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NYS DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives: IN TOUCH WITH Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS)

News

Chautauqua County Jail Graduates Ready, Set, Work! Participants

Ready, Set, Work! 2012

Sarah Dobbs Ontario County Probation Officer and 2011 OWDS graduate on a recent **RSW!** Group:

"The Director of Workforce Development played the part of the employer in my first RSW! group. He was so impressed by some of our participants that he referred them to jobs before the jobs were advertised to the public."

Inside Highlights

OWDS Class Number 6 Graduates!

GOOD JOB!

One Stops Pilot Offender Employment Specialist Training

GCDF certificates

Upcoming trainings

Welcome to *In Touch with OWDS*, an electronic newsletter from the **New York State DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA)** written specifically for OWDS and others interested in offender employment

Leading the Way... Inmates at Chautauqua County Jail complete **Ready, Set, Work (RSW)! -Chautauqua County Probation Department held Ready, Set, Work! sessions in partnership with Chautauqua County Jail in March and April. The first group graduated on Wednesday, April 10 in an evening ceremony at the jail.**

"It really got me wanting to find work and be a better person," "Thank you very much for all the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of the Ready Set Work! program."

These comments made by program graduates on their evaluations show the critical nature of the work being done by Senior Probation Officer **Philip Evans** and Re-entry Facilitator **CodyAnne Weise**, both certified OWDS. **"I am pleased to say that we are moving along with the program,"** said Chautauqua County Probation Director **Linda Shields** (who is also a certified OWDS).

This year, the Chautauqua County Office of Probation was awarded a 200% of Poverty grant through the Division of Criminal Justice Services. The project is directed by Senior Probation Officer Philip Evans and Employment and Re-entry Facilitator CodyAnne Weise. Both Officer Evans and Ms. Weise are Offender Workforce Development Specialists. Together they provide programs to inmates at the Chautauqua County Jail and will soon be offering programs to individuals sentenced to probation in a community setting.

According to the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), the number one way to reduce an individual's chance of recidivism is employment. In 2011, the NIC reported that offenders receiving Offender Workforce Development services have a 33% lower risk of recidivism.

For more information on the **Ready, Set, Work!** program, information on hiring an ex-offender, or volunteering to conduct mock interviews, contact Employment and Re-entry Facilitator CodyAnne Weise at (716) 224-0539.



Pictured left to right: Lieutenant Doug Mulson, Probation Director Linda Shields, Sr. Probation Officer Philip Evans, Employment and Re-entry Facilitator CodyAnne Weise and Warden James Crowell

Ready, Set, Work! 2012

486 individuals complete "Ready, Set, Work!" employment groups in 2012 —

Probation Departments, ATI Programs, Probation Violation Residential Centers (PVRCS) and Federal Probation convened 80 **"Ready, Set, Work!" (RSW!)** employment groups in 2012. A total of 486 individuals, including 200 probationers, completed the 20-hour cognitive-behavioral employment readiness groups and 264 (54 percent) obtained employment within 90 days. Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) in 11 probation departments conducted 33 RSW! groups, including three groups in **RSW! for Sex Offenders**, and one **RSW!-for Persons in Mental Health Recovery**. Seven ATI Programs and four PVRCS conducted 46 RSW! groups and 283 individuals completed the groups in 2012. Click [here](#) for more detailed information.

Albany OWDS Class of 2013

VALEDICTORIAN



Stacy Lesinski with Deputy Commissioner and Director Robert Maccarone and Program Director Cynthia Blair

Stacy Lesinski was the top student for the class. Stacy is an employment specialist for Oswego County Employment and Training Agency. Stacy will be working with the 200% of Poverty grant received by Oswego County Probation

SALUTATORIAN



Lila McDowell with Deputy Commissioner and Director Robert Maccarone and Program Director Cynthia Blair

Lila McDowell is a contract coach for Exodus Transitional Community, Inc. While pursuing her PhD from Oxford University, she researched undergraduate programs within correctional facilities and how they prepare inmates for life and work once they reenter society. Lila will make good use of her OWDS training.



Albany OWDS Class of 2013

Shu'aib Abdur-Raheem	Osborne Association
Kevin Allen	Community First Services
Rabia Aziz	Long Island Minority AIDS Coalition
Susan Capton	Niagara County Probation
Linda Churley	Niagara County Probation
Angela Crupe	NYS Department of Labor
James Edwards	Greenhope Services for Women
Janet Goodberry	Niagara County Probation
Ernest Henry	Dutchess County Re-entry
Jill Hoff	Monroe County Probation
Gordon Jackson	Community First Services
Robyn Keefe	TASC of the Capital District
Stacy Lesinski	Oswego DSS Employment & Training
Chantel Lewis	Community First Services
Lila McDowell	Exodus Transitional Community
Erin Modesta	Project M.O.R.E., Inc
Venion Mulkey	Center for Employment Opportunities
Shannon Perkins	Oswego County Probation
Vanessa Samuel	NY City TASC, EAC
Linda Steele-DeNardo	Center for Court Innovation
Carolina Suero	Workforce Investment Board Oneida County
Nikeiya Tanksley	Center for Employment Opportunities
Jeffrey VanBuren	Center for Community Alternatives, Syracuse
Julio Vasquez	Fortune Society

OPCA Graduates Sixth NIC OWDS Class- On June 21, 2013 the Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, in collaboration with the NYS Department of Labor and County Probation Departments, celebrated the completion of the sixth class of Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) from its In-State Partnership with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). This year's class included staff from County Probation Departments, Alternative to Incarceration Programs, 200% of Poverty Programs, County Re-entry Taskforces and the NYS Department of Labor. With the addition of the 24 professionals who successfully completed the 180- hour training, there are now 138 OWDS trained through the DCJS OPCA partnership with NIC. Along with the two OPCA sponsored teams who attended NIC's national training, 155 Offender Workforce Development Specialists have now completed the program. Karen Coleman, Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development, NYS DOL and Robert Maccarone, Deputy Commissioner and Director of DCJS OPCA both spoke at the graduation. For more information on the next OWDS training beginning September 30, contact Cynthia Blair at Cynthia.Blair@dcjs.ny.gov or (518) 485-5145.

