



Oregon CURE

Summer 2011
Volume 38

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants

A Newsletter for Families and Friends of Incarcerated Individuals

1631 NE Broadway, #460 Portland, OR 97232
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CURE USA Board Meeting Baton Rouge, Louisiana May 20, 2011 thru May 23, 2011

The 2011 CURE USA board meeting began on Friday evening, May 20, 2011. There were over 20 state and issue chapters represented from around the U.S, with Sylvester Uhaa representing CURE Nigeria. Louisiana CURE chair Checo Yancy hosted the meeting and LA CURE volunteer Carl Taylor brought us up to date on the work that he is doing with re-entry, which includes his supervising homeless shelters for men.

Saturday's guest speaker was Louisiana DOC DPS&C Deputy Assistant Director for Re-entry, Rhett Covington. He began his career in the early 70's with the federal government and with state corrections in 1993 as a Probation & Parole officer. In 2008, Louisiana isolated 5% of their corrections budget and instigated a regional pre-release program and transferred people from the state system to parish (county) jails. The DPS&C is currently responsible for approximately 40,000 people, about half of whom are incarcerated in local jails. In 2002, the DPS&C began COrE (Corrections Organized for Reentry) and established reentry programs in all state prisons which was confirmed in 2004 by legislative mandate and was further revised and standardized in 2010. The 100 hour program contains 10 modules designed to help identify needs and challenges that might be faced upon discharge and establish an action plan to connect with community resources to address these needs. Louisiana has seen a 40% drop in the recidivism rate for people who have completed the reentry program.

Rhett is working with 17 parishes (counties) on re-entry preparation for the 20,000 people serving the balance of their prison time in a parish jail. In 2009, the DPS&C launched the Regional Reentry Initiative to address the pre-release and reentry needs of those housed in local jails. The Northwest and Southeast Regional Reentry Programs and the LA Transition Center for Women in Tallulah were opened to serve people returning to 11 parishes in the northwest of the state, the New Orleans metropolitan area, and all women not able to benefit from programs at the women's state prison. As the programs have only been in operation for a year, it is difficult to assess the impact on recidivism, but early numbers demonstrate a positive impact. Although implementation of additional regional reentry programs in the state has stalled due to state budget issues, many local sheriffs have begun pre-release programs on their own.

In 2009, over 15,000 people were sent to prison, 51% were new admissions and 49% or 7225 people were sent back to prison on revocations. Louisiana leads the nation in the rate of incarceration with 883 per 100,000 people incarcerated (vs. a national average of 502 per 100,000) according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics 2009. Angola Prison houses over 5,000 men who are for the most part serving a life sentence or who are on Death Row. People sentenced to life can apply to the parole board for an early release, however, the governor needs to sign the commutation, and at this time, he isn't signing any.

The DPS&C, in partnership with the Orleans Criminal District Court, began the Reentry Court pilot initiative. Warden Burl Cain at the LA State Penitentiary at Angola volunteered to host the program, citing the many resources, including graduates of a theological seminary program and of vocational programs. Through this program, people sentenced to prison meeting certain criteria are sent directly to LSP (Angola), where they are assigned a mentor and placed in separate housing from the general population. The mentors stay with them throughout the program and help them adjust to prison life as well as stay on task toward program completion. This is an incredible program where people serving life sentences are able to have a positive effect on another person's life.

We are all aware of the importance of role models and mentors in young peoples' lives and for some of the young men entering Angola, this relationship will be the first they've experienced with someone who wants them to mature and succeed in their life's endeavors and it also gives both the mentors and the mentees the opportunity to enjoy a sense of pride in their accomplishments. Participants must obtain a GED, obtain substance abuse and mental health treatment where appropriate, and obtain a vocational skill over a period of 18 months to 2 years. Upon graduation and a positive report from LSP, the court allows the person to petition for reconsideration of sentence. If granted, the participant is re-sentenced to probation and followed by the court. If not granted, the person must serve his remaining time in a location determined by the DPS&C. Current state law, as well as resource and logistical challenges, limits this program to Orleans parish.

