



Reentry Task Force

TASK FORCE PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

Program Director Scott Weaver has held several positions at SEPTA that include Primary Counselor, Counseling Coordinator, and he will soon become the Interim Executive Director. His job entails supervising program staff, working with the facilities administrative team, The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Coordinator, as well as SEPTA's sex-offender specialist. He says SEPTA is always looking for clothing donations, especially work wear and coats, as well as community service opportunities. Scott says they are also interested in scheduling presenters from social service groups to come and speak to the residents. He sees the biggest barrier to reentry as transportation and recommended a mobile reentry unit. Wendy Cottrill, the Work Release Coordinator, has been working at SEPTA for 4 years now. Her job entails all community service scheduling. She has been a tremendous help in getting Reentry Coordinator Shawn Stover time with residents to discuss needs upon release and the Reentry Program is very grateful for all of her coordination! Thank you Scott Weaver and Wendy Cottrill for being active members of the Athens Reentry Task Force and for your commitment to those being released from incarceration!



Photo taken by Ohio University Photojournalist Emily Matthews

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

A huge thanks to Diana Pfaff at the 317 Board and Hopewell employees David Schenkelberg, Chris Henry and Dan Brozak for arranging a very generous donation of hygiene items to the Reentry Program for people being released from incarceration and in treatment for mental health/substance abuse issues. The donation will help us create an estimated 40-50 individual hygiene packs for those in need.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 17th: 13th Annual OhioMeans Jobs - Job Fair

This event will be hosted from 10am - 2pm at the Athens Recreation Center, 701 E. State Street, Athens. It is free and open to the public. Please tell participants to bring a resume and come prepared to interview!

For more information about this event, contact Rocky Brunty or Nancy Stotts at (740) 797-1405.



NEW RESEARCH!

Jenny Shadik is a member of the social work faculty at Ohio University. She is currently conducting a research study to learn more about fathers' experiences with their children. Fathers who have experienced one or more challenges (incarceration, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, child abuse and neglect) are the group of focus. Study questions ask about fathers' attitudes, behaviors, and experiences. Another goal of this research is to increase knowledge of fathers' strengths and challenges. There are gaps in the knowledge base around this topic and hopefully this study will help researchers and clinicians learn more in order to help address prevention and intervention services.

The Reentry Task Force is looking forward to what this research discovers and what programs can be made to help fathers in our community!

UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED:

April 18th, 2017: IPAC Professional Conference and Town Hall

This conference offers the opportunity to learn alongside professionals from all sectors and community members about how to build a supportive community around our neighbors who are affected by the opioid crisis. The keynote presenter will be Tina Willauer, Director of Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (S.T.A.R.T.) of the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services. She will describe best practice principles and strategies that work well for families with co-occurring substance use and child maltreatment. She'll also discuss her experience with S.T.A.R.T. and an example of the program implemented in a nearby Appalachian community. CEUs are available for this event.

[Link to professional conference](#)

<http://www.ipacohio.org/aprilconference>

[Link to Town Hall](#)

<http://www.ipacohio.org/townhall>

A MESSAGE FROM SOMEONE IN TRANSITION

"I keep in touch with some of my friends at Marysville. It reminds me of a place that I do not want to be and motivates me to do well with my life. Sleep has been very hard since I was use to so much noise in prison. It is difficult with the silence at night." Her thoughts on addiction- "It gets in your mind and gets to you. My kids and family can be triggers. It is really hard and I struggle."

This person was incarcerated for 3 years on multiple drug charges and is currently attending counseling and treatment at Health Recovery Services. She feels that over time with the help through HRS and continued counseling that her struggle with drug abuse will become a distant memory. She worked in a garden/horticulture center for 2 years while incarcerated and was able to earn a certificate from The Ohio Nursery and Landscaping Association. This person also completed 3 computer classes while incarcerated to have better skills upon release. She has currently applied for several jobs and had a few interviews but the felony on her record has been an obstacle. The long term plan is for her to finish a college degree that she started several years ago and perhaps become a mentor and chemical dependency counselor to help others struggling with addiction.

- Reentry Coordinator Shawn Stover

SPEAKING EVENT

Shawn Stover spoke about the Reentry Program and Task Force at the Kiwanis Club meeting on March 13th at the OU Inn. There were 3 members of the Task Force at the meeting Judge George McCarthy, Dave Brennan local employer, and Tracy Kelly of Big Brothers, Big Sisters. It was a very welcoming group with good questions and great interest in the issues facing people with a felony returning to society. There was also a large donation of new stuffed animals from Tracy to give to children in need. Thank you to the Kiwanis club for the invitation to speak on reentry and thank you to Tracy Kelly for the donation!

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! There will not be a meeting in April.

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 March 23rd, 2017