

# My Journey Home Inc.

A Non-Profit Organization

# Justice Hardesty's Request

- Justice Hardesty indicated he and the Commission would welcome anything I could provide to them in regards to an assessment of the tools needed versus the tools available for parolees that are transitioning into the community. He suggests that I think about it, makes some notes and then prepare a memo, letter or presentation for the Commission. He states “there is nothing like the practical experiences that you are encountering that would help categorize some of those needs versus available services.”
- Justice Hardesty also indicated he would like me to consider how the State could provide support for organizations like MJH and RAIN that have an opportunity to really make a contribution to what the State is trying to do. He asks that I discuss this with my associates and then have a dialogue with him to figure out how the State can provide some practical assistance and make the bridge that will add to the numbers of organizations, like mine, that can provide some help for the ex-offenders reentry.

# In response

- An assessment of tools needed versus the tools available has already been formulated by My Journey Home, Inc. The past five years has been those of gathering needs and resources for a smooth transition. On Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, I spoke with Chief Godska (Parole and Probation) and he referred my questions to Sgt. David Helgerman whom is part of Prerelease for Parole and Probation. The Sgt. only suggested tool was to have a fund for indigent parolees for the initial payments for halfway houses and/or treatment centers. He stated that “the south is really hurting because there is nothing down there for reentry.” MJH has “hit the ground running” here in Northern Nevada and is prepared to do the same in the South.

# Tools Needed vs Tools Available

- **Tools Needed**
  - Identification Card
  - Social Security card
  - Drivers License
  - Jobs
  - Housing, both Transitional and Recovery.
  - Employment Training
  - Mental Health Evaluations
  - GED/High School Diploma
  - Support Group Services
  - Job Preparation
  - General Assistance
  - Welfare
  - Bus Passes
- **Tools Available thru MJH**
  - Housing referrals
  - Work force development and Job placement
  - Mental Health Evaluations
  - Bus Passes
  - Support Group Services
  - Computer Lab, Job Searches
  - Resume writing, online job application training
  - Social Security Cards
  - Job Preparation
  - General Assistance referrals
  - Jobs
  - GED/High School Diploma classes

# Response #2

- My Journey Home has experienced a flood of parolees, and all indicators say that it will get worse. The initial grant requires that a total of 60 clients should be seen and/or assisted by June 2009. As of this date, the total amount of clientele seen is 82. This includes one on one assessments, assisting with job searches, resume writing, referring for mental health assessments, housing, and general case management. I will note that it is our experience that we have encountered a growing number parolees from the Las Vegas area being released in Reno. One other case worker is imperative in the north due to the large amount of influx to Northern Nevada.

**Consider how the State could provide support for organizations like MJH and RAIN that have an opportunity to really make a contribution to what the State is trying to do.**

- We have a concise and detailed breakdown of the services needed and the people to man those positions. A proposal and budget has been submitted to the committee for review.

# My Journey Home Programs

FAFPI Friends and Family of Prison Inmates	T.R.I.P Transitiona l Re- Integration Program	C.O.P.I Children Of Prison Inmates	FORUM Detention Prevention for Juvenciles	One Stop Shop Services for Ex- offenders
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# Friends and Family of Prison Inmates

- Friends and Family of Prison Inmates is a support group for those left behind after a loved one is incarcerated, as a person who has experienced this separation knows, one of the hardest things to deal with is not knowing if your loved one is able to survive the traumatic effect of being locked in a cage. Not having the ability to care for them in the circumstances that they are in, we are a support group that talks, listens, and supports your unique position, and we have found that this works to ease the stress.



# T.R.I.P.

- Transitional Re-Integration Program
- The transitional re-integration program is a diversified program of recovery and Reentry into the community, one that has many layers.
- Services under this program are as follows:
  - Help with obtaining
- \* Birth Certificates (certified copies)
- Identification Cards
- Social Security Card
- Driver License
- Job Placement
- Housing placement
- Mental Health Assessment
- Medical
- Drug and Alcohol assessment
- Veterans administration contact
- Workforce Development

# C.O.P.I

- Children of Prison Inmates
- This Program provides the following:
- Support group for children of prison inmates.
- Assessment and evaluation of mental health issues by a trained licensed social worker.
- Group support for dealing with and healing from the trauma of a parent in prison.

