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- Alternatives Agency, Inc. - Cleveland
- Alvis House - Columbus, Dayton, Chillicothe
- ARCA, Inc. - Cleveland
- Community Assessment & Treatment Services, Inc. - Cleveland
- Community Corrections Association, Inc. - Youngstown
- Community Correctional Center, Talbert House - Lebanon
- Community Transition Center - Lancaster
- Community Treatment & Correction Center, Inc. - Canton
- Crossroads Center for Change - Mansfield
- CROSSWAEH CBCF, Oriana House, Inc. - Tiffin
- Diversified Community Services, Inc. - Columbus
- Fresh Start, Inc. - Cleveland
- Mahoning County CBCF, Community Corrections Association, Inc. - Youngstown
- Nova House - Dayton
- Ohio Link Corrections & Treatment, Inc. - Toledo
- Oriana House, Inc. - Akron & Cleveland
- Pathfinder House - Lima
- Salvation Army Booth House - Dayton
- Salvation Army Harbor Light - Cleveland
- Southwestern Ohio Serenity Hall - Hamilton
- The Sheryl L. Kraner, Esq. Youth and Family Behavioral Health Campus - Newark
- Summit County CBCF, Oriana House, Inc. - Akron
- Talbert House - Cincinnati
- Turtle Creek, Talbert House - Lebanon
- Volunteers of America, Northeast and North-central Ohio - Mansfield
- Volunteers of America, Ohio River Valley - Cincinnati & Dayton
- Volunteers of America of Northwest Ohio - Toledo

President's Message

Community Corrections in Ohio

By Anne Connell-Freund

Now, more than ever, is the time to advocate for community corrections programs in Ohio as the state's prison population reaches an all time high with an expected increase of 5.6% by the end of Fiscal Year 2008. Due to the prison overcrowding and the fact that **60% of offenders sentenced to prison are serving less than a year, and the prison system is not designed to provide rehabilitative/treatment to this population**, residential community corrections may be the most appropriate and fiscally responsible option for Ohio.

The Ohio Plan for Productive Offender Reentry and Recidivism Reduction (The Ohio Plan) calls for a broad systems approach that must begin when the inmate is incarcerated and include managing the offender once they return to the community. Halfway Houses and Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF) are an integral part of the Ohio Plan; as they are a valuable and efficient community corrections sanction that effectively transitions offenders back into our communities. In addition to successful reentry, community corrections make sense on a financial level.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) has repeatedly indicated that they have identified up to 7,000 "Truly Non-Violent" offenders at any one time who are placed in an expensive prison bed. These offenders would be better served by receiving supervision, monitoring and treatment in the community. Community correctional programs offer rehabilitative services such as employment, education, substance abuse treatment, evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy programs, and other supportive services in our community. These programs have been proven to reduce future recidivism to 15% versus the state prison average of 38%¹. Halfway Houses and Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF) have been shown to reduce re-incarceration while also proving to be more cost-effective.

It is important that associations like OCCA work collaboratively with ODRC in order to accomplish common goals. One of the most pressing goals at hand is to assist with the reduction in the current prison population and continue developing evidence-based programs that will reduce recidivism of the population we work with. Working together over the last ten years, we have been able to professionalize community corrections, educate stakeholders and implement research-based and cost effective programs. We look forward to this collaborative effort continuing well into the future as we carry out these important objectives and strive to continue providing quality and effective community corrections services in these fiscally difficult times.

¹ Per DRC Director Terry J. Collins' "Testimony before the: House Transportation and Justice Subcommittee" on April 3, 2007.

"Making a difference in Community Corrections"

Internationally Sought After Sex Offender Researcher Speaks At 2007 OCCA Conference

The Ohio Community Corrections Association (OCCA) represents 28 residential community corrections agencies across Ohio and has been in existence since 1973. OCCA has prided itself on bringing controversial issues to the forefront for discussion and balanced resolution.

This year OCCA convened a roundtable on policy making and community safety / risk management issues with internationally renowned sex offender researcher Andrew Harris, Ph.D. Dr. Harris works in both clinical and research capacities in a maximum security mental health center in Canada. Per his biography, “Andrew’s special research and teaching interests concern the assessment of sexual risk to re-offend... among incarcerated and community-based sexual offenders.”



