

## **Reentry Task Force Meeting**

November 27, 2017

**Present:** Shawn Stover, Dave Brennan, Joe McGowan, Crystal Howard, Mike Blevins, Jay Forshey, Scott Zielinski, Nancy Stotts, Jared Butcher, Larry Green, Sandy Slickles, Cate Matisi, Jayne Darling, Sarah Macy, Larry Fisher, Sarah Cornwell, Laura O'Neil, Jess Leusch, Katelyn Pierson, Becky Filar, Sheila Shafer, Marianna Carson, Ali Lopez, Amy Good, Madison Yee.

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**Dave Brennan:** *Landscape & Horticulture Teacher with ODRC.* Dave announced that he is looking to submit a proposal in conjunction with Sinclair College for a new series of apprenticeship/educational classes that will include skill trainings such as horticulture and construction. Additionally, there will be a job fair on December 12th with organizations and businesses from the horticulture industry also being present. Dave states that the inmates in his class are grateful for the opportunity to improve their employment skills.

**Joe McGowan:** *Supervisor for the Ohio Means Jobs - Athens County (Workstation).* Joe reiterated the branding of the community known "Workstation" as the Ohio Means Jobs - Athens County. He also noted that the Adult Basic Literacy/ABLE program has now also been renamed as the "Aspire Program".

**Crystal Howard:** *Community Relations Coordinator for the Athens County Job & Family Services.* Crystal thanks everyone's participation in this year's Stand Down. The planning committee is currently working on getting the final count for number of clients served. She expressed an extra gratitude to local ODRC members and volunteers from various programs of the Task Force who helped the event throughout the day. Crystal stated that several SEPTA residents volunteered and were a great help. She is looking forward to next year's event and announced that planning will begin in January.

**Sarah Macy:** *Prevention Services at Health Recovery Services (HRC).* Sarah reminded the Task Force of her women in recovery programming at the county jail and noted that she is a helpful resource for referrals for future programming upon release.

**Jayne Darling:** *President of the Board for Women for Recovery.* Jane announced that this was her first meeting and that she was eager to attend after Cate Matisi's involvement. Serenity Grove, the women-based recovery house in Athens County, is still looking for a live-in House Manager. She requests that any possible candidates be women who have personally experienced a journey of recovery, has great organizational skills, and can work with community members as well as women in the house. Scott Zielinski suggested that upon hiring the House Manager, they reach out to the Ohio Means Jobs Athens County to complete on-the-job training for the position.

**Cate Matisi:** *Women for Recovery.* Showed support for the new recovery home and has been an active member of the task force sharing information and networking with members through the planning phase and foundation of Serenity Grove.

**Sandy Sickles:** *Co-Occurring Disorders Treatment Coordinator for Hopewell Health Centers.* Sandy announced that she is soon switching to the position of Clinical Director and her current position will soon be available. Additionally, Hopewell is expanding their Vivitrol Program to the Plains office and will offer three group therapy sessions a week.

**Larry Green:** *Retired ODRC Employee (based in Licking County).* Larry spoke with the Task Force on his background within juvenile corrections and veterans services. Recently, Larry attended an ODRC state-wide meeting with Director Gary Moore and announced that he helped to secure a 150-bed home in Licking County for veterans currently serving parole. Additionally, Larry shared that there are 3000 veterans currently serving in ODRC prisons across the state. He is hoping to help secure funding for creating a veterans entrepreneurship program that they would be introduced to 90 days before release. This would be in partnership with the Appalachian Veteran's Initiative and the Licking County Veterans Reentry.

**Marianna Carson:** *Supervisor of the Athens County Adult Parole Authority (APA).* Marianna introduced her intern, **Ali Lopez**, who will be working on a Reentry Board for the Adult Parole Authority office. Currently, they are supervising 815 individuals in the county. The APA continues to be a major referral source for the Reentry Program in order to help people with their basic needs and gaining employment.

**Amy Good:** *Program Coordinator for Southeastern Ohio Regional Jail.* Amy introduced herself to the Task Force as it was her first meeting. She is primarily responsible for bringing programming such as Alcoholics & Narcotics Anonymous to the Regional Jail. Amy also works directly with many members of the Reentry Task Force to secure mental health and substance abuse treatment services prior to discharge from jail.

**Jared Butcher:** *Community member active with Kiwanis and Kairos.* Continues to show support for the Athens Reentry Task Force and gather information that may be helpful with his work in the prisons and church.

**Laura O'Neil:** *Outreach Coordinator for Athens County Public Libraries.* Laura passed out brochures about the home delivery program that was officially launched on November 10th. She noted that the program is primarily intended for individuals who have difficulty with access to transportation and/or the ability to leave their homes. Further information on the program is available on the homepage of the Athens County Public Libraries website.

**Becky Filar:** *Athens County Prosecutor's Office.* Becky announced that the second vivitrol graduation that will be held on December 6th from 5:30-6:30 at Trimble High School. She is excited for the event and noted that there will again be several individuals from the graduating class who will speak of their recovery journey.