Career Center and DOL Group Graduates OES Pilot in the Bronx



Bronx Offender Employment Specialist Graduates

OES Graduates

Fasina Baptiste
DOL Manhattan, Varick Street

Lisa Badillo
DOL Brooklyn

Thomas Colbert
DOL Queens, Jamaica

Darcie Farella
DOL Manhattan, Varick Street

Vanessa Johnson-Booker
DOL Bronx

Natasha Kearse
DOL NYC Harlem

Liza Kelly
DOL NYC Harlem

Darlene Leaks
DOL Staten Island

Sara Lopez-Echeverria
DOL Brooklyn

Mary Miller
DOL Bronx

Adam Welikson
DOL Queens, Flushing

Maritza Zarzuela
DOL Queens, Flushing

Jamalya Harley
DOL NYC, Harlem

Maribel Mirabal
VIP Services Bronx

Daisy James
Grant Associates, Queens

Altigrace Cange
DOL Staten Island

Tarik Greene
Rockland County

The first Offender Employment Specialist (OES) training held at the Fordham Road Career Center and sponsored through the "Work for Success Employment Initiative" ended on April 26 with 17 participants completing all three days of training. Included in the training were Career Center and Department of Labor personnel from Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, Staten Island and the Bronx. DCJS OPCA Offender Workforce Development Specialists, **Cynthia Blair** and **Matt Charton** facilitated the training. They were joined by **Tarik Greene**, Disability & Offender Workforce Development Specialist, from Tomorrow's Workplace in Rockland County, as well as Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) personnel, **Valerie Franz**, Assistant Director of Vocational

Education, and **Patrick Fitzgerald**, Assistant Director of Operations. **Valerie, Tarik and Patrick are all also graduates of the DCJS OPCA 180 hour OWDS training.** DCJS Deputy Commissioner and OPCA Director Robert Maccarone provided words of encouragement as well as handed out certificates of completion to everyone who attended all three days of the training.



NIC's **OES** training is the first of NIC's Employment Series, OES is a 3 day training, **OWDS** (the second in the series) is 3 weeks and the recently premiered Offender Employment Retention Specialist (**OERS**) is one week

For more information on **OERS** contact

P. Elizabeth Taylor
Correctional Program
Specialist National Institute of
Corrections at:
petaylor@bop.gov

G C D F

Global Career Development Facilitators

Congratulations to **Wendy Brown**, Rensselaer County Parole Re-entry Coordinator and **Jorge Morales** from the Family of Woodstock, both 2012 OWDS graduates.



Upon completion of their OWDS training, Wendy and Jorge both took the next step in their professional development to become certified as Global Career Development Facilitators. The OWDS training is only one of the qualifying criteria for obtaining this certification. Reviewers at the Center of Credentialing and Education in Greensboro, North Carolina also assess education and experience before granting certification. Again, congratulations to Wendy and Jorge for their important accomplishment.

12 Competencies needed for GCDF

- 1. Helping Skills** - Be proficient in the basic career facilitating process while including productive interpersonal relationships.
- 2. Labor Market Information and Resources** - Understand labor market and occupational information and trends. Be able to use current resources.
- 3. Assessment** - Comprehend and use (*under supervision*) both formal and informal career development assessments with emphasis on relating appropriate ones to the population served.
- 4. Diverse Populations** - Recognize special needs of various groups and adapt services to meet their needs.
- 5. Ethical and Legal Issues** - Follow the CDF code of ethics and know current legislative regulations.
- 6. Career Development Models** - Understand career development theories, models, and techniques as they apply to lifelong development, gender, age, and ethnic background.
- 7. Employability Skills** - Know job search strategies and placement techniques, especially in working with specific groups.
- 8. Training Clients and Peers** - Prepare and develop materials for training programs and presentations.
- 9. Program Management/Implementation** - Understand career development programs and their implementation, and work as a liaison in collaborative relationships.
- 10. Promotion and Public Relations** - Market and promote career development programs with staff and supervisors.
- 11. Technology** - Comprehend and use career development computer applications.
- 12. Consultation** - Accept suggestions for performance improvement from consultants or supervisors.



OWDS training in Albany

Due to demand OPCA will hold a second OWDS training this year!
Training Dates:

Sept. 30-Oct. 4, 2013
November 18-22, 2013
January 13-17, 2014

OWDS Corner:

We invite original articles from Offender Workforce Development Specialists. We will try to share one in each issue.

Keeping In Touch:

Offender Workforce Development Specialists should advise as soon as they receive their **GCDF** or other certificates, promotions, etc.

Didn't see **your** name here? Let us know what you are doing. Also please contact Cynthia Blair if you need technical assistance with your **Ready, Set Work!** or **Retention Counts!** groups at 518-485-5145 or cynthia.blair@dcjs.ny.gov