JAIL INDUSTRIES JOURNAL

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A Word from the Chair

Labor and Business Collaborating with Jails

By Sean Morrow

Jail Industries Board Labor Representative and Board Chair

In the last issue of the *Jail Industries Journal,* the programs in the Yakima County and City of Kent jails were highlighted. By all accounts, they are successful. Both attained funding, equipment, and were able to train staff. As offenders move through the courses and are certified on forklifts and flagging, the jail has done its part, and can claim that it has a successful jail industries program.

But, how should we measure success? The programs in Yakima and Kent have shown that offenders are getting what they need while inside the facility, but it is outside the jail where the true success of any program will be determined. RCW

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Innovative Reentry Strategies: The Emerging Role of Correctional Industries

A National Institute of Corrections Broadcast

By Dean Mason

Executive Director, Jail Industries Board

On October 7, 2009, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) presented part 2 of its series on correctional industries (CI) during an interactive 3-hour live broadcast. Part 1, which aired in August 2008, focused on the history and benefits of CI and ways to balance competing interests. This year, part 2 focused on presenting new reentry strategies and highlighted programs around the country that reflect best practices.

The Premise:

Imagine a reentry program that reduces recidivism, changes lives, and makes prisons and jails safer with little or no cost to taxpayers. Such a program has been around for decades. It is correctional industries, an effective model for preparing offenders for employment upon release. The elements of this strategy include skills certification, positive change, collaboration with businesses and the community, and a focus on career development and job retention.

Objectives:

The 3-hour satellite/Internet broadcast aimed to help participants identify:

- The growing role of correctional industries in the reentry process
- Best practices in innovative correctional industries related to successful reentry
- Strategies for promoting collaborations that increase the effectiveness of correctional industries on reentry

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Joint Venture Nets Funding

Carl Perkins Grant Funds Employment-Based Training in Jails and Prisons

By Dean Mason

Executive Director, Jail Industries Board

In response to a request for proposals (RFP) for FY2010 Carl D. Perkins funding, the Washington State Jail Industries Board and Correctional Industries collaborated to submit a joint application. The Employment Security Department's (ESD) Offender Employment Services (OES) unit awards a one percent set aside from Perkins leadership funds for incarcerated youth and adults programs, such as preparing offenders for eventual placement into mainstream employment and mini-grants for creative innovations and staff development. OES granted the CI/JIB proposal $65,000 for the Washington State Jail and Prison Industries Workforce Development Project.

The project will address offender employment deficits to better prepare offenders for successful transition and reentry to the community. The project will blend existing resources and partnership development with grant funds to produce a statewide coordination of offender industries/work programs, offender workforce development, and reentry enterprises at all CI work sites and at three jail pilot sites; the City of Kent, Kitsap County, and Yakima County.

The project has three primary goals:

1. Graduate 300 CI (prison) offenders and 180 jail offenders from the *Makin' it Work* soft skills program highlighted in the last newsletter.
2. Train 10 offenders at the Kitsap County Jail in hazardous waste operations (HAZWOPER) and asbestos abatement. These two certificates provide an offender the opportunity to obtain living wage employment upon release. If successful, this pilot program will be evaluated for replication in other jails provided that funding can be obtained.
3. All project participants will be enrolled in ESD's Services, Knowledge and Information Exchange System (SKIES) database in order for OES and WorkSource to serve offenders releasing from incarceration and entering employment search more effectively. It also provides the participating agencies the data to track employment success upon release to measure program efficacy.

Stay tuned for future articles regarding these programs and opportunities for your facility to participate.

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A Word from the Chair continued…

36.110, which established the Jail Industries Board, was written to include stakeholders from all different corners of the community. Education, law enforcement, victims advocates, several government agencies, business and labor; these stakeholders are charged with ensuring that programs are meaningful and produce real, measurable results.

