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2009
Annual Report
June 2010

Judicial Process Commission

Chairperson's Message

Dear Friends,

JPC is like a shining little diamond. It is a small organization that tackles a difficult job, and does it with high quality and low cost. In 2009, we helped more than 900 men and women returning home to the Rochester area after being incarcerated. We helped more individuals than all other local groups combined.

JPC helped them find a place to live, re-connect with family, obtain training or education, find a job, deal with addictions, and interact with a myriad of agencies. We helped them obtain official identification and correct errors in their Rap Sheet so they could qualify for a job. We helped many of them change their lives so much that various courts awarded them Certificates of Rehabilitation.

Based on available information, the recidivism rate for our clients is significantly less than the national average. Thus JPC saved taxpayers an estimated \$10 million last year since it costs more to incarcerate a person than tuition at a private college. Moreover, when an individual commits a crime and is incarcerated, it is a tragedy for the victim, the perpetrator, each of their families, and public safety. We saved all that agony.

In 2009, JPC won national recognition. Jointly with RIT, we were one of less than 8% of the applicants selected to start a major new project. We won a federal grant to help women in county jail who are pregnant, or are mothers with children two years of age or less. This is a little understood but growing group. Unfortunately, our funding does not cover all our new cost.

In 2009, JPC's cost of operating was less than \$140,000. This is a tiny amount, especially compared to our value. But funding was down because of our nation's recession, and we had to dig very deeply into our reserves.

Fred Schaeffer, JPC Board Chair

Coordinator's Message

Greetings,

In total, 2009 was rocky but rewarding. It began with a new opportunity to partner again with Rochester Institute of Technology. The Women's Re-entry Project was born in the winter of 2009 as JPC sought input from the community at large for the development of a grant request from the Department of Justice, Second Chance Act funding. The JPC/ RIT proposal was one of only 36 requests from around the United State to be approved.

Craig Johnson, Director of Substance Abuse Treatment, Monroe County Correctional Facility and other community partners including Mardy Sandler, Director of Social Work, Strong Hospital, stressed the needs of pregnant women or women with toddlers exiting the Monroe County Correctional Facility. Two part-time Therapists/Case Managers were added to JPC's staff through funding from the US Department of Justice grant. Wrap around funds including the first month's rent are available to mothers that are following through with their re-entry plan. This summer, 8 single bedroom apartments for pregnant mothers or mothers with toddlers will be available through a newly secured five-year Housing and Urban Development grant. More mothers will have the opportunity to begin a new life with their children.

Even though the Rochester area suffered devastatingly high rates of unemployment and a serious economic downtown, the Board of Directors took on the daunting task of finding supporters and funds. Several faith community leaders and New York State Legislators from both sides of the aisle helped. Former Mayor Johnson recruited mentors. Senator Joe Robach and Assemblyman David Gantt pledged support for the purchase of updated computer equipment and a copier. City government leaders provided a contract for JPC's Legal Action Project, which provided Rap sheets, Certificates of Relief from Disabilities/Good Conduct and resumes to ex-offender City residents to help them become employed.

The unrelenting dedication of our staff and funders brought new energy and hope to the over 1,000 men, women and children that we serve. Your continued support provides a second chance and helps break the cycle of reincarceration for area offenders; and reaffirms that everybody matters. Thank you!

Sue Porter, JPC Coordinator

Judicial Process Commission

JPC Vision

The Judicial Process Commission envisions a society with true justice and equality for all. We understand that in a just society, all institutions will be based on reconciliation and restoration, instead of retribution and violence.

Mission

The Judicial Process Commission is a grass roots non-profit organization that works to create a just, nonviolent community. We support the rights of all people affected by the criminal justice system and promote changes to that system that help them achieve their fullest potential. We do this by providing support services, educating the public and advocating for systemic change.

PROGRAMS

1) Ex-offenders Support Services (ESS) includes case management, wrap around services, legal services, rap sheet reviews, certificate of relief from disabilities/of good conduct, and mentoring.

Case Management – Staff and volunteers provide one on one support, coordinated employment services and advocacy for individuals coming out of the criminal justice system.

Wrap Around Services - JPC provides Wrap Around Services to low income, ex-offenders returning to the greater Rochester community that include bus transportation, clothing, bedding, work boots, identifications, and 1st months rent.

