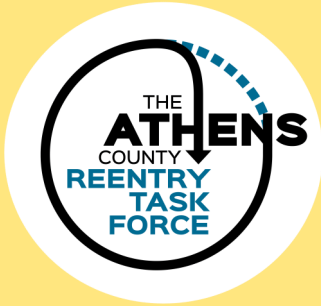




Reentry Task Force



NEW LOGO!

Local Graphic Designer Kailee Slusser donated her time and creativity to the Task Force in the form of a new logo! With a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design from Ohio University, she is “always looking for nonprofits to help.”

She says, “My inspiration was a combination of mind mapping and conversation with [Task Force Newsletter editor and AmeriCorps worker] Erin Phillips as well as an audit of existing logos for similar programs. Erin and I brainstormed potential visuals for the logo. We found that all symbolic imagery that is mentally associated with prison is negative, and we wanted to attach a positive and hopeful attitude instead, without being cheesy. We talked a lot about breaking the unfortunately common cycle of leaving prison just to turn around and come back, and this logo grew from there.” Thank you Kailee!

CONGRATULATIONS SCOTT ZIELINSKI!

After 15 1/2 years with the agency, Scott Zielinski has been hired as the new director of Athens County Job and Family Services. Scott was previously the director of the Workforce Development Board as well as the supervisor of The Work Station located in The Plains. Other positions he has held within the agency include social program coordinator, special projects coordinator, and child support enforcement investigator. Scott was also the Reentry Program’s previous Reentry Coordinator as well as the Reentry Task Force Chairperson. He is still an active member of the Task Force and we are excited to see what his new position will bring.



TASK FORCE PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

The Reentry Task Force has partnered with the agency for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunities to achieve quality employment, independence, and disability determination outcomes. Michael Blevins has been working for OOD for 16 years now and has been a member of the Reentry Task Force for the last 3 years. Mike works with any client that has a disability regardless of their employment barrier and has helped many Reentry Program participants. He tailors employment goals to each individual’s needs and abilities. Mike states that the agency has one new counselor and is in the process of hiring two new case load assistants which can accommodate more referrals. If you have an individual that may qualify for their employment related services, please have them call 800-248-4378 to speak with an OOD

representative. More information, as well as an online application, can be found at www.ood.ohio.gov. Thank you Michael Blevins for being an active member of the Athens Reentry Task Force and for helping reentry clients succeed!



WE CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR DONATION



The Period Project is a student organization at Ohio University, with a mission to provide feminine hygiene products to all populations of women, especially those in poverty. The organization was founded by then-freshmen Madison Sloat and Zach Gheen in the spring of 2016, so the organization is still very new. TPP currently has around twenty-five active members that work on charitable initiatives, legislative efforts, and campus/community outreach. Last semester, The Period Project raised around \$1600 dollars, which is still being used to purchase hygiene items like the donation given to the Reentry Program. However, The Period Project also accepts physical donations, which it uses in both community outreach and on campus for its "Take a Tampon, Leave a Tampon" Initiative. The Period Project is working to educate and train communities of all genders on the importance of accessibility to feminine hygiene products. Check out their website at www.period-project.org, or look them up on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Tumblr!

ANOTHER SUCCESS STORY!

A woman who was released from prison in December 2015 after being incarcerated for 6 years on various drug related charges, became a Reentry Program participant and story of success. During the initial video conference prior to her release, she was goal oriented about her career path. She had OSHA training, operated a fork lift, and worked in a warehouse for 3 years during her incarceration at The Ohio Reformatory for Women. She hoped that those skills would transfer to getting a degree in heavy equipment operation. She came to The Work Station upon release with a positive attitude. As luck and timing would work in her favor, there was a slot available for the WIA/WIOA program to help financially supplement her financial aid and help with the hidden costs of college like transportation or books. It has been a little over a year since her release and she continues to work with Laurie McKnight in the WIOA program. She now reports completing most of the heavy equipment degree and will be working on the CDL portion this semester. In addition, she was recently promoted to Assistant Manager at the restaurant where she has been working since October 2016 while attending school. Did we save one? Yes we did and that has made all the difference!



- Reentry Coordinator Shawn Stover

SPECIAL THANKS!

A special thanks to Jay Forshey at Noble Correctional for helping 2 recently released individuals to obtain an offender release ID. Occasionally due to judicial release or other unusual circumstances ex-offenders are released without an ID. Many people have been in prison for years and have a difficult time obtaining needed documents without at least some initial form of identification. These ID's allow the person to exchange the Offender Release ID plus \$8.50 to get the Ohio State ID. Many organizations and employers require some sort of photo identification in order to provide services or become hired. Thanks again Jay for going above and beyond!

NEXT MEETING INFORMATION

The Next Task Force meeting will be on March 27th at 9:30AM at the Athens County Job and Family Services County Home office in the conference room. See you there!

This newsletter was a collaborative publication between Athens Reentry Taskforce Chairperson Shawn Stover and Newsletter Editor AmeriCorps VISTA member Erin Phillips working with the Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACENet) released on February 23rd, 2017