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Oregon CURE
1631 N.E. Broadway, #460
Portland, OR 97232



Oregon CURE Mission and Goals

Our mission statement:

To reduce crime by advocating for effective criminal justice policies and practices.

Our goals are:

Provide information and education to the public

Continue to develop a positive working relationship with the Oregon Department of Corrections and related agency partners.

Increase membership, funding base and support to incarcerated citizens, their families and friends.

Develop and maintain the administrative infrastructure necessary to achieve the above goals.

To ensure you receive your copy of the Oregon CURE Newsletter, please remember to send us your change of address so we can update our database.

Please Note: Effective Immediately

Due to the high cost of printing materials Oregon CURE will now begin charging \$2 each for booklets requested. **We will continue to provide all items free of charge to incarcerated individuals.** Those booklets currently include: "Sometimes You're the Hammer, Sometimes You're the Nail," "Free-er – but Not Free," and "Keeping Love Alive." When making your request, please include a check made out to Oregon CURE. Thank you.

Doing Time within the Oregon Youth Authority by Meredith Wexler

Like many of you, I am a parent. My 17 year old son, Morgan, was convicted of a M11 crime when he was 16 and is incarcerated. This event has devastated our family and for the first few months, I cried, stayed in bed, forgot to eat, isolated myself from family and friends, and felt as if I had no direction in my life. One day, my husband was searching for some help for us and found Oregon CURE on the internet. We decided to go to the next support group. It was at CURE that I started to express my feelings, felt understood by others and found a new purpose in volunteering for Oregon CURE, learning, supporting and creating programs that I really care about. I understand what it is like to have a loved one incarcerated and I am advocating for the welfare of my son and the thousands of other families who have a loved one inside the criminal justice system.

Although my son spent some time in adult facilities, Washington County Jail and Coffee Creek, he will spend the majority of his time in Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) facilities which function very differently from DOC. The mission of the OYA and DOC is to "protect the public and reduce crime by holding offenders accountable for their behavior." OYA continues to improve treatment, education and job training services to provide youth with the opportunity to learn personal responsibility and develop the skills and behaviors they need to make positive choices for themselves." OYA facilities provide the highest level of security and range in size and function, providing a continuum of evidence based services that strive to prepare youth for return to the community with a lower risk to re-offend. Youth generally live in units of 25, with many of the reformation and treatment activities conducted in these units. There are several male offender facilities: Eastern Oregon, Hillcrest, MacLaren, North Coast, Rogue Valley, and Tillamook. Oak Creek houses young women. There are several work program/transition youth facilities, such as Camp Florence, Camp Tillamook, and Riverbend.

In order to properly care for the medical and mental health needs of youth, OYA has one full time Psychologist and one full time Psychology resident. OYA holds contracts with multiple psychiatrists and nurse practitioners that attend to the medication needs of youth in OYA custody. Up until the last few years, OYA programs were inconsistent which resulted in interrupted treatment when a youth transferred from one facility to another. In 2005, legislation passed mandating treatment to be evidence-based principles of intervention. At this time, OYA facilities are national leaders in using evidence-based treatment practices in order to prevent youth offenders from committing additional crimes and to teach them pro-social behaviors that will help them to succeed in the outside world upon release.

The treatment plan includes an assessment of the offender so the OYA can develop programs designed to address specific types of behaviors and treatment needs. Treatment modules offered are alcohol and drug treatment, changing behavior, cognitive behavior therapy, coping with stress and depression, fire setting treatment, interactive journal keeping, pathways to self-discovery, power source, seeking safety, sex offender treatment, skill streaming, social skills and street smarts. Aggression replacement training is offered to young men and Dialectic Behavior therapy (addresses mood disorders) is offered to young women. On average, it takes a youth two years to complete treatment. Youth are responsible for weekly chores in their facility and have the opportunity to work in food services and canteen. Youth attend school and can complete their GED and take on-line college courses.

Youth offenders can be held under DOC, but housed under OYA because of their age. Whether OYA or DOC, all youth go through recommended treatment programs. Youth under DOC can be removed from the OYA facility and placed in another DOC facility if there is noncompliance with the program. OYA youth cannot be removed and placed into a DOC facility.

