



ROUNDTABLE RELEASE

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RERC Mission and Goals

During late spring and early summer, the RERC Board and Staff worked with a facilitator to reexamine our foundational statements and priority goals. A part of this process was soliciting input from you, our critical stakeholders. The board attempted to reconcile discrepancies between the preferences of the Roundtable and the feeling of urgency by Board and Staff.

The RERC identified three strategic issues that needed to be addressed in the revised mission statement.

These included the following:

- ✓ There is currently a severe stigma against hiring people with felony records.
- ✓ There is currently a severe shortage of adequate immediate, transitional and long term job opportunities.
- ✓ Many returning citizens are not adequately prepared or supported to be consistently successful in competitive employment

With these issues in mind the following revised RERC mission was developed:

The RERC mission is to identify, promote and create immediate and sustainable work opportunities for returning citizens and to promote change in the conditions which limit their success.

Priority Goals:

1. Develop a large, robust group of supportive employers.
2. Working with selected partners, design and implement a new pilot model for successful employment.
3. Through collaboration, achieve positive systemic change in assessment, job preparation, case management, support and mentoring.
4. Promote a positive community attitude toward giving returning citizens a second chance opportunity.

Reentry Roundtable

It's amazing that the leaves are turning and the kids are back to school already. It's also time for our fall Reentry Roundtable meeting. At this meeting we will be discussing the **Ban the Box** initiative that has been adopted by 23 cities and counties throughout the country. We plan on having presenters that have been pivotal in successfully bringing the **Ban the Box** initiative to Michigan.

So please mark your calendars and join us for a very informative meeting.

Monday September 13th 3:00-5:00pm
Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids
360 South Division
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Mapping Reentry Resources

The RERC, Grand Rapids Community Foundation and Community Research Institute of Grand Valley State University with the assistance of a local Steering Team continue with the process of mapping reentry resources and analyzing service gaps and redundancies.

A mapping survey was completed by approximately fifty service providers. Presently, a graduate assistant is downloading the results and beginning the analysis. This information will be presented to the Steering Team during the third week of September and shortly thereafter to the Reentry Roundtable.

The Mapping Project Steering Team includes:

Denise Allsberry	MDOC
Dan Buron	Goodwill Industries
Laurie Craft	GRCF
Randy Demory	Sherriff's Department
James Edwards, Ph.D.	GVSU
Yvonne Jackson	Kent Allegan MPRI
Priscilla Kimboko, Ph.D.	GVSU
Valerie Martin	US Probation Services
Ben Rosa	Hope Network
Ron Stuursma	RERC

Reentry Help Website Update



The Reentry Help website: www.reentryhelp.org has been operating for just over a year and is adding both users and service providers monthly. The site serves the greater Grand Rapids community and its primary purpose is to help returning citizens and their families get connected with the resources they need. We are currently testing a job bank for the site as well.

Here is a snapshot of the latest statistics from July 10:

- **522 individual visits 89% of which were first time visitors**
- **The largest percentage of visitors were interested in employment and housing**
- **1,559 individual page views**

The success of the site is dependent on the service providers who power it, so if you are not registered or know of a provider that could help strengthen the site, please let me know.

Scott Alsgaard
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News From the Jail

A brief update from Captain Demory: "We have not yet heard the results from our application for the Second Chance Act Grant. Final news regarding the likely closure of the Community Reentry Center will be out by the end of September. The TJC (Transition from Jail to Community) will continue inside the jail."



THE BIG THREES

BY ALYSON QUINN

Every forty-five seconds, a prisoner gets released. Walking through the gates to the outside may be easy. But staying out -- in a world fraught with responsibilities, decisions, and opportunities for failure -- can overwhelm ex-prisoners. Recidivism rates testify to this difficulty.

So what makes staying out such a challenge, and how can ex-prisoners get help to succeed? For returning prisoners and those determined to assist them, the benchmarks of successful reentry come in threes. [read more](#)

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WHAT IS HAPPENING AT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Your input counts!

The "Reentry Release" wants to hear news from your organization. We need your input on ideas and articles for possible inclusion in the future newsletters.

Contact Us:

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