

## ***Circles of support awarded \$22,000 in reentry funds from Wisconsin Department of Corrections***

*Times-Villager* [www.timesvillager.com](http://www.timesvillager.com) • Wed., Sept. 2, 2009

Circles of Support has been awarded \$22,000 in reentry funds from the Wisconsin Department of Corrections to support its work in helping men and women make a successful transition from incarceration to life back in the community.

Danel Burchby, Circles Program Coordinator, said the reentry funds will be used in fiscal year 2010 to continue providing group and individual sessions for ex-offenders and to link them with resources for employment, housing, family and peer support, pro-social behaviors and community support. Circles is a voluntary program in which individuals recently released from prison can request to be accepted as Circles participants.

“Our ultimate goal is to reduce recidivism and make our communities safer,” Burchby said. “Prisoner reentry is an issue that affects all communities.”

Mary Kay Kollat, Reentry Director for the Department of Corrections, added, “Northeastern Wisconsin residents are reaping the public safety benefits from the innovative, multi-jurisdictional Circles partnership, and the DOC is pleased to continue its involvement to make this program a success. Circles of Support represents the kind of investments we need to make to promote the successful reentry of inmates back into the community, which ultimately means fewer new crimes, fewer new victims and enhanced community safety.”

When Circles became a program of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin in 2008, there were four Circles operating in three communities – Fox Valley, Green Bay and Oshkosh. Today, there are nine Circles, and Burchby attributed the increase to “our strong volunteer base that supports this growth and continues to step up to give our participants the best service possible.”

In addition, Circles of Support has successfully partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, both its Division of Adult Institutions and its Division of Community Corrections, to ensure that the highest number of eligible participants has access to Circles’ support.

“We all have a stake in the success of these men and women to move from incarceration to citizenship,” Burchby said. “To empower these participants to access resources and make better choices results in a payoff for both them and the community.”

With more inmates scheduled to be released in the upcoming year, Burchby said additional volunteers are needed to support Circles and to make their communities safer.

For more information, contact Burchby 968-6832 or e-mail [dburchby\\_gw@qwicc.org](mailto:dburchby_gw@qwicc.org) .