

## Milwaukee Reentry Council

Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at 2pm

### Meeting Minutes

**Attendees Present:** Conor Williams (Community Advocates), Gretchen Schuldt (Wisconsin Decarceration Project), Tom Reed (Public Defender), Luli Buxton, Eli, Martice Scales (Alma Center), Patricia Gorence, Joseph Ellwanger (Project Return), Dshal Young (WCS), Michael Haas (EmpowerMKE), Nyla, Karen Coy-Romano (Task Force on Criminal Justice Reform), Leslie, Frederick Nelson (Employ Milwaukee), Jamie Reif (Wellpath), Mark Ferrante, Ryeshia Farmer (ACLU), De'Shawn Ewing (Parenting Network), Emily Garner, Rick Barricelli (MCSC), Jeannette Haynes (Employ Milwaukee), Sylvester Jackson (EXPO), Kaelin Rapport (Northwestern University), Sean Wilson (ACLU), Ken Ryback (Community Building Milwaukee), Erich, Lisa V, Quintella Perry, Liz Schwartz (Well Path), Janet Robinson (Alma Center), Adam Procell (Partners in Hope), Niel Thoreson (DOC), Claire Hackett (Milwaukee HUD), Tom LeBel (UWM), Ylonda Glover (Alma Center), Katie Lynch, Gwendlyn Lockett (America Works), Peggy West-Schroeder (EXPO), Shelby Lundsford (Well Path), Ruben Gaona (2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Wisconsin), Jenni Sevenich (Progressive Community Health Centers), Nazir Al-Mujaahid (Ibrahim House), William Lipscomb (US Attorney), Karen Brooker, Kyle Ashley

**Staff Present:** Mandy Potapenko (CJC)

- 1) **Welcome and Opening** – Conor Williams called the meeting to order at 2:03pm. Those present were encouraged to introduce themselves in the chat box.
- 2) **Small Group Discussions** – Shortly after calling the meeting to order, attendees were divided into small breakout sessions to allow for networking and dialogue. Within groups, attendees went through introductions and discussed what drew or lead them to participate in the Reentry Council.
- 3) **Presentations/Informational Updates**
  - a. **The Way Out** – *Ruben Gaona and Eli Rivera*: The Way Out focuses on aiding individuals reentering their communities as a way to fight recidivism through a comprehensive employment platform. The purpose is to connect employees with employers who understand the social and economic benefits of hiring justice-involved job seekers and provide support for both. The Way Out is seeking partnerships and collaborations with interested organizations.
  - b. **Home to Stay Online – Website Demonstration** – *Gretchen Schuldt, Wisconsin Decarceration Project*: The Home to Stay website has been populated with the resources to help individuals, including food, housing and jobs. The next step is to spread awareness within communities and increase traffic to the site to aid those who need assistance. Maintaining the Home to Stay website and keeping the information up to date is one of the biggest challenges, particularly housing.
  - c. **Rights for All Campaign – Voter's Rights** – *Ryeshia Farmer, ACLU*: The Rights for All Campaign at the ACLU has a goal to ensure everyone can cast their ballot in the 2020 election in whichever format works best for them. Smart Justice issues are a priority area in Wisconsin. The ACLU is committed to educating communities on jail voting policies in Wisconsin to prepare individuals for voting leading up to November.
  - d. **Partners in Hope** – *Adam Procell*: The goal of Partners in Hope is to humanize law enforcement and build bridges in the communities. The organization holds a faith-based workshop for men recently released from prison to change the perception of individuals and create positive interactions.

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### 4) Task Force/Ad Hoc Committee Updates:

- a. **Healthcare Task Force** – *Jenni Sevenich, Progressive Community Health*: Updates were provided on the community health worker search. Candidates are currently in the screening process. A challenge is finding candidates who have been incarcerated for over a year. Another issue is finding people who did have a long incarceration are precluded from working in healthcare under the Wisconsin Caregiver Law.
- b. **Home to Stay Task Force** – *John Thomas, DWD*: In-person, drive-through style meetings are being explored as an opportunity, following safety guidelines.
- c. **Housing Task Force** – *Conor Williams, Community Advocates*: A UWM graduate student will be interning at Project Return. They will be a resource for the reentry housing task force to collect information and categorize it into a digital manual to guide everyone in the work of housing. Reentry housing bonds are an option come up by the task force to help with the costs of security deposits and rent. It is similar to the Employment Fidelity bond.

### 5) Public Comment and any Other Business – Milwaukee Community Services Corps announced job and internship program availability. They also offer training in forklift use and OSHA, among other certificates.

### 6) One Word Evaluation and Adjourn - Conor Williams closed the meeting by asking attendees for a one-word evaluation. The next Reentry Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23rd, 2020, 2:00-3:30pm by Zoom. Attendees encouraged to **save the date of** Wednesday, October 14, 2020, at 6pm for an online roundtable with JustLeadershipUSA.

*\*Note: Meeting minutes were transcribed from an audio recording by Alyssa Doman due to being unable to attend.*