



MINNEAPOLIS Community Justice Mentor Connection

Fall 2011

Thank you for your faithfulness as a volunteer mentor for the Community Justice program. Sometimes you may feel alone out there in your work, so we want to keep you informed, updated, encouraged and supported.

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2011 Mentor Training Dates

November 12, 2011

Our volunteer mentors are the backbone of the Community Justice program!

The Mentor Connection is a publication of the Minneapolis Police Department and the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches.

Mentor Submissions

My Mentoring Experience

By: Solomon Ogunyemi (CJP Mentor)

I am Solomon Ogunyemi and I love mentoring. I was trained both as a chaplain and as a pastor and I served in the Nigeria Navy for 26 years from 1976-2002. I have had success mentoring Ambrose at Plymouth from 2008-2009 before his release and after. My health condition, a prolonged slipped-disk, made me to stop for a while when I went in for the surgery in April 2010 at North Memorial Hospital. Though I am still receiving treatment I am healing.

Ambrose was staying with his mother when he gained his freedom and even came to church. We normally picked him up before and dropped him off at home after the services. Later he went to stay with others in a housing facility where he took classes. I visited their class sometimes and I saw them sharing cigarettes and other things amongst themselves during break. I gave him advice that he needed to be more determined to achieve his goal. However I was told by the coordinator that he has gone back to the prison.

My advice to mentors is to have a cordial mentor-mentee relationship where the mentor will be there for the mentee at all times.

Past Mentor Events

April Mentor Support Dinner

The last Community Justice Project mentor dinner was held on Friday, April 29th at the Edina Community Lutheran Church. Dinner was catered by Marino's deli. Probation officer PJ Bensen was the guest speaker and she presented on the GIFT (Gaining Independence for Females in Transition) program which works with women in prostitution. Some of the women with we work are supervised by PJ and are in the GIFT program. The goal of the GIFT program is to improve life circumstances and reduce recidivism among women on probation for prostitution. PJ also spoke about the importance of mentoring and how it makes a difference in the lives of the women she works with.



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Words of Encouragement

Mentors sow seeds of change in the mentees with whom they work. If the mentors doesn't see immediate signs of change in the mentees they often get discouraged and feel they are not doing their job as a mentor. However it important to remember that if no one plants the seed the harvest is impossible!

Here are some inspirational quotes to keep you going:

"Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you."
~ Aldous Huxley

"When one door closes another door opens; but we so often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us."
~ Alexander Graham Bell

"It doesn't matter how many say it cannot be done or how many people have tried it before; it's important to realize that whatever you're doing, it's your first attempt at it."
~ Wally Amos

"One has to remember that every failure can be a stepping stone to something better."
~ Col. Harland Sanders

"When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on."
~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

"Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do."
~ Benjamin Spock

April Mentor Support Dinner, *continued from page 1*

To view a research study on the GIFT program please visit: http://www.co.hennepin.mn.us/files/HennepinUS/Community%20Corrections%20and%20Rehabilitation/Reports/GIFT%20Assessment%20Summary_May%202010.pdf

Compass 180 Graduate Recognition

On May 1st the Compass 180 program celebrated its first class of graduates at the Hennepin Avenue United Methodist. Ten CJP mentees who have completed the Compass 180 program and who have received \$1000 scholarships for education and work expenses were recognized.



The event also included discussion about mentoring, special music, stories of inspiration from some of the recipients and guest speaker Minneapolis Council Member Don Samuels.

Compass 180 is a program for teaching male and female ex-offenders entrepreneurial skills. Participants in the program attend 4-5 workshops to teach them skills such as how to write a business plan, marketing, technology and online resources, business start up guidelines and budgeting. Each participant receives a \$1000 scholarship to put a business plan into action or to attend school. Prospective candidates must be outside of the correctional facility. Please contact Larry Olson at (612) 396-7178 for more information on the program and how your mentee can apply.

Boundaries Training

The Community Justice Project held a refresher training on boundaries on June 1st at the Minneapolis 4th Precinct Police Station. Sharen Southard, a Parole Officer, taught the class and provided a lot of valuable information on boundaries and boundary setting.

Here are some quick reminders when setting boundaries:

- It is appropriate and helpful to attend probation meetings with mentees. Just remember to contact the probation officer in advance to make sure it is ok!
- It is never appropriate to let a mentee stay with you at your residence.
- It is important to give your phone number to your mentee before he or she is released from the correctional facility so that you can stay connected!
- It is not appropriate for you to store your mentee's things for him or her.
- Remember your relationship is confidential and you do not need to share any information with the PO regarding your mentee's drug use or criminal behavior.
- However if your mentee is using drugs or participating in criminal behavior it is helpful to recommend to them that they share this information with their PO.
- Listen to your instincts-don't agree to do anything you are uncomfortable doing!
- Most importantly be dependable and be there when your mentee needs you!

Future Events



October

Mentor Support Dinner

Our next mentor support dinner will be Friday, October 14th from 6:30 – 8:00 pm at the Edina Community Lutheran Church. Dinner will be catered by Gandhi Mahal, an Indian restaurant, and will include salad, aloo pakora (fried potatoes), Nnan bread, rice, coconut chicken curry, tandoori chicken, and rice pudding. Our guest speaker will be Russell Raczkowski from the Education Opportunity Center. He does career planning and financial aid assistance. The church is located at 4113 West 54th Street. Two blocks west of France Avenue on West 54th Street. Parking is available in the lot on the west and south sides of the church. The dinner was funded by Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Hopkins. Please save the date and RSVP to Jennifer Edel at jedel@gmcc.org or (612) 721-8687, ext 318 by Thursday, October 6th.

Community Outreach

If you are a part of an organization, faith-based or otherwise, that is interested in giving back to your community by mentoring adult offenders please contact Hillary Freeman by email at hfreeman@gmcc.org or by phone at (612) 721-8687, ext. 332.

June Mentor Training

The Community Justice Project held its last training on Saturday, June 4th. About 20 potential mentors and observers attended this training at the Hennepin County Adult Correctional Facility. Mentor trainings include information on a paradigms, tips on how to mentor, motivational interviewing techniques, and a panel of mentors and mentees talking about their experiences in the mentor-mentee relationship.



The training also included lunch and a tour of the men's building.



If you or someone you know would be interesting in attending one of these trainings, as either a potential mentor or as an observer, please contact Jennifer Edel by email at jedel@gmcc.org or by phone at (612) 721-8687, ext 318.

Mentor-Mentee Family Picnic

The fourth annual mentor-mentee family picnic was held on Saturday, June 25th. The picnic took place at a different park this year: Columbia Park in Northeast Minneapolis.

About 40 mentors, mentees, and family members came together to enjoy a delicious meal of hamburgers, brats, chips, potato salad, cookies, and pot-luck contributions



from mentors! Mentors socialized, grilled, ate, played yard games, listened to music, and enjoyed the outdoors. Another successful mentor event!



Newsletter Submissions

If you are a mentor or mentee with the Community Justice Project who has written a piece about mentoring that you would like to have included in an issue of Mentor Connection please contact editor/writer Jennifer Edel at jedel@gmcc.org or (612) 721-8687 ext 318.