

Anchorage Reentry Coalition
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
10/25/18

Representatives in attendance from the following organizations/groups: Anchorage Reentry Coalition; Mat-Su Reentry Coalition; Fairbanks Reentry Coalition; Alaska Dept. of Corrections; Akeela; Public Defenders Agency (AmeriCorps); Turiya of Alaska; AK National Guard Counter Drug Support; Anchorage Probation; CITC/Anchorage Reentry Coalition; The Business Boutique; The Daniel House; Cordova Center; PRC/ABADA; Nine Star; United Way; Arctic Circle Counseling + Consulting; VA; Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority; Partners Reentry Center. In total 29 individuals were in attendance.

1. Introductions.

2. Presentation: Monica Gross, United Way. Ms. Gross presented on the Pay for Success project. Ms. Gross explained: the concept of “permanent supportive housing;” the research that has been completed regarding the need to service individuals in Anchorage that become involved in the criminal justice system, exhibit homelessness, and are also high-utilizers of health care/emergency services; and presented data regarding successful supportive housing interventions in other locales. The Pay for Success project will entail 270 units of supportive housing (permanent housing plus case management) over a 4-year period; the plan is to enroll 5-6 participants per month during the 1st year of program implementation, and scaling up to an estimated 8 participants per month. Interviews with potential housing providers will begin the following week (end of October/start of November). The project will begin enrolling/placing individual in housing starting January, 2019. *[More details can be found within the PPT Presentation; contact the Coalition Coordinator if you would like a copy of the PowerPoint Presentation presented to the Coalition].*

3. Presentation: Jasmine Smith, Business Boutique. Ms. Smith presented information about The Business Boutique. The Business Boutique offers several services: classes, training and testing, business development, consulting and one-on-one mentoring for small business owners, and event planning. Ms. Smith has a contract with the Alaska Dept. of Corrections and does work with women at Hiland Prison; she is familiar with the needs of reentrants, is able to serve numerous demographics, and can customize services to the needs of the individual. The Business Boutique has 7 training programs, including certified computer repair, bookkeeper, customer service, community resources specialist, travel and tourism specialist, work safety, and administrative assistant. Graduates of the programs will be able to leave the Business Boutique with their credentials, as it is also a certified proctor port. The Business Boutique will be able to offer child care to parents. Some classes and services are free, and sliding scale fees are available for self-pay individuals. It is the certification testing (e.g. Microsoft) that is the most expensive component of the training where there is less flexibility in total cost to the customer.

4. Presentation: Jason De Heus. Mr. De Heus presented to the Coalition about his personal story, including his alcohol and drug use and eventual sobriety and recovery. Mr. De Heus successfully completed CITC’s Recovery and Reentry Program (Chanlyut), and is currently pursuing a degree in film.

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5. Upcoming Events:

- A reentry event specifically for those on Federal Probation will be held at the Federal Courthouse on Wednesday November 14 in the afternoon. The event will include speakers, followed by an opportunity for reentrants to get information from service providers via table top setups. This is the first attempt locally at such an event that specifically targets those on Federal Probation. Yulonda Candelario from the US Attorney's Office is helping to implement and organize the event, along with Jonathan Pistotnik of the Anchorage Reentry Coalition.
- There will be a hiring event on April 24th in the afternoon at the Mid-Town Job Center in conjunction with National Reentry Month. The intention is hold pre-event activities/workshops leading up to the hiring event, such as resume preparation, interview preparation, potential making interview clothes available. Demetria Veasy of the Midtown Job Center and the leader of the Coalition's Employment & Education Workgroup is leading the implementation of these events.
- The Midtown Job Center is interested in holding more hiring events in the community and is interested in doing a hiring event(s) at the local halfway houses, and specifically target those residents at Cordova Center and Midtown Center.

6. Coalition Coordinator Updates:

- The Coalition has a new informational brochure and a data sheet regarding some local statistics pertinent to reentry; the Coalition's Facebook page is being updated regularly with online stories and media pertaining to reentry (locally and nationally); and the Coalition's website has been updated, however it is still a work in progress.
- Dr. Eileen Starr was a member of the Coalition who passed away recently. Sometime again, Dr. Starr began collecting donations and supplies of basic toiletries for the purposes of giving them to people upon their release back into the community; she gave these supplies to the Coalition. Currently, the Coalition Coordinator has gathered up and itemized all the supplies, and has set a goal to distributed 100 backpacks full of essential items (soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, deodorant, etc.) to individuals that release to Anchorage and are working with the Coalition Case Manager. The Coalition is seeking donations of supplies and monetary support to reach the goal. Since the Coalition does not have non-profit status it is difficult to solicit donations from potential donors. The Coalition Coordinator has prepared a letter for potential donors, and has a list of the items being sought. Kudos to Yulonda Candelario for gathering up donations for the backpacks.

Next Quarterly Coalition Meeting:

January 24th at the NeighborWorks Alaska Office, from 9:30am-11am