Start II program. Gaddy currently serves as one of the three full-time staff assigned to the Office of Transition Services.



Vincent Gaddy

Tony Reggi

Tony Reggi graduated from Piedmont Bible College with a BA degree and received the Master of Divinity from Liberty University. He studied for the Master of Theology degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and received a Doctorate from Erskine Theological Seminary. While in school he also earned his airframe and power plant license and worked at American Airlines for thirteen years. For the past fifteen years he has been working with populations that face barriers that hinder them from reaching personal success in life. From 2002 through 2005 he was the Co-Cluster Leader and Offender Employment Specialist for the Going Home Initiative in Asheville, NC where he assisted many ex-offenders in locating employment and guided them through other



Tony Reggi

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of fostering public safety in the community. These efforts have led to her involvement in numerous community-based justice initiatives such as Weed and Seed and Project Safe Neighborhoods. (The U.S. Department of Justice supports these national programs.) Therefore, community organizing, neighborhood revitalization, capacity building, leadership development and social change related to both institutions and people heavily influence her work in this area. She strongly believes that crime and justice are community issues and that resolution resides in the power of ordinary people coming together to do extraordinary work in their communities.

In 2006, Ms. Sullivan received a State Employees' Awards for Excellence in the category of Innovation. She holds a B.A. in Political Science and History from Emory University and an M.A. in Public Policy from Duke University.

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rectional Research and Evaluation Analyst. Ms. Parker has also worked for the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety where she served as the Juvenile Justice Specialist for the State at the Governor's Crime Commission. Ms. Parker left state government in 2002 to work for a private research firm as the Assistant Project Manager for Training and Technical Assistance for National Innovations to Reduce Disproportionate Minority Confinement.

She returned to NCDOC in October of 2003 as the project director for the Going Home Initiative. In her current position of Correctional Research and Evaluation Analyst, she oversees the Office of Transition Services. She serves as an adjunct instructor of Criminal Justice at North Carolina Central University.

OTS Conference Slated For April

The Office of Transition Services will conduct its 2008 statewide conference on offender re-entry April 22-24 at the Sheraton Hotel and Marina in New Bern.

The theme will be "Training, Education and Collaboration: A Model for Transition and Re-entry."

Scheduled speakers include Francina Carter of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC); Teresa J. Chappell of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Faith and Community-based Initiatives; Steven McFarland of the U.S. Department of Justice, Task Force for Faith and Community-based Initiatives; Hon. Denise Hartsfield, Forsyth District Court in Winston-Salem; Joseph Williams, New Creations Community Outreach, Detroit, MI; and Kim Carter, Time for Change Foundation, San Bernardino, CA.

Reservations should be made no later than March 28. Contact the Office of Transition Services at 919-716-3080.

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Pledge My Heart to You Program and Readings for Re-Entry Program."

"Mine was a mental and emotional incarceration," Mankins says. "You can have control and release yourself."

She decided to deliver that message of hope as a motivational speaker in Jonathan's memory to pre-release participants in Project Re-Entry, a pilot program to offer pre and post-release support for inmates in and around Forsyth County.

She figured that her mission would be to get self-help books in the hands of inmates to give them motivation through reading – to spark personal belief. So she went out into the community and solicited self-development books that could be placed on designated prison book

shelves which was the start of a collection and donation program to be known as Readings for Re-entry.

"The message of hope is a powerful one," Mankins said. "These books can give them strategies to redefine themselves both legally and morally. They give them hope to survive and show them that no matter what happens, they can keep going."

She explained that these are "How to Books" on blue collar jobs as well as books on overcoming fear, anger; books on forgiveness and public speaking; books on positive attitudes and networking; how to study and how to present with confidence.

One of the goals is to ask the prison librarian to keep the books together on Readings for Re-entry shelves and that they be clearly marked for easy access by partici-

pants.

Currently these books can be found at Forsyth Correctional, Dan River Prison Work Farm, Davidson Correctional and Piedmont Correctional Institution. Since June 2006, 1,131 books have been collected and distributed by Mrs. Mankins Readings for Re-entry.

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barriers such as housing and therapy. He worked in the Workforce Investment Act program as the On the Job Training counselor and built excellent relationships in the business community. Currently he is the Community Development Project Manager in the Office of Transition Services for the North Carolina Department of Correction.



Female Maintenance Work Group At Fountain Correctional

Fountain Correctional Center for Women in Rocky Mount has incorporated the Female Maintenance Work Group to utilize female inmates. Supt. Lynn Sanders said the transition has been smooth for the staff. In addition to utilizing male inmates over the past 15 years, FCCW also had a female grounds crew working in maintenance. The females are screened by case managers, interviewed by programs staff and maintenance staff. The interviews determine knowledge and skills inmates possess about electrical, heat and air and plumbing or a genuine desire to learn. Inmates can utilize their newly-learned skills when they transition back into their communities.

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modifications to plan, prioritize supervision; successful completion of correctional supervision.

IV: Maintenance & Sustainability:

Goal: Maintain a prosocial, law-abiding lifestyle.

Activities: Involvement with mentors and local community support networks, gainful employment, self-sufficiency; aftercare.

The role of OTS will be to sup-

port the internal divisions and external partners by:

1. Creating a seamless system of transition and re-entry by coordinating efforts internally through recommendations on new and existing policies, procedures and practices.

2. Serving as a liaison for community organizations, state and local agencies and other partnerships involved in offender transition and re-entry.

3. Raising awareness about offender transition and re-entry through the dissemination of educational information and resource materials.

4. Providing training and technical assistance through the use of Evidence-Based Practice, research and model transition and re-entry programs.

5. Identifying and sharing information regarding existing resources.

6. Pursuing funding for demonstration projects that address transition and re-entry barriers, gaps in service and/or develop new programs and initiatives.

Major focus areas are:

1. Transition and re-entry policy recommendations.
2. Training and education on evidence-based practices.

3. Resource inventory.

4. Local network development and capacity building.

5. Technical assistance on transition and re-entry efforts and specific issues.

Based on the largest combined number of prison releases and DCC population, the initial target counties are: Wake, Mecklenburg, Guilford, Forsyth, Durham, New Hanover, Buncombe, Cumberland, Rowan, Pitt, Gaston, Alamance, Wayne, Davidson and Cabarrus Counties.

Send your comments or story ideas to:

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