Nick Sotelo LMFT, is the current OYA treatment services coordinator and provided valuable information for this article. Nick works in administration with the responsibility of making sure the Treatment Services delivered to OYA youth are effective and also works with various agencies to confirm treatment plans. I asked Nick for his opinion in what we can do to help make the youth system more successful. Nick stated that the biggest need is for transitional housing units for DOC youth that are being released so they don't need to face a life struggling on the streets, which in often leads to new crimes committed by the youth and a return to incarceration. The second important area that needs change is to educate the public on youth releasing to our communities. Many citizens openly voice their discontent in having youth offenders move into their neighborhoods; however this is due to a lack of information on the crimes of conviction and the low recidivism rate of the youth offenders. Upon release, the majority of youth (and adults) simply want to move on with their lives and create a productive, crime free life for themselves. They need the support and compassion of neighbors, family and friends to make this transition successful. Nick concluded it is the OYA's goal to assist people to lead crime free lives and become productive members of their communities and this should be the communities' goals as well.

I wanted to speak a bit about one personal concern I see in the support of these young offenders. It has been clearly studied and discussed within Oregon CURE and the facilities themselves that the success of the offender partially depends on the support system they have in place. I visit my son, Morgan, religiously every Sunday from 1 to 4 in the afternoon. I have never missed a visit. I write to him every week, and we are grateful that we are able to receive one phone call a week from Morgan. I schedule my life around those calls, letters and visits because I know how important and valuable it is for his success for him to know he has family that loves him and supports him. My son's facility houses 50 youth offenders and on average, every Sunday during visiting hours, there are maybe 10 to 15 families that come to visit. Morgan tells me that there are many youth in the facility that have never received visitors. This is a tragedy in my eyes and I grieve for the youth that find themselves without support. I cannot reiterate enough how valuable it is to the success of these young offenders to receive care and support from the outside world.

On June 1, the Beaverton Oregon CURE support group invited in guest speakers: Karen Daniels with the OYA, Maia Christopher from the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, and Joe from University of Hope .

OYA Continued from page 6

Karen Daniels is the Assistant Director for facility services for OYA, is responsible for the agency's 11 statewide facilities and serves as a member of the executive team that manages the agencies' 1,135 employees. OYA is unique in looking at youth as capable of rehabilitation. A movement towards positive youth development is on the rise and OYA is structured on a foundation of respect, optimism, and a strong belief in cooperation and collaboration among community agencies, and families that will assist in this process. Education is extremely important to OYA. I recently attended a graduation ceremony at one of the OYA facilities where 15 youth graduated from high school with caps and gowns. OYA strongly supports the data that youth that have an education, have much lower recidivism rates. OYA looks at the current job market and determines how they can get our OYA youth living wage, meaningful jobs upon release.

I was fortunate to meet Joe a short time ago, He is an inspiring young man and a wonderful success story of determination and positive energy. Joe, (name changed to respect his privacy) was convicted of a M11 crime when he was 15 years old and remained in the OYA custody until he turned 21. When he arrived at OYA, he was overwhelmed by abandonment issues and didn't feel any purpose in life. In the years that followed, a transformation took place. He started to write – and to think about what needs were not being met while youth were in custody. Joe completed his treatment, received his high school education, took on-line college classes and began to “wait his sentence out”. Prior to leaving OYA, Joe worked with minority services director Ron Weaver, and two friends and fellow offenders, to put together a program that would engage community volunteers to help mentor and support incarcerated youth in the arts, music and poetry. The University of Hope was up and running! Joe believes that “each person must have a sense of hope in order to move forward each day”. For the young men inside McLaren, art, music and poetry are some of the things that give them purpose.”

Youth must apply to get into the program, acceptance is based on behavior, grades and staff recommendations. Once part of the program, they have the choice of participating in a variety of artistic groups. The University of Hope offers art, basic finance and life skills classes by bringing teachers into the OYA facilities. McLaren was the first pilot site for his university and soon, another pilot site will be created to continue researching whether his project is based on evidence based policies. In the next year, Joe is hoping to gain more funding for his project and would like to develop a mentorship program where released OYA youth would mentor incarcerated OYA youth with the focus on their role as human beings, rather than criminals. Joe is currently at Portland State finishing up his degree in Psychology and then hopes to attend the PhD program. You can read more about the University of Hope Project at <http://www.uhproject.org/>.

