

## Athens County Reentry Task Force Meeting

March 25, 2019



**Meeting Attendees:** Shawn Stover (OMJ Athens Reentry), Joe McGowan (OMJ Athens), Crystal Howard (Athens JFS), Betsy Gee (Health Recovery Services), Jennifer Fredette (OU Political Science), Zack Eckles (SE Ohio Legal Services), Jessie Schmitzer (HAPCAP Mobility Coordinator), Carlene Triplett (Foothills District United Methodist Women), Cate Matisi (Women for Recovery/Serenity Grove), Kerri Shaw (OU Social Work), Nancy Stotts (OhioMeansJobs), Monica Silverthorn (Athens VA-HUDVASH), John Butcher (Nelsonville Holiness Church), Shelia Shafer (Athens Children Services), Diane Pfaff (AHV 317 Board), Sandy Sickles & Amanda Ailiff (Hopewell Health Centers), Laura O'Neil (Athens Co. Public Library), Kyle Verge (ACEnet), Cindy McFerrer (Athens Veterans Court), Drew Case (ODRC), Larry Green & Daniel Spradlin (Appalachian Veteran's Reentry)

**Shawn Stover- Reentry Chairperson-** Introduction to the meeting and welcome members to share information about their services and upcoming community events. Meeting topics focus on reentry, recovery and poverty.

**Jennifer Fredette-** Ohio University Political Science Professor

- Jennifer has an interest in learning more about Reentry and helping people in recovery. She wants to stay up to date on what is happening in the community.

**Cate Matisi & Kerri Shaw - Women for Recovery and Serenity Grove**

- Kerri and Cate shared information for a project that their group had been working on called ACCESS which stands for Athens County Coalition for Employment Support Services
- They created surveys to share with the group that will be passed out at the Job Fair and in the community to employers, agencies, and participants. The goal is to address the barriers of gaining and maintaining employment for people with a felony/criminal record.
- Cate also reported that April is the 1-year mark for Serenity Grove. What a momentous year they have had with all of the tremendous community support.

**Joe McGowan- Supervisor for OhioMeansJobs Athens County**

- Joe states that the OhioMeansJobs Center will be moving at some point in the next year. County officials are looking at various sites that will provide a suitable location for community members and space for staff.
- The OhioMeansJobs Center also will no longer be taking clothing donations for interview clothing or Reentry due to management concerns. Donations can be made to Goodwill and tell them that it is for the OhioMeansJobs Center AKA- The Work Station in exchange they will keep track and give OMJ clothing vouchers for our community members.
- OMJ is also partnering with the local libraries for Aspire/GED information
- Scott Hatfield Aspire instructor at Athens OMJ has been going to STAR in Nelsonville to help residents with ABLE study material and testing.

### **Betsy Gee- Health Recovery Services**

- Betsy reports that HRS has been busy providing services as usual and nothing new to report.

### **Jessie Schmitzer- HAPCAP Mobility Coordinator**

- Jessie shared that the Line 7 -Nelsonville and Albany expansion routes are still in the works and they will share plans as they continue to come together.
- **Athens Public Transit:** 508,572 riders in 2018 (436,109 in 2017)
- **Athens on Demand Transit:** 12,118 trips in 2018 (9764 in 2017), traveled over 175,000 miles all within Athens County. In 2018 due to being completely full they had to deny almost 700 riders.
- **GoBus:** Provided over 100,000 rides across the State of Ohio for the third year in a row.

### **David VanCleave- Dept of Youth Services**

- Dave coming to the meeting to stay up to date on local supportive services and events.
- He recently referred an 18-year-old youth that he was working with to Reentry for supportive services.

### **Crystal Howard- Athens JFS Community Relations Coordinator**

- Crystal reports that the remodeling of Athens Job and Family Services office on Rt 13 should be completed in a few months.
- The Back to School bash August 1<sup>st</sup> from 3-7pm at Market on State applications available in April and sponsored by Job and Family Services. Please check out our Facebook page and website for additional updates on events. [jfs.athensoh.org](http://jfs.athensoh.org)
- Our agency is a tier 1 food pantry with food boxes/items available Monday through Friday now.
- Athens County Job and Family Services has been building stronger partnerships with local community organizations to increase food distribution to those in need.
- Crystal also promoted Senior Safety Day on Thursday May 16<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 2pm at the Athens County Fairgrounds. This is through many local partnerships and will be a very informational and fun community-oriented event

### **Sheila Shafer- Athens Co Children Services**

- Reminder that April is child abuse awareness month with April 10<sup>th</sup> wear blue day to show support. April 13<sup>th</sup> is kid fest
- They partner with Integrated Services for the START Program (1 of first 15 counties in Ohio)
- May is Foster Parent recognition month with 42 homes currently licensed through children services
- They have had 17 adoptions this year with increased grants for families with adopted children.
- Several staffing changes recently

### **Anne Richardson- Athens Adult Parole Authority**

- Anne states that they continue to manage their caseloads and there are no major changes with the Adult Parole Authority currently.

### **John Butcher- Pastor Nelsonville Holiness Church**

- Increasing outreach services to individuals and trying to find better solutions to help people who are homeless.
- They also have a food pantry to help those in need.
- John has always been a strong advocate for people in jail and prison who need extra support.

### **Larry Green- Appalachian Veterans Reentry, Daniel Spradlin- Veteran's Reentry Associate**

- Larry and Dan are searching and researching Land Banks for possible homes that could be renovated and occupied by Veterans coming out of prison.
- Larry states that he has found in Florida that they take more of an interest in children visiting their incarcerated parents in prison and have good reunification programs that he would like to learn more about and incorporate into the Ohio prison system.
- Dan is working with Larry in the Appalachian region to increase services and opportunities for Veteran's coming out of prison with a focus on housing and employment.
- He reports that there are 3500 Veterans in 27 Ohio Prisons with about 1/3 coming back to the Appalachian region.

