



Restorations TODAY!

July 2009

Volume 1, Issue 1

A Publication of Restorations Ministries, Inc.

Upcoming Events:

- **3rd Annual International Prisons & Corrections Leadership Summit; Jul 20-24—Atlanta, GA**
- **Women Moving Forward Reentry Conference; Oct 24—Jessup, MD**

Inside this issue:

Letter from the **2**
President

MCI-W College **2**
Degree Program

From the Oval Office **3**

Raising the Bar in **3**
Partnerships

Healing Behind **3**
Bars

“Women Moving Forward” Reentry Conference

Restorations Ministries, Inc. (RMI) is privileged to co-host a daylong reentry conference consisting of educational and social activities for over 100 inmates scheduled for release from the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW), Maryland's only state prison for women. The facility houses 850 inmates out of the Maryland counties, Baltimore City, and the District of Columbia. RMI will join a number of national and local organizations who have built a reputation as a powerful presence in the area of public service.

The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) is spearheading the conference for the second year. The conference, entitled **“MCIW: Women Moving Forward”**, scheduled for October 2009, will speak on a number of pertinent issues incarcerated

women face upon their release. This public service project is an innovative approach at outreach to women in need of assistance as they attempt to reintegrate into the community. These women, mothers to an estimated 300 children, will face a number of obstacles as they attempt to re-join society.

Last year's conference was highly successful; the first of its kind in the state of Maryland. It gave over 125 inmate participants the opportunity to attend workshops with written materials covering various reentry priorities. During lunch, a fashion show was held where about 20 inmates showcased “work-ready” and eveningwear clothing donated by Suited to Succeed, a Baltimore nonprofit that helps women transition from unemployment to self-sufficiency. Says Judge Brenda Murray, NAWJ committee co-

chair and the chief administrative law judge at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, “We rented a carpet for them to march up and down on—and they can keep the clothes!” Judge Murray recognized that the women prisoners' needs regarding reentry are neglected, especially relative to men.

Several studies have shown that the vast majority of in-



Participants attend workshop session.

mates cite assistance with finding employment as one of their greatest needs after release. **Story Continues on Pg. 4**

Learning Evidence-Based Practices in Las Vegas

In April 2009, RMI attended an extraordinary reentry conference hosted in Las Vegas, NV. The conference, entitled, “Strategy and Tactics for Evidence-base Best Practices of Ex-Offender Reform and Transition to the Community”, provided information of evidence supported and data driven practices in the industry. Joy-fields Institute, the host organi-

zation produces education, training, and development programs to help leadership and management in the justice, corrections and behavioral care fields discover, understand, and implement data-driven Evidence-base Practices (EBP). EBP are methodology supported by research findings which provide evidence the approach is effective and more

likely to produce desired results. The purpose of the 3-day highly interactive program was to equip attendees to effectively address correctional reform and client change through the adoption of evidence-base best practices.

The term “evidence-based” is one that has been recently in-

Story Continues on Pg. 2



Robin M. Waley
President & CEO

"EBP elements have been empirically supported through research that has confirmed specific and defined outcomes."

Letter from the President

Restorations Ministries, Inc., or "RMI", is a Christian-based, nonprofit corporation managing educational and vocational training institutes, as well as providing transitional housing to assist ex-offenders to make a successful reentry into our communities. Our mission is to provide educational and job training resources with supportive services to maximize the marketability of the formerly incarcerated, in an effort to minimize unemployment, and reduce recidivism. As a new organization operating in the District of Columbia, we realize that this may be a daunting

challenge, but we are up for the task!

Our vision is to provide temporary housing for the duration of the client's training and preparation for reentry. Unlike many other transitional programs that focus primarily on housing, RMI's core emphasis is education to increase marketable skills and vocational training that is job-specific for employment acquisition. It is our hope that clients discover their God-given purpose and begin to advance toward its fulfillment. We are committed to providing excellent service to formerly incarcerated adults to help

them realize their potential. Answering the call to address the explosive reentry of ex-offenders into our local communities and impede an increasing recidivism rate, we will provide the tools they need to maintain productive living.

Our leadership includes professionals with over 60 years of collective experience in non-profit management and community service. In maintaining community accountability, we will utilize state-of-the-art technology to make quantitative and qualitative analyses to consistently monitor our program's effectiveness.

Cont'd from Pg. 1, "Learning Evidence-Base Practices"

corporated throughout the non-profit industry. EBP elements have been empirically supported through research that has confirmed specific and defined outcomes. (e.g. reduction in recidivism, increased employment rates, behavioral improvements, etc). There may exist other elements that are not empirically tested, but there is a general agreement among experienced professionals that

these offender management practices are important and beneficial (i.e., "promising practices" or "best practices").

Some EBP elements for offender management learned at the conference include: a) to begin to plan for release when offenders enter the residential setting; b) to identify and anticipate barriers to reentry early in the process; c) to develop case

management and intervention plans to address identified needs; d) to identify community resources prior to release; and, e) to link institutional and community stakeholders prior to release.

RMI is committed implementing EBP and the highest quality of servicing in the execution of reentry servicing.

MCI-W College Degree Program

One of RMI's collaborative organizations, the National Association of Women Judges, has launched the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women College Degree Program. It is an innovative collaboration between government, nonprofit and an institution of higher learning.