Maia Christopher is the executive director of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA). Maia began working with Correctional Services of Canada in 1990. She moved to Washington State and worked in the Department of Corrections for 10 years, specifically with sex offenders. Maia then moved back to Correctional Services of Canada working with individuals who had committed various offences. Maia took the position of Executive Director with ATSA in 2007. Established in 1996, Oregon ATSA is a non-profit, interdisciplinary organization and is a branch of ATSA, an international organization. ATSA was formed to “foster research, facilitate information exchange, further professional education and provide for the advancement of professional standards and practices in the field of sex offender evaluation and treatment”.

OR ATSA is a voluntary membership organization and does not credential members or certify fitness to provide services. Maia reported that the field of sex offender treatment is relatively young as sex abuse has become less secretive. Treatment is not a cure, it is simply a piece of helping the offender, in reaching out to the community and building collaborative and cooperative relationships between the offender and all the agencies and people that will be involved in treatment and support, such as the parole board and officers, counselors and treatment providers, family members, schools, housing units. The basic modality of treatment for sex offenders is cognitive behavioral mode. ATSA will provide referrals for treatment providers when requested. Maia stated that the biggest challenges that sex offenders face in the community are stigma and loneliness. You can read more about ATSA at their website www.atsa.com

Support Group Meeting Information Please visit our website www.oregoncure.org for additional information!

New SE Portland Location:

Second Tuesday of the Month from 6:30 pm – 8pm! St. Anthony Catholic Church, 3720 SE 79th Ave., Portland. Call Sheri for details (503) 380-0626

Our Support Groups and Facilitators are: Call for Times and Locations. **Additional information is available on our website!!!!**

www.oregoncure.org

Beaverton: Gretchen (503) 350-0236

Eugene: Ken (541) 935-1182

Dave (541) 344-7612

John Day: Julie (541) 932-4446

Salem: Alicia (503) 930-0330

Medford: Sam (541) 944-3304

Adelia (541) 772-9680

NE Portland:

Pastor Tellis (503) 422-1154

Wanda (503) 289-8120

SE Portland: Sheri (503) 380-0626

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS IN COMMUNITY BANKS

The Oregon Department of Corrections now allows people in custody to open savings accounts in financial institutions in Oregon that agree to oversee accounts for people in prison. All agreements are exclusively between the person setting up the account and the financial institution. At this point, only savings accounts are allowed since Central Trust can provide cashier's checks at prisoner's requests.

Point West Credit Union, main office in Portland, has agreements with financial institutions all over the state. Point West is a member-owned non-profit financial cooperative. There are no stockholders, so all profits are returned to members in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates and lower fees. Point West Credit Union serves employees and family members of employees of 39,000 businesses. Family member can be a spouse, child, parent, sibling, aunt, uncle or cousin. The relative must provide proof of employment to Point West. Also, to be eligible to open an account, a person must be employed during his or her incarceration and provide proof with either a DOC pay stub or letter verifying employment.

There are a number of considerations to make prior to opening a savings account. The advantages are that your deposited money is sitting in your account earning money; albeit, the interest rates are currently low but earning something is better than nothing. As you regularly deposit your earnings, you will establish a reputation with your chosen institution, and thus will find it easier to open a checking account, obtain a credit card and a loan upon release.

As a person in prison opening an account at Point West, you will need to know that there are some special requirements. All deposits must be made at Point West Credit Union in Portland. If a family member or friend who lives out of town is making a deposit, the deposit can be mailed to Randy Majors directly to his attention. Mr. Majors services all accounts at Point West belonging to prisoners in Oregon. All deposits from inmates must be by Direct Deposit from the DOC. No wire deposits from outside persons will be accepted. A family member or friend may deposit into your account only by permission of Mr. Majors. Any dispersal of money to a third party requires a written ok from your case manager. You may have beneficiaries on your account, but there can be no joint person on the account.