Dr. Andrew Harris leads sex offender policy roundtable discussion

Due to the heightened interest in sex offender laws and containment, OCCA offered a policy session to elected officials, cabinet level staff and agency executives on April 2nd in Columbus. The material can be used to craft appropriate and EFFECTIVE public policy for offenders. Dr. Harris’ research proved that validated assessment tools are accurate predictors of sex offender risk and repeat crimes. Harris cited evidenced based practices for changing offender behaviors.

If you would like a copy of the presentation, please contact OCCA.

The Columbus Dispatch; Date: Jan 20, 2007; Section: Editorial/Letters; Page: 8

Broader prison-release programs needed

As our newly elected officials begin public service, Ohio can start fresh and thankfully end a negative and divisive campaign season.

As a corrections professional, I was saddened to see some campaigns use Willie Horton-style ads that painted all offenders with a broad, scary brush and seemed to imply that if we do anything other than lock up offenders for a long time, we expose society to all sorts of dangers.

Now, can we please have a rational discussion about what will truly make the community safer? In corrections, we are always balancing punishment and delivering appropriate sanctions for a crime with the need to reduce the likelihood that those under supervision will commit a new crime once they are released.

Our criminal-justice system is weighted toward punishment. The number of people incarcerated in the United States has grown more than fourfold since 1973 and continues to increase. Projections from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction show Ohio's prison population growing from about 45,000 at the start of 2006 to more than 55,000 by 2015. That is an 22.2 percent increase during the same period that census projections show Ohio's total population growing by just 1.4 percent. When offenders are released — and 95 percent will be — they face enormous challenges in the community. In Ohio, 26,677 offenders were released during 2005 but only 52 percent were released to any type of post-incarceration supervision, such as post-release control, pa-



**DENISE M.
ROBINSON**

Ohio is locking up more people, but is supervising just over 50 percent upon their return to the community, thus contributing to the creation of a new generation of offenders.

role, and transitional control. The remaining offenders were released directly to the street without supervision or mandated services.

A large number of newly released offenders do not have housing, jobs, or support systems, and many remain affected by substance abuse and physical and mental problems. These are considerable factors when assessing the risk of these individuals again committing crimes. The Bureau of Justice Statistics found that nearly two-thirds of former offenders will be rearrested within three years of being released.

Incarceration also is tearing at the fragile fabric of families. It often means the loss of the primary wage-earner in a household and the loss of a parent. More than 3.2 million children in the United States have a parent in prison, on parole or recently released.

Regardless of the circumstances, children always experience the loss of a parent as a traumatic event. And incarceration of a parent leads to a vicious cycle: Children of offenders are five times more likely than their peers to end up in prison.

Ohio is locking up more people but isn't supervising enough of them upon their return to the community, thus contributing to the creation of a new generation of offenders.

Do you feel safer? How about poorer? Even at today's daily average cost of incarceration in Ohio, it will take another \$245 million a year to incarcerate the projected 10,000 more people. That's in addition to the \$1.5 billion Ohioans

spent on prisons in 2006.

There is another way. Community corrections programs carefully monitor offenders and hold them accountable but also provide them with the opportunity to work, participate in treatment and maintain family connections.

The purpose is to provide the research-based programs and treatment services that have been proved to help to curb the staggering recidivism rate and to reduce the impact of incarceration on families and children.

But community-based programs are still only part of the solution. True reintegration requires effort on the part of those released, their families, human-service agencies, faith communities, government, employers and the larger community.

In a reflection of what common sense tells us, criminal-justice researchers have found that the more people are invested in their community by things such as having a job, having a family, belonging to a church, having health care and having safe and adequate housing, the less likely they are to commit crimes. And that makes us all safer.

Ohio's lawmakers and residents should support community corrections and other re-entry programs and services that will contribute to safer, healthier communities.

Denise M. Robinson is president and chief executive officer of Alvis House, a private, nonprofit agency that provides research-based re-entry programs and services for released prisoners.

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OCCA Gives Accolades at Annual Conference

OCCA gives two awards at their annual conference; the President's award for external entities for contributions to the field and the membership award for leadership within the association. This year's recipients are Terry J. Collins and Debra Winston, respectively.

Terry J. Collins, director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, earned the OCCA's 2007 President's Award for his dedication to and advocacy for community corrections. Collins stated on numerous occasions that we have "a responsibility, once incarcerated, to provide opportunities for offenders to obtain the job skills, education, and treatment services that can enable them to return to society as productive citizens".