The Anne Arundel Community College will present a college

degree program for the 850 female inmates housed at the facility. In a period spanning two weeks, consisting of standards, placement testing, guidelines, and goals, inmates were afforded the opportunity for education that they would otherwise not have. The testing was carried out over a 3-day period. Officials from the college met with the women to discuss their past and present

ambitions.

Fifty women met the criteria and were selected to participate. Classes began the Spring semester of 2009. The credits earned would allow a participant to complete an associates degree in liberal arts and receive credentials directly from the college; a wonderful springboard to a successful future.

From the Oval Office—President Obama and Reentry

In his new budget for 2010 President Obama requested \$109 million for prisoner reentry programs, including \$75 million for the Office of Justice Programs to expand grant programs authorized by the Second Chance Act that provide counseling, job training, drug treatment, and other transitional assistance for former prisoners. In an effort to generate public support, the President went on an unprecedented media campaign, appearing on everything from 60 minutes to ESPN.

The Second Chance Act of 2007: Community Safety

Through Recidivism Prevention is federal legislation designed to ensure the safe and successful return of prisoners to the community. The main purpose of the Act is to reform prior legislation to include reauthorization and expansion of provisions for assistance to offenders being released from prison.

Additionally, the Act provides for the expansion of state and local reentry projects in order to expand services to offenders and their families for reentry into society, as well as the necessary services to remain productive members of society.

Each year, more than 650,000 people are released from state and federal prisons. They struggle with substance abuse, lack of adequate education and job skills, and mental health issues. A large number of these people return to prison within three years of their release due to inadequate rehabilitation/social services and job opportunities.

The Act will address these barriers with additional government funding for programs that ease prisoners' transition back into society with job placement, housing assistance, counseling and drug treatment.



President Obama introduces FY2010 budget

Raising the Bar in Partnerships

In an effort to remain abreast of cutting-edged information and technology, the executive staff of RMI attended the 9th Annual Public-Private Partnership Conference—Raising the Bar: Establishing and Recognizing World Class Partnerships sponsored by the DC Office of Partnerships and Grants Services. Held at the DC Convention Center, agencies from around the region attended to participate in

interactive workshops conducted by industry experts. The RMI team attended three workshops to help build the capacity of the organization and to leverage services already in place. The workshops focused on funding evidenced-based programs, capitalizing on media partnerships, and continuous quality improvement for our program. Says Robin Waley, RMI ED, "We need to maximize

opportunities in establishing community and public partnerships as we implement this very unique program servicing to the population of reentrants.



"We need to maximize opportunities in establishing community and public partnerships"

Healing Behind Bars Through the Word of God

Each week they file into the classroom and almost fill to capacity. Female inmates eagerly attend the weekly Bible Study at Jessup's state prison. This week's study is a continuation on "Forgiveness".

During the course of the series, women shared their struggle to forgive persons and perpetrators causing injuries to their souls. Injuries contributing to a

relentless emotional pain that followed them throughout the course of their lives. Pain that began a rollercoaster of vain attempts to medicate with drugs and/or alcohol. Some experienced the pain as victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse, and others from neglect. But whatever the underlying cause, they were now faced with a dilemma; the decision to forgive; not only those who

caused them pain but also forgiving themselves for subsequently causing others pain.

At the end of the series, based on the biblical story in the Old Testament about Joseph who was sold into slavery, falsely imprisoned for years, yet came to forgiveness, many women were able to identify with their own lives. In the end, the only answer was to forgive.

Restorations Ministries, Inc.

4927 North Capitol Street, NE
Suite #207
Washington, DC 20011
Phone: 301-535-9659
Fax: 301-870-4112
E-mail: info@restorationsministries.org
Website: www.restorationsministries.org

To whom much is given, much is required

Restorations Ministries, Inc., or “RMI” is a Christian-based, nonprofit corporation managing educational and vocational training institutes, as well as providing transitional housing to assist ex-offenders to make a successful reentry into our communities. The mission of RMI is, “*to provide educational and job training resources with supportive services to maximize the marketability of the formerly incarcerated in an effort to minimize unemployment and reduce recidivism.*”

RMI’s core emphasis is education to increase marketable skills and vocational training that is job-specific for employment acquisition.

Cont’d from Pg. 1, “Women Moving Forward”

One of the reasons last year’s conference was so successful was because of the successful partnership between government, corporate, and non-profit communities, all coming together to accomplish one goal. In one segment of the conference, a plenary on finding employment was held. Inmates who were scheduled for release within a 60-day timeframe were eligible to participate in the employment plenary session.

Many from the business community, such as, Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Downtown Partnerships participated. Some

business participants conducted onsite interviews. Inmates interviewed on scheduled appointments and dressed in professional attire. Many of the participants representing national corporations and local businesses expressed that they were very impressed.

This year’s conference will focus on a series of interactive sessions covering employment, affordable housing, healthcare, education, addiction and mental health recovery, family reunification, and personal finances. Groups supporting the conference, headed by NAWJ, are Alternative Directions, Inc., Girl

Scouts of Central Maryland, Marian House, Maryland Commission for Women, Maryland Women’s Law Center, National Women’s Prison Project, and the Maryland Women’s Bar Association.

The conference will empower inmates with information to make a successful reentry to society and live productive lives. Armed with a host of resources for housing options to apply to with case managers, and employment leads with opportunities to interview with prospective employers, the women can face the prospect of reentry with confidence.



MCIW inmates model in fashion show