**Nancy Stotts:** *Employment Counselor at Ohio Means Jobs Athens County.* Nancy announced that the OMJ is in need of men's shoes, both interview shoes and cold-winter shoes such as boots. Service providers who are interested in potentially obtaining short-term classes for their clients should contact Tina at the Tri-County Adult Career center to see if funding would be available to attend these classes. Short-term classes consist of courses that are not Pell Grant eligible, such as computer classes and CPR training. Nancy asks members to contact her if they wish to post a job on the employment board, hold a job fair, or conduct interviewing at the OMJ Center.

**Scott Zielinski:** *Director of the Athens County Job & Family Services.* Scott reminded Task Force members of the Industrial Maintenance Program available for enrollment at the Tri-County Adult Career Center. He noted that the non-emergency transportation program is still in transition to be taken over by the state Medicaid program, but that a reprieve has been granted, extending the current services to be in function until January 1st, 2019. Scott announced that ACJFS is getting ready to roll out the new Child Care Program for publicly funded childcare. The program is currently of approved legal status throughout the state but is heavily underutilized. The program will allow for in-home childcare for families 130% below the poverty line and for the in-home aides to be certified through the ACJFS. There are no restrictions on family members becoming certified in-home aides as long as the aides are not the legal guardian or parent of the children in question. If interested in learning more about the program, Scott asks that members contact Lisa Radford ([lisa.radford@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:lisa.radford@jfs.ohio.gov)).

**Jay Forshey:** *ODRC Southeast Region Reentry Administrator.* Jay has worked for over 22 years in the ODRC system at four different locations in various positions. Much of his current work is in communities as a means of sharing stories of reentry in order to create new task forces. He encourages community members to become justice liaisons to bridge the gap of support and connectivity from the community to the justice system, thus ensuring better chances of success and reintegration for reentry individuals. Jay thanked everyone for their continued leadership in the county. He announced that 370 Athens County individuals (323males/47 females) are currently incarcerated and presented that approximately 16 people will be released by the end of the year. Jay invited the Task Force members to attend the Southeast Regional Ex-Offender Coalition that will take place in Lancaster at the Liberty Center on December 20<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am to 1:00pm to register <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ohio-ex-offender-reentry-coalition-tickets-40032605601>

**Sheila Shafer:** *Athens County Children Services.* Sheila announced the development of the Ohio Start Program, a peer-based trauma treatment program that is receiving funding from the Public Defender's Program. Athens County will become the 14th county in Ohio to join in the Peer Program network. The Program will introduce families within the Athens County Children Services to peer mentors at Integrated Services who have experience with their own journeys in child welfare and addiction. As addiction makes it difficult for parents to maintain permanent custody of their children under the eyes of the law, Sheila is hoping that the peer support will provide additional help and guidance for these at-risk families. Additionally, the Athens County

Children Services annual Christmas Giving Tree is up at the Athens County mall in which community members can find the gift wish-lists of at-risk children in the area.

**Mike Blevins:** Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. Mike announced to the Task Force that OOD is in need of referrals. Potential clients can include anyone with a disability which could include being incarcerated and having mental health/substance abuse issues. They will be evaluated for employment assistance needs. Individuals will also partner with various employment services at the Ohio Means Jobs Athens County. If you have any further questions please email [michael.blevins@ood.ohio.gov](mailto:michael.blevins@ood.ohio.gov)

**Larry Fisher:** *Executive Director for ACEnet.* Larry introduced the SBA Grant that ACEnet was recently rewarded. The grant will be utilized to create a small-business program for reentry individuals within the Athens County area in its first year. There will be two possible tracks available: General Entrepreneurship, and a Food Sector Entrepreneurship in which individuals will be able to learn more about the food industry and find placement at one of the the many locally owned restaurants and food businesses in the area. Both tracks will allow clients to receive educational training, business lessons, and more to provide a strong basis of practical knowledge and experience. Currently, Larry wishes to reach out to charitable organizations in the area to secure a “loan guarantee pool” for individuals in the program with a focus on religious-based organizations. Please contact Larry if you would be interested in having ACEnet members come speak to any charitable or social organization about getting involved in the program.

**Sarah Cornwell:** *new Microenterprise Program Trainer at ACEnet* who was hired to help facilitate, implement, and grow the SBA Grant. Sarah was formerly the Environmental Specialist at Ohio University’s Voinovich School. She is eager to work with the reentry population and begin work on this new SBA program.

**Shawn Stover:** *Reentry Coordinator Athens County,* stated that the SBA program to help Reentry individuals through ACEnet will be very beneficial to the Reentry population and hopefully open doors for other opportunities for employment. When the community see’s the benefits of hiring people who want to work and overlook their backgrounds perhaps we will be able to recruit more employers.

Shawn thanked everyone for sharing information about their programming and upcoming events as this is a great opportunity for people to make connections and learn how we are all working together to help people in the community. He also reminded the Task Force members to keep an eye out for the next newsletter and future emails regarding Reentry. It is recommended to check out the Athens Reentry Task Force website for previous newsletters, events and minutes.

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The next meeting will be on **January 22nd at 9:30am** at the Athens County Job & Family Services main office located at - 13183 St Rt 13 Millfield, Ohio 45761. **There will NOT be a meeting in December.**