



# The Mayor's Office of Re-Entry

The Newsletter For and About People With Criminal Histories and Those Committed To Helping Them

## **NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS:**

Neighborhood Networks are formed within geographical boundaries. Network members volunteer to embrace persons with criminal histories returning to their neighborhoods and provide support, guidance, and resources for them. The Network is comprised of community stakeholders who are concerned with re-entry, the previously incarcerated individual, and his/her family. Together they work to ensure conditions of release are consistently met and that the re-entry plan developed by the IDOC Re-Entry Specialist and/or the community organization case manager is adhered to. Neighborhood Networks do not replace service provider case managers, but rather, work alongside them and parole/probation officers to assist in the smooth transition from incarceration to successful community living.

Contact Victor White, Mentor/  
Neighborhood Networks Supervisor  
for the Mayor's Office of Re-entry at  
317-966-4209 to see how your  
neighborhood can get involved

## **ALL ABOARD, NEW MENTORS**

The Mayor's Office of Re-entry continues to seek mentors for First Day Out and the Women's Re-entry Assistance Program. Mentors are trained and gender matched with participants who are committed to changing criminal behaviors.

## **FIRST DAY OUT PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHT: A.W.**

**A**.W. has come a long way since being in the First Day Out program. Mr. W. was unemployed with a pregnant wife. The bills were adding up and stressing him out. However, he is overcoming many challenges.

Now employed at Northside New Era Baptist Church via the Transitional Jobs Program as a custodian, A.W. has a consistent income to support his family. He is also receiving counseling to better his relationship with his wife and children and wants to be the father to his family that he should be.

Furthermore, A.W. has been recruited to speak to future mentors of the First Day Out Program to explain what the program is about and how it has benefited him.

Overall, A.W. is really trying to be a better man. It's very challenging out here with a criminal record, a family to take care of, and experiencing physical illness. But he is up to that challenge and is willing to prove all the naysayers wrong.

## **POINTS OF INTEREST:**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation recognizes the complex set of problems re-entry represents for former prisoners, their families and communities, and is interested in the unique role faith and communities of faith – clergy, people of faith, congregations and faith-based organizations – play in helping people make their way back into the legal community. Casey's interest stems from a desire to understand how resources are mobilized on behalf of vulnerable populations –single parents and their children, prisoners and their families, immigrants and refugees. Casey recognizes that in the case of the incarcerated, it is not only the person incarcerated who needs support, but also the families left behind. The social costs of incarceration are also born by the families and children. Without sufficient supports, two-thirds of former inmates will be rearrested for a felony or a serious misdemeanor within three years.

**For More Info call(317) 327-3928 or visit [www.indy.gov](http://www.indy.gov)**

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## THE 2<sup>ND</sup> CHANCE CHALLENGE

**T**he 2nd Chance Challenge was birthed out of the Third Annual 2nd Chance Conference held in October, 2010. The Conference provided an opportunity for people with felonies to network and gain knowledge on how to embark upon their own entrepreneurship venture. Business Ownership Initiative (BOI) and New Life Development Ministries partnered with The Mayor's Office of Re-Entry to offer a challenge to conference participants who were interested in taking the next step in owning their own business. Contestants were invited to submit a written or video essay about their business idea. The top five submissions were selected to attend a Business Plan Writing class at BOI that was paid for by New Life Development Ministries. After completing the class, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Challenge participants were instructed to write and submit a final business plan detailing their proposed venture. The entries were judged by three highly qualified judges and the top two entries were to receive monetary rewards.

On February 22, 2011 the Second Chance Challenge Awards Ceremony was held at Business Ownership Initiative (BOI). Three of the seven finalists submitted a completed business plan. Each of the three arrived eagerly awaiting the final results of the Challenge. A history of the Second Chance Conference and the Second Chance Challenge was given along with words of encouragement by both Deputy



Mayor Olgen Williams and the Director of Re-entry, Maxine Bryant. It was a joyous occasion with a couple of surprises. Instead of only two entrants receiving financial support, all three finalist were surprised to learn that they will each receive financial support from New Life Development Ministries and will be able to obtain a micro-loan of up to \$4,000. They will also benefit from access to barrier buster funding with approval from The Mayor's Office of Re-entry, technological support, and further business development assistance from Business Ownership Initiative.

Todd Fuqua's business plan for 'Second Chance Connexions' received 1<sup>st</sup> Place. Earl Jameson won 2<sup>nd</sup> Place with his 'EJ3 Web Design and computer Repair' business plan. Finally, Antron Alexander placed 3<sup>rd</sup> with 'Ant's Grill and Catering'. The Mayor's Office of Re-Entry would like to congratulate all contest participants and thank its partners Business Ownership Initiatives and New Life Development Ministries for their role in this successful venture.

*Whether seeking employment or pursuing personal goals, preparation is the key to your success. Remember: "It is absolutely better to be prepared and not have an opportunity than to have an opportunity and not be prepared." Continue to work hard towards your goals and dreams and be prepared to seize your opportunity when it presents itself.*

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RE-ENTRY: MAXINE BRYANT:

These are exciting times for the Mayor's Office of Re-Entry.

There have been lots of program-

matic changes—all to increase the quality of services provided to people with criminal histories. I'd like to recognize and to thank all of the persons who work to make the Mayor's Office of Re-Entry successful in its endeavors.

I am thankful, first of all, for my leadership team for this Office: Donata Barnes, who is the Program Manager for our Transitional Jobs Program and Gina Fears, who is the Program Coordinator for the FDO/WRAP/NN Programs. These women work tirelessly alongside me to ensure that the needs of program participants are met. While we give general oversight to programs that come out of the Mayor's Office of Re-Entry, we are surrounded and supported by a great team of individuals who are



committed to improving the quality of life for our participants. That team consists of FDO and WRAP Case Managers Immanuel Ivey and Barb Overton. In addition, Victor White has stepped up as Mentor Supervisor/Trainer/Newsletter Editor. You may not be familiar with our Justice & Mental Health program for women with co-occurring disorders at Liberty Hall. Team member Amy Shaner is the Care Coordinator for that program. We also are glad to have Maisha Lyons from Liberty Hall Men's Work Release and Benjamin Sandman from Duvall as a part of our site case managers for First Day Out. Additionally, we welcome Marcus Jones and Kiana Williams who are offering their skills, talents, and abilities to this Office.

Finally, I can't forget the Neighborhood Networks Facilitators and their respective memberships – Scott Rosenberg from the Eagle-dale-Lafayette Square NN and Joan Marsden from the Martindale-Brightwood NN. We also look forward to working with Rosalyn Hug-gins who is our newest Neighborhood Networks facilitator with the Mapleton-Fall Creek-Near North areas. And of course, the mentors who work diligently with program participants while they are incarcerated and follow them for the

first year after release, are the backbone of the FDO/WRAP/NN programs. I would be remiss not to mention our partnering organizations such as Jobs Partnership, Northside New Era Baptist Church, and JobWorks that are also vital components to our team. I am honored and humbled to give leadership to such a great and comprehensive team!

I must thank Mayor Greg Ballard for his insight and foresight in creating the Mayor's Office of Re-Entry and Deputy Mayor Olgen Williams for his ingenious leadership. Their support of our efforts encourages us to continue to provide stellar services and to seek additional funding for even more programs!

We also celebrate the array of awesome service providers who provide on-going support and services to persons with criminal histories. Be sure to watch the government channel #16 this month for our showcase of Indy's BEST opportunities for people with criminal histories that will highlight six exemplary re-entry community service providers.

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