



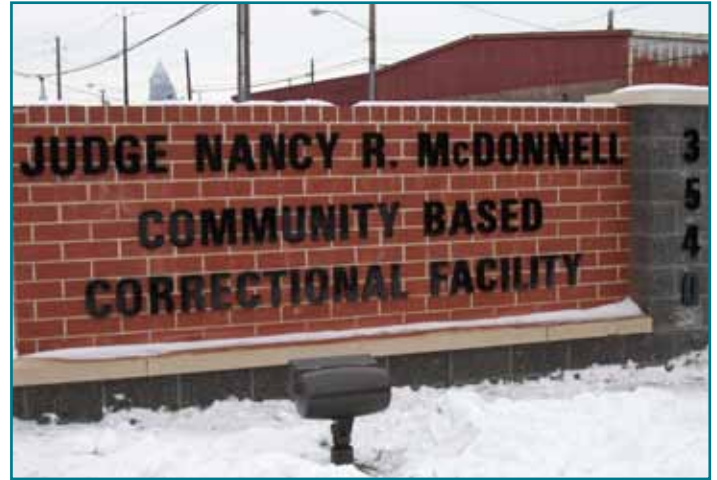
Cuyahoga County Reentry Review

Judge Nancy R. McDonnell Community Based Correctional Facility Opens

By Mary Kelley

A long-awaited vision became reality when the Judge Nancy R. McDonnell Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF) opened on Croton Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held on January 26, 2011.

Funded by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) and operated locally by Oriana House, the CBCF is a new 53,000 square-foot facility and can house up to 200 clients. Due to budget limitations, the CBCF will start out housing 100 clients. CBCF programming will provide clients with services and resources to address their needs in the areas of employment, housing, education and cognitive behavioral skills.



The CBCF is named for Judge Nancy R. McDonnell

Cuyahoga County sent 4,553 offenders to state prison last year – 20% of Ohio’s total. Half of those will cycle in and out of prison in less than a year. 1,300 of those offenders were considered to be non-violent and low-risk and, as such, are ideal candidates for sentencing to the CBCF instead of prison.

“Research has shown that people diverted from prison can be successful,” said ODRC Director Gary C. Mohr. “This facility will be part of the positive change process in people’s lives.”



Anne M. Connell-Freund, Exec. Vice President of Operations – Oriana House and Dan McNea, CBCF Project Director – Cuyahoga County



Ed Fitzgerald, Cuyahoga County Executive



Illya McGee, Vice President of Correctional Programs in Cuyahoga County – Oriana House

Hundreds of people came to get the first look at the new facility



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Entrepreneurship Program

By Fred Bolotin

Entrepreneurship and self-employment can provide an avenue to financial self-sufficiency. In response to the growing number of reentrants who are expressing a desire to own their own business, the Cuyahoga County Office of Reentry is sponsoring the Entrepreneurial Business Development Series (EBDS).

The goal of the program is to provide participants with an understanding of what it takes to start a business, according to Maurice Stevens of Career Development and Placement-Strategies, Inc. Participants are not ready to open a business when they complete the four week program. "Sixteen hours of workshop instruction doesn't make a person an entrepreneur," Stevens explained. "We try to give participants the basics of what has to happen before they even begin to try to turn their dreams into realities."

During the four workshop sessions, participants first realistically assess their own strengths and weaknesses and identify particular skill sets that they will need to improve their chances of becoming a successful entrepreneur.

People often think that if they have a specific talent, they can turn it into a successful business, according to Stacey Banks-Houston, the instructor for the program. She makes the participants realize that "just because you know how to cook, doesn't mean you're ready to open your own restaurant."

Much of the focus in this series is on the need for, and the elements of, a good business plan. Other topics covered include how to conduct market research and how to develop an executive summary for the business plan. Those that complete the four week series are eligible for, and encouraged to seek, continued one-on-one support and coaching based on their particular needs.

