



Athens Reentry Community



Ohio Reformatory for Women-picture from online posting

Shawn Stover Reentry and Cate Matisi Women for Recovery went to the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville on March 20th. Cate had already been on a tour previously with Sarah Cornwell from ACEnet that created a solid contact with Cynthia Lynch a casemanager and organizer of events at the prison. Cate also returned the same week for a Tapestry event with other members of Women for Recovery.

The Reentry fair at ORW was a great opportunity to meet women coming back to Athens and the surrounding counties and begin to develop rapport and a plan for Reentry. Serenity Grove also had a well organized Tri-Fold with pictures of the house, staff and mission. There were many positive comments from the women at ORW about the concept of Serenity Grove and gave them hope that people in our communities care and are working on options for people leaving prison in need of more supportive services.

The visit to ORW opened new lines of communication with prison staff and gave us a good opportunity to share our local information with women who are soon to be released. There were many women from other parts of Ohio who also welcomed the opportunity to talk with us and share their stories of hope and recovery. We were able to give them words of encouragement and support for their release to other Ohio counties..



SE Ohio Reentry Coalition Meeting April 16, 2018

Jay Forshey ODRC SE Ohio Reentry Administrator scheduled a gathering of several Southeast Ohio Regional Reentry Coalitions at the Ohio Means Jobs Athens site to discuss various ideas and strategies regarding helping our returning citizens to receive better services and have a better chance for success upon release. Staff from Noble, Belmont and Chillicothe Correctional also attended to answer questions about pre-release prison services and reintegration services. The use of video conferencing with the prisons has been useful for the community reentry programs to reach out to the inmates prior to release with little loss of needed office time that would be consumed by travel.

The meeting was a great opportunity to discuss major issues of housing, transportation and linking of services to help with ongoing treatment and employment. The major consensus was that Reentry is not an entity or an event. Reentry is a community working together utilizing their services and strengths available to assist our returning citizens. Thanks so much to Jay Forshey and the continued support of Ohio DRC for working with our local communities to collaborate services.



Photo Courtesy of Dan Enger

StoryCorps Panel

Dan Enger -Global Enterprises and Robyn Singleton -Emory University travelled from Atlanta Georgia to Athens Ohio to complete the final part of the local StoryCorps process. What a great group of people pictured above from the panel that met at the Athens Ohio Means Jobs Center in The Plains to review and discuss written stories and audio recordings from students at the Federal Hocking Middle and High School , Rural Women's Recovery and participants from the Athens Reentry Program. The panel was comprised of a teacher, high school students, professionals, and community members who shared a common interest of helping to strengthen our communities and discuss some of the struggles of people living in Southeast Ohio. The life experience and hard earned wisdom of the panel led to some very thought provoking and interesting discussions about multiple issues around poverty , addiction , abuse/neglect and other barriers for people living in Southeast Ohio. We determined that listening, communicating and mentoring are key to understanding the needs of our youth and participants . Thanks so much to Dan and Robyn for their compassion.

REENTRY RANTS & RAVES

We had another successful job fair with Athens , Meigs and Perry Counties at The Athens Community Center. This is a great location and the community center has a very positive atmosphere. I was able to spend some time with John Koren from the Adult Parole Authority during the day as he strongly encouraged people on "Community Control" who were not employed to attend and pass out their resumes. The Athens Reentry Program and the Adult Parole Authority have a good relationship as we share the same goal of breaking down barriers for people who have limited resources and linking them with the needed services. The majority of the time this means gaining employment and making positive changes for a more productive life. I was impressed that there were so many people at the Job Fair that both John and I worked with as well as people who worked with other community control officers. There were many participants who stopped by our table afterwards with good news that they scheduled an interview or the employer was interested in their application.

Shawn Stover—Reentry Coordinator

NEXT MEETING INFORMATION

The next task force meeting will be on Monday **May 21, 2018** at **9:30AM** at the Athens County Job and Family Services County Home Office (13183 St Rt. 13 Millfield, Ohio 45761) in the conference room. See you there!

This newsletter was initially established January 2017 by Erin Phillips previous AmeriCorps Vista through Appalachian Center For Economic Networks (ACEnet) and is currently edited and maintained by Athens Reentry Taskforce Chairperson Shawn Stover released on May 2nd , 2018.