

Mercer County Reentry Task Force

Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 15, 2013

Location: 218 N. Broad Street, 2nd Floor, Trenton NJ

****Next meeting date is on July 10, 2013 at 218 N. Broad Street (2nd Floor), Trenton, NJ @1:30PM****

In Attendance

Herb Levine- *Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness*, **Stacie McGeehan-** *Mercer County Department of Human Services*, **Linda Rogers-** *Mercer County of Correction*, **Luis Rivera-** *One Stop Center*, **Cynthia Morgan-** *Helping Arms*, **Zachary Brown-** *Helping Arms*, **Perry Shaw, III-** *A Better Way*, **Jan Stokes-** *A Better Way*, **Celeste Jackson-** *A Better Way*, **Carrie Steel-** *NJDOC*, **Wendi Kornberg-** *DOC Office of Drug Programs*, **Brittany Aspromonti-** *NJDOC*, **Grizel Wilson-** *NJDOC*, **Denise Higgins-** *Catholic Charities*, **Lt. James Dickinson-** *NJ Parole Board*, **Abdul Muhammad-** *C.E.C.*, **Daren Ivy-** *C.E.C. Bo Robinson*, **Anastasia Jackson-** *Probation*, **Tonya Coy-** *UIH Family Partners*, **Duncan Harrison-** *UIH Family Partners*, **Doris Mesinoff-** *Mercer Board of Social Services*, **Lorna Colligan-** *Mercer Board of Social Services*, and **Elzata Goodman-** *UJIMA*.

Staff: Michelle Daniels- *AmeriCorps VISTA at Bonner Center*- recorded minutes.

Stacie handed out the Agenda and March 6, 2013 Minutes.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Meeting commenced at 1:33 PM. Members introduced themselves.

March 6, 2013 minutes were accepted.

2. Agency Updates

Some members discussed services their agencies provide.

Doris Mesinoff-MCBOSS- Ex-offenders are placed in housing at the time of release, despite the 30-day waiting period imposed by the State for receiving General Assistance.

Tonya Coy- *UIH Family Partners* –On June 15th UIH will be honoring fathers. Duncan Harrison will replace Tonya at upcoming Re-entry meetings.

Cynthia Morgan- *Helping Arms* –Have grant to work with inmates returning to Mercer County with housing, jobs and intensive case management. Program screened for individuals with multiple incarcerations and work history. It also helped people at the *Rescue Mission*.

- 58 served and 5 returned to jail (2 returned for prior charges)
- 35 housed (thanks to MCBOSS), re-employed and off assistance; workings of Doris, Cathy and Lorna at MCBOSS were commended
- This was a federal grant that will now be operated by county money

Luis Rivera-*One Stop Center*- State college tuition waiver for individuals to improve certain skills (not obtain a degree), waiting on approval for new funding.

Perry Shaw, III-*A Better Way*- Organization provides counseling, jobs and training for the population. Ford Motor Company training completed, OSHA training coming in July. There are over 3000 vacant buildings in Trenton; working with City Works and Isles revitalizing homes. On Wednesday, May 22, 2013 there is a showing of a documentary entitled: *Tale of Two Cities*.

Wendi Kornberg-*NJDOC*-Grant funded program engaging the family pre and post release. Post release program is 3 months. Also, sub-granted services to Shiloh CDC and 2 other agencies.

Darren Ivey-*C.E.C Bo Robinson*- Helping connect individuals with housing and drug programs. Attending ex-offenders career fair on Friday in PA; wants to bring *Second Chance* program over to NJ.

Denise Higgins-*Catholic Charities*- She is working to connect Emergency Services and Mental Health division. Job fair upcoming in June. *Trinity Cathedral* has space available with full kitchen and *Rescue Mission* has 4 vacant floors.

Linda Rogers- *Mercer County of Correction* -Now provides certified parenting class. Thanked Bonner Center for all their services.

3. OLD Business

Ban the Box

Ban the Box Hearing - June 13th at 10AM at the State House
Need employers who provide services to population to attend. Ron hires ex-offenders and Cynthia will speak to him about testifying.

New Business

Transition

Herb is retiring so this will be his last meeting. Members thanked Herb for his services. On June 20th at 5PM there will be a goodbye event for Herb. He will do consulting work in NJ and Philadelphia post retirement.

Perry Shaw III, *Executive Director of A Better Way* has agreed to accept the chairmanship. His residency in Mercer County will encourage relationship with local churches.

Mr. Abdul Muhammad has transitioned to a new position at Bo Robinson; he's now operating a work-release program.

Meeting adjourned at 2:27PM.

Members Present:

MEMBERS	AGENCY
Zachary Brown	Helping Arms
Cynthia Morgan	Helping Arms
Linda Rogers	Mercer County Correction Center
Luis Rivera	One Stop Center
Jan Stokes	A Better Way
Celeste Jackson	A Better Way
Perry Shaw, III	A Better Way
Carrie Steel	NJDOC
Wendi Kornberg	NJDOC
Brittany Aspromonti	NJDOC
Grizel Wilson	NJDOC
Denise Higgins	Catholic Charities
James Dickinson	NJ State Parole Board
Abdul Muhammad	C.E.C
Darren Ivey	C.E.C Bo Robinson
Anastasia Jackson	Probation
Tonya Coy	UIH Family Partners
Duncan Harrison	UIH Family Partners
Doris Mesinoff	MCBOSS
Lorna Colligan	MCBOSS
Herb Levine	Mercer Alliance
Michelle Daniels	Bonner Center