There are some people who currently have savings accounts in a West Coast Bank, and those accounts will continue to be serviced. However, West Coast at this time is accepting no new accounts from incarcerated persons while they review their protocols. Oregon CURE will notify you of any changes in future newsletters.

For employed family members who want to learn if they are eligible to join Point West Credit Union, go to Pointwestcu.com, click on Join Us, and enter the company's name in SEARCH.

Contact Person at Point West Credit Union: Randy Majors
Point West Credit Union 718 NE 12th Avenue, Portland, OR 97232-2274
Main: 503-5000, x123, Direct: 503-546-5023, rmajors@pointwestcu.com

News From The DOC

Television Sets, MP3 Players and Electronic Messaging:

Within the coming months, a few new products and services will become available to people in prison. A new 13" television has been identified that will be available for purchase on August 1, 2011. Beginning July 18th, the Commissary will begin accepting pre-orders for this television. The price for this 13" television will be \$219. Additionally, as of August 1, 2011, the price of the 8" television will be reduced to \$165.

In addition, the department will soon offer MP3 Players that will allow people in prison to purchase individual songs from a catalog of several million songs. The same device used to hold and play the songs will also be able to hold electronic messages (emails) and photos sent by loved ones. The details of when these products will be available, their price, and any conditions or restrictions on their sale or use will be shared as soon as they are available.

Would you like to contribute to Oregon CURE? Subscribe to our Oregon CURE Newsletter? Please write to the address below and sent the amount for the contribution type: Inmate (\$3), Individual (\$15), Family (\$25), Organization (\$50), Other (\$\$\$).

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BOOK REVIEW AND MORE

By Judy Farrell

Crime and Public Policy edited by Joan Petersilia and James Q. Wilson, Oxford University Press, 2011:

"Wilson and Petersilia, outstanding scholars on their own, have outdone themselves. The fourth version of their series on crime and public policy brings together twenty-one very strong chapters on current knowledge and recent developments about crime and about the responses of the criminal justice system, each written by acknowledged experts who are at the top of their field."--Alfred Blumstein, J. Erik Jonsson University Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research, Carnegie Mellon University.

There are more than 600 pages in this book, and much of the text is very technical as it describes the details and results of current and past research. However, the Conclusion at the end of each chapter summarizes the important content and provides much stimulation for discussion and further thought.

As a long-time member of Oregon CURE, I am a firm believer in the saying, "Knowledge shall set us free." Following are the titles of entries that could be of great interest to people in prisons and their loved ones outside. In the following issues of our newsletter I would like to publish parts of selected topics as follows:

Crime and Biology
Labor Markets and Crime
Sex Offenders and Sex Offender Policy
General Deterrence: A Review of Recent Evidence
Community Corrections: Probation, Parole and Prisoner Reentry
Prisons
Crime and Public Policy

Petersilia and Wilson did not collect these chapters from experts because the message will "solve" the crime problem but rather because it will demonstrate how to think about this problem. I hope you will look forward to the articles, and that they will provoke interest for further reading and discussion.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HANDWASHING

By Judy Farrell

Dr. Joseph Bick has established quite a name for himself in the corrections industry. When Bick, an infectious disease specialist, became the chief medical officer at the California Medical Facility, Vacaville, CA, in 1993, he discovered a chaotic situation: years of neglect of inmates and prison facilities, and medical staff that was demoralized. Over the years, he has helped improve the facility considerably by implementing prevention strategies to help stop the transmission of illnesses commonly occurring in prisons, such as Hepatitis A and C and MRSA. It cannot be overstated how important handwashing is in a prison setting. As you touch people, surfaces and objects throughout the day, you accumulate germs on your hands. In turn, you can infect yourself with these germs by touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Although it's impossible to keep your hands germ-free, washing your hands frequently can help limit the transfer of bacteria, viruses and other micro-organisms. It's generally best to wash your hands with soap and water. Follow these simple steps:

- Wet your hands with running water
- Apply liquid, bar or powdered soap
- Lather well
- Rub your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Remember to scrub all surfaces, including the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails.
- Rinse well.
- Dry your hands with a clean paper towel or air dryer.
- If possible, use the paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Keep in mind that antibacterial soap is no more effective at killing germs than is regular soap. Using antibacterial soap may even lead to the development of bacteria that are resistant to the product's antimicrobial agents--making it harder to kill these germs in the future.