# Forum

- The “Forum” is a program designed to facilitate the following objectives:
- Help to deter the “At Risk” children incarcerated in the juvenile hall systems, from becoming the next “Prisoners” at the adult facilities throughout the state.
- We strive to accomplish this task through the intervention and support that we give in the presentations we perform at the facilities.
- Doing this type of service work, also serves a double purpose.
- It gives a sense of “Paying it back” for the ex-offender, who has possibly never had the opportunity or had the inclination to, be a part of the community in the process of rehabilitation for the youth.

# One Stop Shop Pg. 1

- This Program is very diversified in that it covers many areas of reentry as well as training.
- Through our “Workforce Development” Program, we strive to find employment for the ex-offender.
- We currently have 83 employers whom have given us the ok to send prospective employees to them for work and are on the continuous search for more.
- \* We have attended the Federal Workforce Development Classes, and have utilized their procedures and processing to facilitate assisting ex-Offenders in their search for gainful employment.
- We have been successful in assisting 82 ex-offenders in obtaining employment.
- Also available is the Mental Health component. Assessments are being done a Licensed Clinical Social Worker we have on staff.
- Transportation to and from work is a matter of importance and as possible, we obtain Bus Passes for the newly released inmates mainly through the grace of giving that our board members have.. This an area that needs further assistance.

# One Stop Shop Pg.2

- We are assisting in the completion of Social Security Disability Applications when appropriate.
- We are assisting in “after treatment” housing for those successfully completing drug and alcohol programs and/or halfway/transitional housing programs.
- We presently have an 8 unit computer lab with a volunteer to assist in resume writing, job searches, online applications and basic computer skills.
- We have a volunteer instructor formerly from Western Community College to assist in GED studies, GED testing and online college courses.
- Our resource directory focuses on services conducive to the population we serve.
- Applications and referrals for the “Trades” unions.
- Peer to Peer counseling services

# COLLABORATIONS

- The Ridge House
- Nevada Aids Foundation
- Washoe County Senior Services
- Washoe County Adult Social Services
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Children's Cabinet
- Going Home Prepared/Nevada Department of Corrections/Nevada Parole and Probation
- Bristlecone Family Resources
- Kiwana's Club
- Federal Parole and Probation
- Bailey Counseling Services
- **Advancing Community Cultivation & Enhancing Progressive Transformations-**
- Tuesday Night Groups at Sparks Christian Fellowship
- PPARX Prescription Assistance Program
- Nevada Job Connect/JOIN/Vocational ReHab
- RAAH (Reno Alliance Against Homelessness)
- Join Together Northern Nevada
- Step I
- Crossroads
- Heaven Bound Transitional Home
- University of Nevada Reno
- Herlong Federal Correctional Institute
- Integrity Staffing/Hire Dynamics

# Fund Raising Efforts

- T-shirts/Canvas bags/Prison Blue sales
- Microsoft Grant
- Walmart/Sam Club Grants
- Target Grants

## FUTURE EVENTS

Prison Art Show

Documentary in May

programs to name in this brochure that will be available.



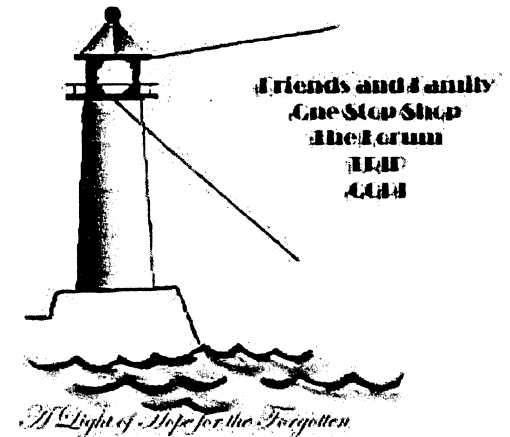
Contact Elaine Voigt @ 775-322-8941 ex. 25  
Contact Nelton Voigt @ 775-322-8941 ex. 25



This picture is of some of the members that participated in the FORUM. This was a picture that was taken at ROP or Right of Passage in Yerington Nevada. Most of the juveniles at ROP are gang members or potential gang members from different states and some that are native to Nevada.

