

Genesis House Ministry
Aspire Challenge

Organizational and Management Team Background

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Genesis House Ministries, Inc., is a faith-based, holistic, non-profit 501c3 initiative for men leaving the prison system in southwestern Pennsylvania. We officially began receiving clients in September of 2014. Prior to that we began renovation of our existing facility in June of 2012. Our clients are referred to us through the Probation, Drug Courts, Attorneys, Judges, and Bail Bondsman. We work in conjunction with Warden Brian Miller of the Fayette County Prison by interviewing and petitioning the courts for clients who are candidates for our program. At our core is a resident house, where clients receive far more than a warm bed. Through a comprehensive rehabilitation program GHM seeks to cut down recidivism and provide positive benefits for its members, their families and the community as a whole. Program elements include: Personal and spiritual development, Vocational development (including entrepreneurship), Substance abuse prevention, Counseling (social, mental, spiritual). We offer job placement training, dress for success, resume writing and mock interview training. Furthermore, other programs offer only housing without the critical supportive and reintegration services of Genesis House. We currently have an 87% success rate. Finally, most other programs are shelter only and require the residents to leave the shelter from 8:00 a.m. until the evening, thereby returning men to the streets with no work and no productive activities to occupy their time – truly a model that supports recidivist behavior. Genesis House is designed to turn this paradigm upside down and return our clients back to the community with the background and training needed to be a functional person in society. We build on their skills and give them everything they need in order to start their own business once they complete our program.

Genesis House Ministries, Inc. was founded by Reverend Terry Sanders who has been working as the Chaplain of the Fayette County Prison for the past 15 years and knows first-hand prison release qualifications and what it takes to make a difference in the lives of men. He has more than 25 years of recovery and has determined to make a change in the lives of other men who are incarcerated, who feel they have no hope, no way out and no chance for a new beginning. Rev Sanders went to Fairmont State University where he received a BS in Criminal Justice with a minor in Public Administration. He began planning and preparing to open the residential division which opened in September of 2014. During the planning stages, Rev. Sanders coming from the corporate side of business himself, established relationships with corporations and businesses who are now partnering with GH and employing our returning citizens.

Mr. Kevin Sanders serves as the Resident Manager where he oversees the clients and their daily schedules. Kevin also runs a mentor program in which he inspires, motivates, and encourages young men to pursue their dreams and focus education, to be men of character and integrity and the importance of respecting others. Mr. Sanders is a Magna Cum Laude graduate from Slippery Rock University, with a BS in Criminal Justice.

Mrs. Debra Ellis is the Case Manager and helps identify appropriate providers and facilities throughout the continuum of services. Case Management serves as a means for achieving clients' wellness and autonomy through advocacy, communication, education, identification of service resources and service facilitation. She received her Masters of Science in Human Services with specialization in Social and Community Services from Capella University. Mrs. Ellis also has a BS in Administration of Justice. She worked as a Correctional Officer for five years at the Fayette County Prison and has been a member of the Prison Ministry Team for the past 10 years, where she ministers and helps grow the women in the prison.

As an Intake Specialist, Miss Bernadette Leeds welcomes all new residents into the GH program. She acquires all necessary documentation for admission, explains house rules and what is expected during their stay. She assists clients and families with payment information, and encourages family members. She assists with correspondence and manages all bookkeeping duties. Miss Leeds goes into the state prison every Saturday and ministers the Celebrate Recovery Program. She has been in recovery for 30 years.