From the Mayo Clinic and corrections.com websites

To our many contributors, we THANK YOU for your generosity! We know times are hard. If you've not yet had an opportunity to donate, we welcome any amount you can send! Our entire income is generated from your donations. All of our expenses go towards fulfilling our mission and goals. As you know, our board is comprised of volunteers who contribute countless hours to this organization. Please join us in our advocacy efforts.

CURE USA Board Meeting Continued from First Page

In closing, Rhett expressed his appreciation for the leadership of Secretary "Jimmy" Le Blanc, for pursuing the idea of providing reentry assistance to incarcerated persons. The community needs to advocate for these programs and be ready to assist with time and resources when the decision is made locally to pursue them. CURE USA certainly appreciated Rhett's involvement in these important programs and the time he gave to speak to all of us.

The next speaker was Keith Nordyke, an attorney whose office is located across the street from the LA DOC. He specializes in parole and pardon work, and prison litigation. Of those who apply to the parole board for a hearing, only 6% are granted pardons; however, a law was just passed that states if a person has served 10 years and reached the age of 60 with a determinate sentence, they are eligible for parole consideration if the crime of conviction was not defined as violent or a sex offense. There are also requirements that the person cannot have committed any disciplinary offenses in twelve consecutive months prior to the parole eligibility date, and that they have completed 100 hours of prerelease programming. The person must also complete substance abuse treatment if needed, obtain their GED (if deemed capable) and obtain a low-risk level designation. Keith encourages people in prison to get into educational programs and to contact him years prior to their eligibility so he can start working their cases. However, due to the political climate in Louisiana, Keith is currently advising potential clients that he is unable to assist them in their efforts for parole, and it would be best if they did not spend their hard earned dollars on a parole attorney at this time.

Each representative from a state or issue chapter gave their reports for accomplishments in the last 18 months. We know the challenges are considerable and it can be difficult to initiate and maintain a relationship with either a State DOC or our lawmakers, however, there have been signs of positive movement. State budgets have forced lawmakers to reconsider sentencing issues. Longer prison sentences are counter-productive and the increase in incarceration costs is not sustainable. Although there are several states that have been unable to reach the moral and ethical decision to review their tough on crime stance, there were several reports that tough on crime talk is diminishing and that new allies are coming into these discussions with coalitions being formed throughout the U.S. In some states, the number of people approved for parole or pardons is increasing, including people sentenced to life. The latest figure for Michigan is a 50% parole rate and an almost 15% reduction of the number of people in prison. There is also movement to decrease the amount of time between parole hearings in some states. Work is being done in Iowa to prevent new laws that create new crimes.

A private showing of "The Land of the Free: The Angola 3" was shown at the meeting. Most of us would believe it impossible that anyone in the US could be held in solitary confinement for almost forty years. We would be wrong. Samuel L Jackson narrates the story of the Angola 3, extraordinary men targeted by prison authorities for becoming members of the Black Panther Party and organizing against the degrading conditions, abuse, and sexual slavery rampant in America's most infamous prison. The broad coalition that has formed around this cause is almost as inspiring as these three men who continue to advocate from the inside.

We were honored to meet Wilbert Rideau, who was released from Angola prison after 44 years of incarceration. He was the editor of The Angolite, for 25 years and has traveled throughout the states, lecturing about journalism and criminal justice at universities and talking to troubled youths at the request of judges and school authorities.

Charles Sullivan, co-founder of CURE discussed several bills before the 112th Congress. The session began in January of 2011 and will end in January of 2013. Several bills are carryovers from the 111th session and have not yet been assigned an updated bill number. Bills of interest to CURE include: Reauthorizing the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention, the Youth PROMISE Act, Finalizing PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act), establishing a National Criminal Justice Commission to undertake an 18 month study of the criminal justice system, Abolishing the Federal Death Penalty and Re-authorizing the Second Chance Act. Stay tuned for updates on our federal legislative work.

