



CIRCLES OF SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

SERVING FOND DU LAC, THE FOX VALLEY, GREEN BAY, OSHKOSH & SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Winter 2009/2010

A PROGRAM OF GOODWILL INDUSTRIES NCW



Fond du Lac joins Community Circles of Support

Circles of Support is pleased to announce the addition of Fond du Lac into our service area. The Fond du Lac Community came on board with a strong core of volunteers in place with a history of mentoring individuals released from prison as well as solid Department of Corrections presence and support. We welcome them into our Regional Community Circles of Support.

Volunteer Marcie Janz writes...

Fond du Lac Circles of Support is one month old, but comes to the Circles of Support with several years of experience in mentoring ex-offenders. We began as Holy Family/FDL Community Mentoring Minis-

try after a request for assistance from an inmate anticipating release. Leading the development of this ministry was the Holy Family director of Pastoral Care along with a core group of four people. With the encouragement of the Taycheedah Correctional Institute warden, this group began formulating the ministry's mission.

In 2003, the first volunteers participated in a training session given by Taycheedah staff. Over the past four years, volunteers met with approximately 20-25 ex-offenders. One participant continues communication with his team after four years, without re-offending. In fact, In these

four years, 95% of those mentored had no revocation or return to prison.

In consideration of the future, it was determined that the benefits of a larger volunteer community, the similar mission and values of the Circles of Support as well as the collaboration with DOC were advantageous for our movement into the Circles. Its organizational structure allows Fond du Lac to assist its participants in small or large Circles, depending on the comfort of participants.

We appreciate being a part of the Community Circles of Support and look forward to working with all of you.

DOC, Division of Community Corrections weighs in on FDL Circles...by Karen Schmitz, DCC supervisor

With approximately half of released offenders returning to prison, this is a much needed resource that complements parole supervision. The new Fond du Lac Circle is currently working diligently to transition its structure, policies/procedures and training protocols.

Community Circles of Support assists the DOC and the offender with establishing the critical success factors that reduce an offender's risk in the community. Circle members often help offenders tackle the barriers that exist in housing, employment and reestablishing family ties. This partnership is an example of the community extending a hand to support the offender, while contributing to the reduction of recidivism and costs associated with incarceration. Fond du Lac Community Corrections welcomes this partnership and looks forward to many years of collaborative teamwork with offenders and Circle volunteers.

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Circles, Department of Community Corrections Employment Program (CCEP), and Goodwill Industries team up to give a Fox Valley participant success...

86.7% of Circle participants remained in the community rather than return to prison in the first 12 months. (2008 CCOS)

“I was terrified when I came home to face what had happened.”



This letter was written by a Circles of Support participant who was linked to a transitional job through Goodwill Industries NCW and CCEP. The power of our work is evident...

I just want to start by saying Thank You so much for everything you have done for me. The last five years have definitely been the most challenging years I have ever had. I can assure you that the moments of my doubt and uncertainty were so overwhelming that I actually attempted more than once to take my own life. When I (got involved with) CCEP and the Circles of Support Group, I can honestly tell you, that truly, you saved my life. The fear in me was so great that for eight months I was a fugitive away from my home and my family. As difficult as it was for me to go through that, it was more difficult to realize what my family went through when I was missing. I was terrified when I came home to face what had happened. It has been a very long and difficult two years since then. Imagine my surprise to find here the love and support of a community that was willing to help me. The list is endless: Probation and Parole, The Community Corrections Employment Program, The Day Report Center, The Outagamie County Health and Human Services, The Harbor House, The FSET Program, ADRC, Circles of Support Program, and Harmony Café. I didn't think I had anything to offer. I struggle with my doubt everyday. I want to let you know how grateful I am for all of the support I have received. I know that I still have a long way to go in the process of healing. There are moments when I don't think I will make it. But somehow, even at those darkest moments, I find that when I can reach out and ask for help, I find it. It is solid. It is really there. Thank you so much for believing in me and helping me to believe in myself. — R

Circle Happenings...