Entrepreneurial Education Delivery Solution

Genesis House clients will come to the program through a referral system. Rather than marketing to our individual residents, we will continue to build upon the network of professional relationships we already have in place for clients, funding and technical support. We will continue to collaborate with our community support system to identify the skills and assist each one according to their desire. Our community collaboration begins with the Fayette County Prison – Genesis House Executive Director, Reverend Terry A. Sanders, is the Prison Chaplain and has long and close ties with the prison administration. Mrs. Ellis will obtain client history and demographic from the inmates pending release to determine the possibility of entering Genesis House. Once a client enters Genesis we will continue to rely on the community for support. We also receive support from the Fayette county court system, it is here where Rev. Sanders will petition the court on a client's behalf, assuring the courts Genesis House will provide the care, counseling and support that is needed to carry out their sentence. The support of each client does not end once they enter our doors, in fact it is just the beginning. Once a client enters the facility the work of helping them heal through services provided by our staff and the help of outside agencies such as: **Fayette County Drug and Alcohol Commission, and Fayette County Behavioral Health.** These programs will continue to provide social services, and mental health counseling. Ensuring each client will continue to receive help to grow and regenerate back into the community. **Fayette County Courts** – The court system is supportive of our work and will be a source of referrals for alternative sentencing. **Fayette County Commissioners and Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB)** – both are groups of top-level county officials that address criminal justice issues from a systemic and policy level perspective. The Fayette County CJAB is working with Genesis House and has committed funding to the program. **Local churches** – As a Pastor with his own pulpit, Reverend Sanders is well-connected with the area faith community. These connections will continue to be leveraged to build awareness, the volunteer base, support for program participants, and contributions. Each client has the obligation to participate in our services, thereby working on the Spirit of the Man. **Area businesses** – We will continue to develop relationships for financial support and, even more importantly, job placements for our clients. One active employment arrangement already is hiring referrals from Genesis House's mentoring program, and others are in development.

In order to keep in line with the small business aspect of this Challenge, Genesis House has already started training and preparing the clients for entrepreneurial ship. We began while they were still in prison by mentoring and shaping them through life skills and career development training. Our participants would be those with strong functional knowledge and the skills and vision to navigate change, accommodate ambiguity, surmount complexity, and motivate teams in a common purpose to create sustainable economic and social values. Genesis House Entrepreneurship Program is a practice and a process that results in creativity, innovation and enterprise development and growth. It refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action involving and engaging in socially-useful wealth creation through application of innovative thinking and execution to meet consumer needs, using one's own labor, time and ideas. Engaging in entrepreneurship shifts people from being "job seekers" to "job creators", which is critical in communities that have high levels of unemployment. It requires a lot of creativity which is the driving force behind innovation. We will continue to work in conjunction with local educational systems such as OVR, and Career Link to assist in expanding our curriculum to incorporate the necessary components needed for our participants to be able to gain knowledge and firsthand experience of business ownership. Through our classroom training we will continue to explore unconventional methods of training. We will utilize our current employment partnerships to develop subject matter, workshops, knowledge and skills. Our current daily mentoring, counseling, and training has been preparing the clients for their reintegration back into society and has included all the skills necessary for job training, placement and possibly entrepreneurial ship. Through our employment partners Each client entering Genesis House has had some trade or skill that we will help polish as part of their training and mentoring.

Integral to the Genesis House holistic approach is assistance with job placement once the men are released for independent living. Even before the opening of the Genesis House residential program, we already have established relationships with local employers and, through our counseling and mentoring services, have placed dozens of released inmates into responsible work positions. Once our clients have completed their initial intake and three-month intensive counseling, mentoring and life skills training, they will begin the transition into the work force. During this time, they will continue working on the skills acquired and expand on them by working with Mrs. Ellis on how to type an effective resume, and proper interview skills. They will also work with Rev. Sanders on how to properly dress for an interview or public speaking engagement. During the second phase, they will not only be working, but they will receive the training and instruction needed to open and maintain a checking account. They will learn how to pay their bills, and how to provide for their families. This is a lifestyle change for most of our clients, who prior to coming to Genesis House may not have had this training. They lived from paycheck to paycheck and relied on the government to provide for their needs. It is important that each client's dignity is restored, and we can do that by making sure that they are properly trained before they enter back into society. A properly trained client will not only be strengthened but they will strengthen their families and thereby strengthen the community as a whole.

Through the local Private Industry Council clients will participate in Dad's Matter which is a six-week parenting class that helps develop each man's character and explored many aspects of being a father, including discipline, communication and other fathering skills. Dads Matter focuses on the client's childhood experiences with their own parents. The Private Industry Council also offers other programs that teach financial stability and also allow for clients to return back to school to finish their GED's or to continue their education. This training is necessary for each individual that aspires to open their own business. Again, it is a process and it begins the day a client enters our doors. We get to know them, counsel them, mentor them, and love them back to health. We set them on a path that will enable them to confidently move forward in their life. Clients that would like to enter into entrepreneurship will also be referred to SCORE, Fay Penn, Bridgeway and the SBA for training, counseling and mentoring. We will help them develop a rapport with each business development center and the SBA as for each stage of their training. We will assist them with registering for business administration classes to assist them in the areas of financing, marketing, human resources, leadership and product development. We will also guide them in the proper direction, by using one of our many resources to help them refine and draft a business plan. We will use all of the facilities and resources available to us to achieve this, including the Private Industry Council, St. Vincent DePaul Society, City Mission, and Cross Keys. We will also utilize the service and training that is offered by the Fayette County Vo-Tech, OSHA, and other educational facilities that will give our clients the necessary skills needed to be a business professional, or just to expand their education in order to sustain their current job with the possibility of promotion or obtain a position in the career of their choice. We understand not all of our clients will desire a blue-collar job. In fact, they may want to be a CEO of a business or a counselor. For that reason, we will be sure that whatever their desire we will take every step possible to ensure that they fulfill their dream career. Genesis House is not only a living and life skills rehabilitation facility; it is a home, a place where our clients can learn, grow and eventually emerge a New Man. Genesis is a new beginning, a fresh start and we welcome every opportunity to advance our clients into their new future.