The program was developed in collaboration with the Reentry Reconnection Grassroots Coalition, which is a project of the Healthy Fathering Collaborative. The series of workshops, which begin on the first Wednesday of each month, is still in its infancy—the first series took place in October 2010. To date, nearly 30 people have completed the series. The program is open to anyone with a history of involvement with the criminal justice system.

None of the participants have started their own business yet, but it would be unrealistic to expect that to happen in such a short time, noted Ms. Banks-Houston. It takes months to con-

duct the necessary research to develop a good business plan and significant time after that to implement the plan.

Those with criminal histories often have extra challenges in trying to start a business. The EBDS doesn't sugar coat the process. "We try to be brutally honest with the program participants," Ms. Banks-Houston explains. Many formerly incarcerated individuals have poor credit or no credit history. Those who have child support obligations usually leave prison with arrearages; this has a negative impact on their credit scores. Obtaining financing or finding investors is probably the greatest challenge facing reentrants seeking to become entrepreneurs.

The last week of the program is taught by Passages, Inc., a faith-based community organization. Representatives from local financial lenders and investment firms are brought in to explain the process of how entrepreneurs can find funding. This step also helps entrepreneurs build an ongoing relationship with a financial institution.

"We try to give people the basics of what has to happen before they even begin to try to turn their dreams into realities."

Jamal Kelley was one of the first to complete the EBDS. He credits the program with giving him a good understanding of everything that needed to be done, especially to make sure that others didn't take advantage of him. Kelley's goal is to open a coffee shop. "The idea is just one aspect," Kelley explained. "There is a lot of research to be done in terms of marketing, understanding the competition, and learning everything that goes into a business. The program made me realize that I have to get all my ducks in order before approaching potential investors."

He also realizes that things never go exactly as planned, but he is determined to keep moving forward. He envisions his coffee shop as place with simple good food and beverages and a welcoming atmosphere that will include various types of entertainment. Kelley is confident that with the knowledge gained from the EBDS, he will reach his goal this time.

Information about the Entrepreneurial Business Development Series can be obtained from the Reentry Reconnection Grassroots Coalition, located at 3631 Perkins, 4th floor, Cleveland, OH 44114. Their phone number is (216) 431-9000. You can also request information via e-mail to rrginfo@gmail.com or by visiting their website at www.neofathering.net/reconnection_center.asp.

Talking With: Mike Randle

By Mary Kelley

Mike Randle is the Program Manager for the new Judge Nancy R. McDonnell Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF). Mike has more than 20 years experience in corrections and most recently served as the Director of Corrections for the State of Illinois.

Reentry Review (RR): What motivated you to take this position at the CBCF?

Mike Randle (MR): *This was a wonderful opportunity – both professionally and personally. I'm originally from Cleveland and it's nice to come back home and be close to family and friends.*

RR: The CBCF started full operations on January 28, 2011. How are things going so far?

MR: *It's been going very well. As of February 8, we already had 42 clients living here. The Judges are referring clients and we are very busy with the new staff, new clients and a new facility. It's obvious that a lot of thought went into the planning, design and construction of the CBCF so that it is secure but still very productive for client treatment and improvement.*

RR: The CBCF follows a phased program. What is it about this approach that you believe will be successful?

MR: *Each of the four phases builds on another. Clients begin in Phase 1, which is the most restrictive and progress up to Phase 4. There are rewards and sanctions that reinforce positive behavior and sanction negative behavior with consequences. The restrictions become less as clients earn their way through the phases with positive, pro-social behavior. Clients can be here up to 180 days, the average stay is four months. The client influences the length of his stay – if he is not progressing it affects how long he stays. The client works on improving himself and addressing whatever problems brought him here so that this is, hopefully, his last involvement with the criminal justice system.*

RR: What are your goals for the CBCF and its outcomes? How will you motivate your staff to achieve these goals?