Denied a Chance for Honest Work *“The great expense and time involved in successfully prosecuting and incarcerating the criminal offender is largely wasted if upon the individual’s return to society his willingness to assume a law-biding and productive role is frustrated by senseless discrimination.”*
Jason Hoge, Esq. MCLAC

Legal Action Project - This is a first of its kind collaborative effort with Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. (LAWNY)-Monroe County Legal Assistance Center (MCLAC) to reduce and/or eliminate legal and illegal barriers that make it much more difficult for ex-offenders to rejoin the community and succeed in almost every important aspect of life. Major activities/services include:

RAP Sheets – JPC, working in collaboration with MCLAC, requested 415 New York State Rap Sheet for individuals with criminal records from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services and FBI.

Certificates of Rehabilitation: Certificate of Relief from Disabilities and Certificate of Good Conduct - JPC case managers, MCLAC legal staff and customers worked together to prepare materials for 150 applications to apply to various courts for these certificates. These Certificates remove any automatic barriers to individuals’ employment or licensure caused by a criminal conviction and serve as legal evidence of rehabilitation that assists individuals in gaining stable housing, employment, or licensure.

Job Discrimination Education and Referrals –This service ensures that New York State law and public policy designed to encourage employment of persons convicted of crimes is enforced. Staff researched RAP sheets, wrote letters to employers and referred cases to MCLAC for further advocacy and/or litigation. JPC and MCLAC staff gave twenty-four presentations to service provider staff regarding employment discrimination against ex-offenders and advocacy efforts.

Faith Community Adult Mentoring Project (FCAMP) - Former Mayor William Johnson became our first JPC “Mentor Champion”, opening doors for us, helping to recruit new mentors and mentoring young exoffenders. 36 active Mentors mentored 52 ex-offenders in 2009. FCAMP assists individuals coming out of the criminal justice system by providing them with a trained mentor that serves as a guide or coach to support their successful return to the community. Most mentors are recruited from Rochester’s faith communities. Trainings were held three times a year and 43 new mentors were trained. Mentors and mentees work together to identify employment resources, housing, to problem solve and to identify resources from other local organizations. An FCAMP Advisory Committee meets quarterly to support this effort.

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2) **Public Policy Group** – Twelve activists meet monthly developing strategies, fact sheets and reports advocating for more reentry resources for prisoners returning to Monroe County. This is a racially diverse group that includes parolees and mentors; people directly affected by the issues, as well as citizens active in faith communities and interested in social justice and reentry issues. A white paper is underway advocating for free birth certificates for the poor.

3) **Jail-Prison Correspondence Project** – Staff responded to more than 543 pieces of mail in 2009 from local jail inmates, prisoners, and prisoners from facilities around the United States. These include complaints of abuse, discrimination, inadequate health care, reentry, legal needs and requests for information.

4) **Justicia** – Our electronic bi-monthly publication is distributed six times a year to 360 individuals/organizations. When funds are raised, we would like to reinstate postal mailings to our larger database of 4,609 people. Writer Jack Bradigan Spula edits the newsletter. It contains articles and reports on re-entry, the death penalty, prison conditions, restorative justice, etc. This is a volunteer publication and the only one of its kind in the region.

*An experienced driver and warehouse operative, **Jerome** found his life turned around when he was convicted and sentenced. Not only did he lose his job and the income it provided, he also lost his drivers license and perhaps most importantly his self-worth. His confidence hit rock bottom. JPC gave him hope and help. Today Jerome is in a job-training program, and is rebuilding his life with support from his JPC mentor.*

JPC Customer Service Statistics 2009

Category (#'s are underreported)	
Unique Individuals Served: 936 assisted in office; 543 through jail correspondence	1,479
# by Age 17-29 (212) 30-49 (539) 50+ (134) Unknown (51) = 936	
Female: 309 Male: 627	
Walk-Ins (Customers who registered at reception each day: not all are entered into db.)	
# Rap sheets applied for	415
# Rap sheets: received/reviewed (In cooperation with MCLAC)	277
# Certificate of relief/Certificate of good conduct: applied for/approved	150/77
# Obtained a job** (for those we could track)	90
# Entered education/training** (for those we could track)	39
# In treatment program** (for those we could track; others in treatment prior to JPC)	13
# In support group** (for those we could track)	75
# Returned to jail/prison (for those we could track)	21
# Parole/probation (underreported: self disclosed) (County: 178) (State: 282) (Federal: 29)	244
# Volunteering in community/ churches	23
Mentors Trained (Some return to faith communities to start their own program.)	61
Jail-Prison Correspondence Received	543
# re-arrests	4
# facing new charges	8
# on work release	3