- Circles of Support recently received grants of \$5,000 from Memorial Presbyterian Church, Appleton, and \$2,000 from the Oshkosh United Way.
- Circles of Support was honored to receive the ESTHER Community Leadership Award on December 6, 2009, along with the Safe Streets Treatment Options Program.
- Circles will participate in Green Bay Correctional Institution's 2010 session of Choices and Possibilities (C&P). Facilitated by Ginny VandenBranden of GBI, the sessions of C&P introduce the inmates to a thorough array of the different resources needed to be successful when reentering the community.



Volunteer Spotlight...

The Circles volunteer spotlight this edition falls on Jeanne Samson.

Jeanne works diligently and loyally with both the Salvation Army Circle and Peace Lutheran Circle in Oshkosh. She has taken responsibility

to complete all of the outcome reports for both Circles. She's willingly given rides to participants in need and has met with participants to work on budgeting skills.

Her co-volunteers describe her as "a

terrific person, a reliable volunteer, and she brings a great strength-based attitude to the table."

Thank you, Jeanne, for your work and dedication to reentry and keeping our communities safer.

"In 2009, over 7.3 million people were on probation or in jail or prison—3.2% of all U.S. adult residents or one in every 31 adults." (Pew Center on the States)

Gifts Received...

- Dwight Becher - \$100 contribution
- Our Redeemer Lutheran Church – 7 quilts
- RSVP of Outagamie County's Hooks and Needles Team - 7 afghans
- Goodwill G3 Teams – Care packages for reentry
- St. Patrick Church, Neenah – Hotdogs for participant holiday party and scarves for participants

Gifts Needed...

- Holiday and Greeting Cards
- Gloves and Hats
- Stamps
- School Supplies
- Bus Passes
- Bicycles
- Hygiene products

"People helping people transition from incarceration to the community"

**SERVING FOND DU LAC, THE FOX VALLEY, GREEN BAY,
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A PROGRAM OF GOODWILL INDUSTRIES NCW

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Check us out on [Facebook](#)
Community Circles of Support

What We Do...

Community Circles of Support is a reentry support program. Trained volunteers meet with releasing offenders in a group or "Circle" format to specifically address transitional issues for men and women returning to our communities from incarceration.

Circles offers three main services: pro-social support, breaking down barriers, and concrete resources linkage.

How to Be a Volunteer...

Volunteers are what make Circles an effective, meaningful program. Adult volunteers are sought to meet in a group setting with ex-offenders to provide support and encouragement for good choices and assist in raising participants' accountability. Time commitment is once or twice per week. Training is provided. To apply, call Danel Burchby at 920-968-6832 or 1-877-490-3120 or e-mail dburchby_gw@gwicc.org, or visit our [Web site](#).

How to Refer a Participant...

All Circle communities are currently accepting participant referrals. Recently released men and women may be referred by their agents, community organizations or self-refer. Participants must attend Circles voluntarily, take accountability for their crimes and be open to feedback on various life issues. To refer, please call Danel Burchby at 920-968-6832 or 1-877-490-3120 or e-mail dburchby_gw@gwicc.org, or visit our [Web site](#).

Please cut and return this portion...

Please consider supporting Circles of Support in assisting ex-offenders to reintegrate back into the community in the following way(s):

I wish to make a cash or check donation in the amount of:

\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other: \$ _____

(Please make checks payable to: Circles of Support/Goodwill Industries – Return to: CCOS, 1800 Appleton Rd., Menasha, WI 54952)

I wish to make a credit card donation: Please charge my VISA MASTERCARD

Account # _____

Expiration Month/Year _____ / _____

Signature _____

I would like more information about how I can become a Circles of Support volunteer.

I may know of possible job/housing opportunities for Circles participants – please call me.

I can donate bus passes or a bicycle to Circles participants.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____