We will encourage all of our clients to pursue their dreams. For some it may be just to be reunited back to their families and for others it will be the possibility of having starting their own business based on the skill set they came to Genesis House with and the additional training they received while in our program. It is vital that we maintain a mentorship program as well as counseling and training, even after the client has received their graduation certificate.

Access to Capital

Genesis House and Rev. Terry Sanders has built a business connection with Fay-Penn Economic Development, which assists small business with funding and micro-loans and developing business. We have also partnered with and received loans through Bridgeway Capital who assists entrepreneurs, assist small businesses in getting established, and nonprofit organizations pursue opportunities to grow. Once we have given the basic training, guidance and direction in small business development we will be able to turn them over to a financial partner to further develop their small business opportunity. We understand that in order to succeed entrepreneurs must have more than financing in order to succeed. Educational opportunities help increase the potential success of small businesses. We would connect our clients with those that offer one-on-one assistance, that would connect them with the opportunities that fit their particular business needs. We will make sure that they have access to experienced professionals in business planning, financial management, marketing. The programs offered through Bridgeway offers such training at little or no cost to our client. They will help them build their business skills and their network through seminars and training. Bridgeway will assist with scholarship possibilities so that the clients will be able to participate in these programs.

Some of our clients may be better suited for help from Fay-Penn to begin their business. It is our goal to connect our clients with partnership the will enable them to grow in their particular marketplace. Fay-Penn much like Bridgeway Capital does offer financial assistance, they would be more suited for those who have all the other training and are primarily assistance in business plan development, and start-up funding.

We would also connect our clients with the SBA in order to assist in the planning and development stages of their businesses. They will also enable each client by helping maintain and strengthen the entrepreneur, build on their dream and aid them in obtaining their goal, they will counsel, and protect their vision. Each client will also have the opportunity to connect with local banks in order to gain finance. Prior to any of these connections the clients will be trained in a classroom setting on basic and business finance, how to write a successful business plan, and we will provide them with resources, and tools to help them navigate their way to small business success. Genesis House also has community connections that support our program and whom will aide each client any way they have the capability. Some of those connections include programs such as City Mission, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Cross-keys Human Services, Community Action and Connellsville Community Ministry. We will connect our clients with these community services to assist them in securing housing, utility deposits, and furnishing their new home as they begin their transition from Genesis House back into the community. Other connections such as Chestnut Ridge, SPHS Behavioral Services, Drug and Alcohol, Narcotics Anonymous, will provide continual services to ensure our clients receive the best aftercare possible in order to sustain themselves and prevent recidivism. Some clients may have to continue with the Daily Reporting Center or Probation, thereby keeping themselves accountable. Genesis House will also be a key part in the lives of our client's aftercare, we will continue our weekly Bible Study at our church Victory House Ministry, which is currently a key support system for our clients on a daily basis. The Bruderhof Communities of Farmington, Pa has been and will continue to be a huge supporter of Genesis House and its clients. They have the capability of teaching and training the clients in specific fields that will assist them in regeneration back into society. We will also continue to refer and rely on the job placement and skill training of Specialty Conduit, Joy Construction and Advance Chimney Sweep. These businesses have trained and employed over 50 men since September of 2014. Prior to that Rev. Sanders was able to secure employment for over 200 men coming out of prison prior to 2014. Most of those men were employed through the Brownsville Marina and again at Specialty Conduit. All of our community connections, employers, social services, county agencies, and non-profits have and will continue to play a key role in providing services, training, jobs and provide some the ability to build their own business. The funding from the Aspire Challenge would enable Genesis House to continue to grow its' educational platform for entrepreneurial training.