Terry Collins, Director, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, received the OCCA President's Award

Debra Winston, Associate Executive Director for the Salvation Army Harbor Light, was nominated by her peers as the 2007 Membership Award recipient. Debbie has worked in many capacities in the association. She has been the treasurer and is currently the secretary, serving on the OCCA executive committee, and co-chairing the conference committee. Debbie is described as a quiet leader, pressing forward on community corrections issues that affect the state and her locality, soliciting vendors for the conference, and serving as a confidante and friend to members of the association.



Debra Winston, OCCA Membership Award recipient, poses with Director Terry Collins and Assistant Director Mike Randle

For a copy of remarks given on April 3, 2007 by Director Collins at the Ohio Statehouse contact OCCA at 614-252-8402 or GPG at 614-461-9335.

Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann and Ohio Legislators honor Alvis House for 40 years of service to the community

Since 1967, Alvis House has played a critical role in breaking the cycle of crime. The agency has worked with thousands of offenders to prepare them for life on the outside. **Opening Doors, Rebuilding Lives** was the theme of the agency's 40th Anniversary Celebration, held April 18, 2007 during a luncheon event at the Ohio Statehouse.

All of the materials for the event featured pictures of Alvis House clients and their families to remind those in attendance that when an individual is incarcerated, it impacts the whole family.

In its first year, Alvis House provided services to about 60 men who were returning to the community after serving time at the Old Ohio Penitentiary. This year, Alvis House will serve more than 3,000 men, women, young adults and children in 24 programs at 11 locations in Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Chillicothe.

The need for reentry services provided by Alvis House in Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Chillicothe has never been greater. The number of people incarcerated in Ohio increased by 250% just from 1980 to 1997. In 2006, Ohioans spent more than \$1.5 billion on incarceration. The state's prison population has already reached an all time high and projections show an increase of 5.6% by the end of Fiscal Year 2008.

Nearly 95% of all incarcerated offenders will return to the community. Ohio releases an average of 73 offenders a day. A large number of newly released offenders do not have housing, jobs, or support systems, and many remain affected by substance abuse, health and mental health problems. These are all enormous risk factors in the likelihood these individuals will commit a new crime. "During those critical early months, a reentry program can make the difference between returning to the community and returning to prison," said Denise M. Robinson, president and CEO of Alvis House.

Another important concern is the impact of an individual's incarceration on families. For many families, it means the loss of the primary wage earner and the loss of a parent. And incarceration of a parent leads to a vicious cycle: children of offenders are five times more likely than their peers to end up in prison themselves. Alvis House operates both an adult and youth family-focused reentry program and provides family support programs to help participants to work on issues surrounding an individual's incarceration.

Participation in Alvis House and other community corrections, reentry and halfway house programs has been demonstrated to substantially reduce the rate of recidivism. These programs provide time for individuals in transition to orient back to the community, receive counseling services, reunify with their families, and obtain housing and employment.

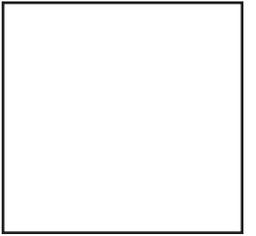
In addition to the Attorney General's keynote address, the program included remarks from House Minority Leader Joyce Beatty; Senate Minority Whip Ray Miller; and Sen. Steve Stivers. Janet Jackson, United Way President; Dir. Terry Collins, ODRC; and Dr. Reginald Wilkinson, Ohio College Access Network President, also spoke. Andrea Cambern, anchor, WBNS-10TV, served as the mistress of ceremonies; and Richard Weiland, president of Richard Consulting Corporation, received the Founders' Award.

Many OCCA member agencies supported and attended the event and Alvis House was pleased to be able to provide members with an opportunity to talk to legislators during the budget process. Ohio is very fortunate to have the member agencies of OCCA working collaboratively with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to accomplish the common goals of reducing recidivism through the use of evidence-based programs and working to reserve expensive prison space for the most serious and violent offenders.



Hon. Marc Dann, Ohio Attorney General

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MISSION

The Ohio Community Corrections Association offers to member community correction service providers the opportunity for advocacy and professional development, which enhances the ability to reduce repeat criminal offending.



VISION

To be number one in residential community corrections and reduce criminal offending.