### **Sandy Sickles- Hopewell Health Centers**

- Sandy has much to report about Hopewell Health Centers expanding of services and meeting the needs of the community.
- They have a dental unit in Athens and Hocking with expanded dental services in Nelsonville within a year. They continue to have direct access to intakes at their main office Monday through Friday from 10 until 1:00. People can walk in and be seen within this time frame and be set up with ongoing services.
- She also encouraged people to check on their prescription for produce program to help link families with healthy fresh food.

### **Amanda Ailiff- Hopewell Health Centers SE Ohio Regional Jail Liaison**

- Amanda continues to help with Reentry services through the jail with a focus on people with mental health and substance abuse backgrounds.
- She provides increased services for at risk populations linking with community resources to decrease continued jail time.
- Amanda also has put together numbers regarding cost for jail stays and number of days in jail for repeat offenders for the Athens County Stepping Up Committee regarding supportive housing.

### **Nancy Stotts- OhioMeansJobs Employment Services Counselor**

- Nancy discussed the CCMEP Program through Job and Family Services and OMJ for 16 to 24-year old's needing job skills training and guidance. They have between 2 to 10 participants who can job shadow for a few weeks each month and learn important skills.
- She also promoted the upcoming job fair and expecting between 200 to 300 job seekers to attend. There will also be an In-Demand Job Fair in May with more details to come.

### **Cindy McFerren- Athens Veteran's Court**

- Cindy states that Veteran's Court is going well right now with a very cohesive group of participants.
- They continue to have court twice a month with regular participation and a recent graduate from the program.
- They have had 6 total participants graduate the program since the beginning

### **Monica Silverthorn.- Social Worker for HUD VASH program**

- Monica talked about the HUD VASH program helping homeless Veterans with housing and other needs. They have vouchers currently for homeless Veterans.
- She also discussed VA medical services that are beneficial to our Veterans.
- Monica reports that they continue to have regular "Stand Down" meetings for the event planned for October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 with more details as the time gets closer.
- They are in the process of moving their office to The Plains.

### **Carlene Triplett- United Methodist Women Foothills District**

- Have 6 volunteers from Athens County reaching out to be support to women in Marysville through the HOPE letter writing project. This is a minimal one-year commitment for the volunteers. Their goal is to provide inspiration and support to female inmates at Ohio Reformatory for Women prior to their release and build a relationship of trust.
- Muskingum County also is participating in the HOPE letter writing program and has 12 volunteers.

### **Diane Pfaff- 317 Board Community Services Manager**

- Diane reports Health Recovery Services has an in-home outpatient medication assisted treatment program to monitor methadone/suboxone participants.
- She promoted the trauma informed care workshop stating that this is a very good presentation and people would benefit from attending.
- Diane also discussed ongoing need and creation of recovery homes and stated that McArthur currently has this option for women with children.

### **Kyle Verge- ACEnet**

- Kyle talked about how ACEnet is working on expanding Reentry type services and gathering information on recovery services and their connections within the community. ACEnet serves many counties throughout Ohio and the SE Ohio region.
- He also has been offering a series of small business development classes in many communities through the local library system. Contact Kyle for more information on classes [kylev@acenetworks.org](mailto:kylev@acenetworks.org)

### **Laura O'Neil- Athens County Public Library**

- In April Jenny Stotts will be doing a CASA Program trauma informed care.
- There will be many Summer activities scheduled for the libraries and it is good to check out their site online to stay up to date with events.

- She cited a very good documentary called No Small Matter about early childhood education.
- They are also going to try a Pop-Up Library concept to get people together in the local communities.

#### **Zack Eckles– Southeastern Ohio Legal Service**

- Zack reported that they are working on organizing clean slate clinics and fair housing information sessions. They also are gathering information to help people with questions about the CQE(certification for Qualified Employment) process.
- He also encourages people to reach out to them with any questions or concerns that they may be able to address regarding helping our people in poverty or Reentry.

#### **Drew Case- SE Ohio Region Adult Parole Authority**

- Drew attending the meetings to share information about adult parole authority offices. He states that there are approximately 38,000 people on some sort of probation in Ohio with roughly 400 probation officers managing these cases.
- Lower level offenders require less contact and supervision dependent on their reporting responsibility and meeting the goals of their release. Higher end offenders require much more time and supervision but also make up a smaller portion of those on supervision. They are very busy with high caseloads.
- Drew also reports that CQE's and CAE's are different. The CAE's are called certification of achievement and can be obtained through courses and training while in prison. CQE's Certification of Qualified Employment are obtained once released from prison through the courts after a period of time.

#### **Shawn Stover – OMJ Athens Reentry Coordinator**

- Shared information about Reentry Program Statistics from 2017 and 2018 compiled by Melissa King an AMERlcorps worker at ACEnet.
- Shared information about the podcast featuring Serenity Grove and shared information about Faces of Hope (Photo Project), Passion Works Personal Stories, Needle Work in Nelsonville, DP Dough Pre-Law Fundraiser for Phi Alpha Delta our Reentry donation champions.
- Shawn also shared a story of a returning citizen's hardships after a lengthy incarceration and needing to learn how to do some of the most basic of things like pumping gas, shopping and trying to find employment.

**Next Reentry Task Force meeting will be Monday May 20<sup>th</sup> 2019 starting at 9:30am and generally runs to about 11:00am at the main office of Athens County Job and Family Services 13183 St Rt 13 Millfield, Ohio 45761 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room.**