Two resolutions passed unanimously:

1. We renew our commitment to the development of CURE into an international organization. That development should occur in a manner that is consistent with CURE's history and the principles it has supported. Any funds expended for international work should come from funds raised specifically for international work.
2. CURE should create or participate in coalitions in situations where the likelihood of success is enhanced by having additional partners and where all partners agree on the ultimate goal and the strategies for reaching that goal.

Two other resolutions were presented and will be finalized and voted on at the next board of directors meeting in the fall of 2012.

1. Position on Sentencing
2. Position of the registry for people convicted of sex offenses

The CURE volunteers who attended the conference come from all walks of life: some are retired, others are holding full time jobs, some are formerly incarcerated, while others have a loved one in the prison system. We all come together to discuss our challenges and share our successes with our volunteer efforts to reform our criminal justice system.

"Today's problems are seldom solved by yesterday's thinking". Albert Einstein

Publication Notice

This newsletter is a publication of Oregon CURE. Oregon CURE is a 501 (c) (3) organization whose goal is to reduce crime through criminal justice reform.

The opinions and statements contained in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Oregon CURE.

Contributions of articles, letters to the editor, notices, etc., are welcome, but may be edited or rejected for space considerations.

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Oregon CURE is an all-volunteer organization. Oregon CURE volunteers typically work at other jobs. Volunteers answer letters.

We appreciate the letters you send and do read them. We try, but are not always able to answer every letter individually. Oregon CURE is not a service organization. Do not send us any legal documents. We do not offer legal services or provide legal advice.

Meeting with the Department of Corrections

The Board of Directors of Oregon CURE once again had the opportunity to meet with Director Max Williams and associate directors and staff of the Department of Corrections on June 20, 2011. Representing Oregon CURE were Gretchen Vala, Kris Vala, Judy Farrell and Bonnie Nusser. Our agenda had been submitted earlier and everyone was ready to get down to business.

A number of issues were discussed:

- Jana Russell, Behavior Health Services Administrator, led Mental Health discussion. She offered to give a Power Point presentation on mental health within the walls of the institutions, covering intake to release. Jana Russell and/or Claudia Fischer-Rodriguez, Clinical Director, are the liaisons between the outside and person in prison.
- Visiting restrictions for children with a parent convicted of a Domestic Violence or Sex Offense are determined on a case-by-case basis. Call Brenda Dennis with questions or concerns.
- Phone calls returned in a timely manner by Case Managers was a topic of conversation. It is their intent to return calls with 24 hours. There was discussion of identifying specific trends of non-returned calls.
- Update on Request for Proposal for phones. Once a final bidder was awarded a contract, the remaining bidders filed protests. The current contract with VAC was temporarily extended until the protest concluded and the new vendor could be announced. The intent is to balance rates between prisons. The future with the new vendor includes options for newsletters, voicemail options, e-messaging and video-calls. There may be rolling phone black outs during installation and implementation of the new phone system.
- Institutions are using a Security Threat Group (STG) model for managing misconduct. It is behavior based and is managed by use of education and programs.
- Education for correction officers took a financial hit due to budget cuts. Most education to staff is online, which gives flexibility in developing curriculum.
- Director Williams indicated there is no reason to believe people would be sent out of state to prison. HB 3682 was introduced to send people in prison with immigration status in question to out-of-state prisons. This died in committee. This bill was not supported by the department.
- HB 3285 awaits signature by Governor Kitzhaber. According to the DOC, it sends a message that everyone should share the cost of the burden of the budget cuts. The top fees annually assessed from the Trust Account deposits could be 5%. This will be cautiously rolled out. No date yet as to when this will occur.
- Most institutions currently have gardens and use whatever produce they grow. All surplus foods are donated to local food banks.
- Director Williams suggested Oregon CURE meet with superintendents of all institutions, if possible, to enable each of us to have a better understanding and knowledge of the other. It was determined that we would begin with east side institutions. Appointments will be made with TRCI and EOCI. *We met with key personnel including Superintendent Rick Coursey (EOCI) on August 1, 2011.*