MR: *The main goal is to reduce recidivism by having clients successfully deal with whatever issues brought them here – like substance abuse or anger issues – anything that is causing them to be involved in the criminal justice system.*

We motivate our staff by investing in a lot of staff training so they know they can do a good job. Before we opened, the staff went through four weeks of training both in the classroom and in practical settings. We also have an ongoing quality assurance program with a lot of on-the-job training and a yearly in-service training. We then observe staff and their interactions with clients and provide feedback on how they are doing.

RR: What is your opinion on the future of community corrections and reentry?

MR: *I think we're seeing a real movement toward community based corrections. It seems that people are starting to understand that we can't continue to just incarcerate people. I've been impressed that both Ohio and Cuyahoga County are a lot further along than some other states on reentry issues. I think we will continue to see that reports like "Justice Reinvestment in Ohio" by the Council of State Governments will shape future public policy recommendations.*

Note: The "Justice Reinvestment in Ohio" report is on-line at <http://justicereinvestment.org/states/ohio>



CBCF Program Director Mike Randle



Judge Nancy R. McDonnell Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF) Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

Pictured (l. to r.) Front Row: Phyllis Cleveland, Ward 5 Cleveland City Council Member and City Council Majority Leader; C. Ellen Connally, District 9 Cuyahoga County Council Member and County Council President; Judge Nancy R. McDonnell, CBCF Judicial Advisory Board; Alfonso P. Sanchez, Chairperson – CBCF Facility Governing Board; Administrative and Presiding Judge Nancy A. Fuerst, CBCF Judicial Advisory Board

Second Row: Gary C. Mohr, Director – Ohio Dept. of Rehabilitation and Correction; William M. Denihan, CBCF Facility Governing Board; Martin J. Sweeney, Ward 18 Cleveland City Council Member and City Council President; Thomas Washington, CBCF Facility Governing Board; Melanie GiaMaria, Esq., CBCF Facility Governing Board; Gwendolyn Mitchel-Cole, CBCF Facility Governing Board; Roger Riachi, CBCF Facility Governing Board

Back Row: Judge Dick Ambrose, CBCF Judicial Advisory Board; Judge Timothy J. McGinty, CBCF Judicial Advisory Board; Geoffrey Mearns, CBCF Facility Governing Board; Charles R. See, CBCF Facility Governing Board; James J. Lawrence, President/CEO – Oriana House; Frank Jackson, Mayor, City of Cleveland

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The Nancy R. McDonnell Community Based Correctional Facility



CBCF Resident Dorm Room



A View of the Main and Visitors' entrance



CBCF Resident Lounge Area



Resident Exercise Room



CBCF Staff Desk in a Phase Area

The Citizen Circles Concept



Citizen participation and guidance is essential for correctional practices inside and outside institutions. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has embraced the needs related to offenders returning home from correctional settings and as such one strategy is the implementation of Citizen Circles. i Circle members address risks that contribute to criminal activity by taking ownership of the solution. It is an opportunity for citizens to communicate expectations for successful reentry and help offenders recognize the harm their behavior has caused others. Offenders are able to make amends and demonstrate their value and potential to the community.

Citizen Circles Locations

The Euclid Avenue Citizen Circle

216.421.0482 ext. 282

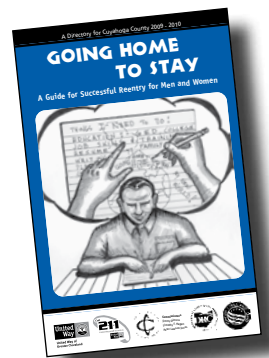
CEOGC

North Star Resource Center

216.751.1382

Mt. Pleasant

216.751.1085



To receive a copy of **Going Home to Stay**

contact First Call for Help at 216.436.2000 or go online and download a copy at www.211cleveland.org/pdfs/communityreentry.pdf



COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS:

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phone: 216.698.2501