We have made trips out to Yerington to visit and talk with the kids there, in fact one of the kids graduated the program went home to dad in Washington and low and behold one of our members, that was at the forum, and talked to him, was friends with the father 16 years earlier.

**My Journey Home Inc.**



***Brought to you by people with passion  
to shed a light of hope to those that  
have been forgotten.***

***It was once said "If you give a man  
a fish, he eats for a day, If you teach  
him how to fish, he eats for a lifetime.  
We believe that if we give the "tools"  
to the ex-offenders that WANTS to  
make a life for themselves, we keep  
another person from being  
victimized...  
And we give back what was once  
taken...to someone else***



## WHO ARE WE?

I should begin by introducing myself; my name is Elaine Voigt. I am the founder and facilitator of the above mentioned support groups. Our groups are therapeutic and not adversarial. Our primary purpose is to re-integrate families that have been through one of the most traumatic experiences. These families have been thrown into the unknown and fearful world of the judicial system by no fault of their own. The children and families suffer the same consequences as the offender as well as having to work through shame, fear, abandonment, economic devastation, rejection, blame and harassment. That was the reason I started "Friends and Family". Let me take this time to explain what and who each group serves.

**Friends & Family**". this group is for the moral and emotional support of a family that has a loved one, (brother, sister, son, daughter, mother, father, ect) in prison. From my own personal experience, a parent will begin by blaming themselves for not being a good parent. Then the stress and strain of visiting your child behind bars, hearing the horror that goes on in prison, will scare a parent senseless. For a mother, not being able to protect my child from that fate is more than a mother can bear.

**TRIP (Transitional Re-Integration Program)** is designed to help "empower the ex-offender through programs to integrate safely with family and community". We presently have a BADA certified/licensed

social work that sits in on the meetings with the ex-offender. It is a support group to help the ex-offender with the daily stresses, at home, on the job and in the community.

We also have a support group for kids who have parents in prison called **COPI (Children of Prison Inmates)**. When trying to find a name for the group, one student suggested..."COPI, so we don't copy what our parents have done". I guess that says it all.

One of the most powerful undertakings we have pursued, is one called "**The Forum**". Where a panel of people from our groups go into the juvenile facilities and talk to the at risk kids, the family members talk about the problems that arise from judgment and the stigma of having a loved one inside, we let the kids know that their selfish actions and choices leave a wake of grief for the family, not as a guilt trip, or anything like that, but the plain truth of it...The released person whom has gotten "IT" has a chance to tell what life is really like inside, the violence, the chaos and the loss of any type of choices, among other things, not as a scared straight program but as a reality check...this is critical because these at risk children are but a hair breath away from becoming the next "Back Number" in the system, and someone else you may know, or I may know becoming the next victim. Personally I believe that this part of our program is vital to both the children we talk to and the ex-offender that talks to them because of the healing effect opening up to someone

else has, and the "accountability" involved by each of the ex-offender to "Stand up and Be Heard". One of the things that we all learn is that You can't BS a BS'er...and we become accountable to the things we say and the choices we make through the commitment to talk truth to these youngsters....It's a double edge sword and it helps us.

Another part of our program is going to be "**The My Journey Home Learning Center**". Basically this program is in the development stage, one of the things we have seen develop from our group, is that newly released people have a hard time with surviving, from week to week learning how to budget, going to meetings, learning how to pay bills, much less taking time to go to college to finish a GED or take some college courses for a career, not to mention that most of the people getting out of prison have what is commonly referred to as "social rejection". Where they face the "**way too many people here for me**"

Reintegration problem, that takes some time to work through, our program will help them to learn how to socialize with the classroom setting.

Also the Children of Prison Inmates have a difficult time with school because of the Judgment issue that anyone has, which has a parent in prison. We propose that this learning center will be available to the children to take some computer classes and to have the opportunity to socialize with other children in the same situation, hopefully ultimately to support each other through some of the rough situations that they face... There are too many