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Many women ex-offenders have experienced very serious physical and/or sexual abuse, starting young. They are plagued with high levels of physical/mental health problems and substance abuse issues & need treatment and trauma counseling. They are often the sole support/caregivers for their children. There was no coordinated effort to help these vulnerable women: that's why we started the Women's Reentry Project. Sue Porter, JPC Coordinator

Community Partners - 2009

Best Program
Catholic Family Center: Restart, Freedom House & Prodigal Sons and Daughters
Monroe County Correctional Facility Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program
Monroe County Department of Human Services-Work Experience Program (WEP)
Monroe County Legal Assistance Center, Reentry Project
Monroe Community College
Monroe County Reentry Project
Monroe County Probation & Community Corrections Dept.

New Yorkers for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
New York State Parole
Rochester AmeriCorps
Rochester Friends Meeting
Rochester Correctional Facility (NYS Work Release Facility)
Safer Monroe Area Reentry Team (SMART)
United States Probation and Pre-trial Services
Vocational Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities - VESID
Volunteers of America Store & Working Women's Wardrobe

2009 Key Funders/In-kind Support

Key Funders

Catholic Family Center
City of Rochester
First Unitarian Church
Downtown United Presbyterian Church
Lois Davis
Phogg Foundation
Monroe County Bar Foundation
Mt. Rise United Church of Christ
Polisenni Foundation

Key Funders

Presbytery of Genesee Valley
Rochester Area Community Foundation
Rochester Society of Friends
Spiritus Christi
Fred and Floy Willmott Foundation
John F. Wegman Fund
Marie C & Joseph C Wilson Foundation

In-kind Support

Monroe County Legal Assistance Center (In-kind legal staff)

Judicial Process Commission

Current Board Members & Advisory Board

Mary Boite, Vice-Chairperson,
Fundraising Committee, Chair

Gregory Bouie
Willow Group, LTD, Batavia
Marketing and Customer Service

Helen Cheves
Adjunct Faculty, Dept of
Communication, SUNY Brockport. II
Steps Ahead, President

Jane Coons, Treasurer, Finance Chair

Duncan McElroye, Action for a
Better Community &
Synnex/Concentrix Corporation

Isabel Morrison,
Public Policy Group

Gail Mott, Secretary,
Fundraising

Deacon John Mourning, Mentor

Fred Schaeffer, Chairperson,
Public Policy Group, Mentor,

Suzanne Schnittman, PhD.
Public Policy Group, Governance
Committee

John Perry Smith, President, Total
Information Inc.

Finance Committee

Advisory Board

John Klofas, PhD, Director, Center
for Public Safety Initiatives; Prof.,
Dept. of Criminal Justice, RIT

Emmanuel Oparah
Asst. Program Director
Action for a Better Community

JPC staff are both paid and volunteer and come to us through a variety of avenues. In 2009 JPC benefitted from the work of eighteen volunteer staff from seven organizations including, AmeriCorps; Monroe County Department of Human Services Work Employment Program; Rochester Rehabilitation Employment Program; Lifespan; Monroe Community College; Roberts Wesleyan College; Rochester Institute of Technology; and community volunteers.

Current Staff, April 2010

Staff

Susan K. Porter
JPC Coordinator

Kamilah Richardson
Sr. Service Coordinator

Valerie White-Whittick
Mentor Coordinator

Cynthia Consaul
LCSW-R

Jeanette Gartland Creighton
LMSC, CASAC

John Mourning
FCAMP Outreach

Mavis Eagan
Client Navigator/Evaluator

Consultant

MacClurg Vivian
Freelance Grantwriting
Consultant

Rochester AmeriCorps

Charles Rance
Service Coordinator

Monroe Co. Dept of Human Services, Work Employment Program

Shalanda Patterson
Administrative Assistant
Prison Correspondence

Monroe Community College

Nicholas Wolcott
Veronica Alexander
Job Smith
Michelle Caceres
Scott Graham

Lifespan

Azir Tahir
Administrative Assistant

Volunteer Staff

Sr. Veronica Casey
Financial Assistant

Ed Johnson
Financial Assistant

Betty Wynn,
Administrative Assistant

Donna Banks
Administrative Assistant

Brenda Crosby McCoggle
Administrative Assistant