

Transition and Support Committee

Annual Report

March 2021 to March 2022

This report covers greatly reduced activities in providing support to formerly incarcerated men who are living in the Chapel Hill and Durham communities.

Yokefellows at Orange Correctional Center:

Tuesday evening meetings were suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic. Subsequently, there were no opportunities for person-to-person relationship building with Orange Correctional Center (OCC) residents.

Formerly Incarcerated Citizens:

Since March 2016, TSC support teams of two – three persons provided support to twenty-one men in their transitioning from OCC back into the community. Given the inability to develop pre-release relationships, no support was provided to men transitioning from OCC to the community. Coronavirus also restricted support to formerly incarcerated men to telephone contacts and occasional person-to-person contacts. Men called to request assistance in negotiating systems, e.g., medical, social services, IRS, health insurance, called for assistance with problem solving, securing housing, to share joys and concerns, or just to talk with a friend.

More intensive support was provided to four previously incarcerated citizens. Provision of assistance in resume writing and employment search which resulted in four employment interviews, employment, increase in salary, and increased opportunities for training and skill development. Referral to a forklift training course and assistance with an employment search. The outcome was obtaining employment that provided a consistent forty-hour work week with benefits, and a pay increase. Referral to, and assistance with completion of an application for, subsidized senior housing. The outcome: Qualification for the housing and placement on a short waiting list. Referral of one formerly incarcerated citizen to Children's Services when he became a single parent to his eleven-month-old child. Social media was used in obtaining a crib, baby carriage, pampers, clothes and other items. There were ongoing telephone contacts related to parenting concerns and issues. Provision of transportation from jail to a recovery program was provided for one formerly returned citizen who relapsed and was reincarcerated. Regular telephone contacts provide ongoing support.

Formerly Incarcerated Citizens Network: CHFM and TSC have played an important role in the founding and progress of the local reentry peer support specialist organization, Wounded Healers of North Carolina. Eight former OCC residents obtained North Carolina peer support specialist certificates. Seven of these men are involved with Wounded Healers in providing support to individuals reentering the community following incarceration, helping these

individuals find pathways to participate in, and contribute to, healthier and more inclusive communities.

On February 16, 2022, a TSC member attended a webinar which focused on support of reentry peer support specialists and on knowledge and resources needed to effectively support individuals in transition from incarceration to the community.

Financial Support of Alamance Orange Prison Ministry:

Alamance Orange Prison Ministry (AOPM) is solely supported by donations. In October and November TSC conducted the annual fundraiser to support the chaplain and the ministry's activities at OCC. Asta Crowe coordinated this year's fund raiser. The sale of pecans netted \$825. AOPM received \$385 from this effort. A donation of \$250 was given to AOPM to purchase hats to be included with other items in OCC residents' holiday7 k packages.

Transition and Support Committee Meetings and Activities:

From March 2021 through March 2022 the TSC met via Zoom on the last Tuesday of the month. The primary focus of these meetings was on updates of formerly incarcerated men and ongoing support. Several TSC members attended the Friday morning meetings at Weaver Street Market scheduled by Josh Leroy, OCC Chaplain.

Our committee membership includes Annette Broadwell, Asta Crowe, Hank Elkins, Nancy Fisher, Tom McQuiston, Richard Miller, Bonnie Raphael, David Schneider, Byron Stevens and James Taylor. (Co-clerks: Tom McQuiston and Nancy Fisher)