Labor and Business must step up so that these programs can truly be successful. If the ultimate goal is to train offenders for future employment and businesses are not willing to hire them or labor is reluctant to admit them into apprenticeship programs, the chances of them re-offending increase exponentially. Waiting for them to complete their sentence is not the time to reach out to these people. We [labor and business] need to be involved right from the beginning. Programs need to be designed so that the offenders are being trained to the standards that will be expected of them when they enter the workforce, not only by those who do the job, but also by those who manage it. The correctional staff that have been certified to do the training have been doing an excellent job, but nothing can replace the experience of those who do the jobs in the community on a daily basis.

Both labor and business have long histories of helping those less fortunate in our communities, the local jail should be no exception.

"Wouldn't it be great if we had…an innovative program that helped reduce recidivism, that allowed people to stay out of our prisons rather than returning to them, that gave them jobs that allowed them to start paying for themselves; all those sorts of things that sound like what we'd like to do? Well, you know we do have such programs…**I am one of those who believes that if we didn't have [Correctional Industries] now, we'd have to invent it**…the problem is that not enough people understand the importance of these kinds of programs to our entire system."

Rep. Daniel E Lungren
(R) California

Comments introducing the broadcast of *Innovative Reentry Strategies: The Emerging Role of Correctional Industries*

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Innovative Reentry Strategies Broadcast continued…

- Positive reentry outcomes resulting from correctional industries
- The future of correctional industries

Planning for this broadcast began right after the 4th of July holiday weekend. The selected panelists traveled to NIC Headquarters in Washington D.C. to work with facilitators Patricia Taylor, NIC Correctional Program Specialist, and Ed Wolahan, NIC Distance Learning Administrator. After a warm welcome from NIC Director, Morris L. Thigpen, the workgroup settled in for two intensive days of compression planning. Representing the states of California, Indiana, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington, along with representatives of Federal Prison Industries and Jail Industries, this diverse collection of CI professionals set out to identify best practices in their own jurisdictions and from around the country. That was no easy task and far too much to complete in two days so, armed with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers, the group spent the rest of the summer working in small teams to build a blockbuster show.

The NIC contracts with the Northeast Washington Educational Service District 101 (NEW-ESD 101) for staff development video services through the Corrections Learning Network. It was at the NEW-ESD 101 studios in Spokane Washington that the team met for the actual broadcast event. An all day work session and rehearsal on October 6th was the last opportunity to establish segment times, edit prerecorded videos, and work out the many other details that go into this kind of production.

Not being "professional" television personalities, every member of the team shared feelings of nervousness, a little fear of the unknown, and excited anticipation all at the same time. While a couple of members were part of last years broadcast, even they had their moments of angst. The real professionals were the saving grace for everyone, NEW- ESD 101 producer Cynthia Halterman and her exceptional studio team, and veteran host/moderator, Kathryn McCormick.

October 7th arrived and it was show time first thing in the morning. The panelists took their turns going through make-up…a first for most of the men. There was very little time for the jitters as the go-live time quickly approached. Everyone took their places and we were live. The broadcast opened with taped comments of support and remarks about the positive role of correctional industries from Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA-3rd District) and Congressman Daniel E. Lungren (R-CA-3rd District). The next three hours sped by as the panelists introduced a diversity of prison and jail industries programs, guest speakers, and video. Two call-in segments for viewers were filled with enthusiastic questions from sites around the nation.

Then, after months of preparation, it was suddenly over. But...really, it was not. This broadcast was a continuation of a conversation started during last year's broadcast. It is a conversation that will and must continue, not by a few selected panelists, but by every Sheriff and Police Chief, prison or jail administrator, correctional industries manager, and staff. It is a conversation we need to continue with legislators at every level of government. It is a conversation we need to extend to our community partners and the public. Employment is a key factor in the successful reentry of offenders to the community. Effective correctional industries work and training in our nation's jails and prisons is <u>the</u> key ingredient in preparing those offenders for employment upon release.

Join the conversation!

Collaborations for Reentry

The Importance of Volunteers and Programs in Jails

By Terri Beernink

Programs Officer, Yakima County Department of Corrections

Programming in a correctional setting can be costly and difficult to find and deliver. Our department is not unlike other departments throughout the state; we are being asked to do more with less. However, the one thing we refuse to sacrifice in our department is quality programming. So, how do you provide quality programming at an affordable cost? Well, one of the best-kept secrets in programming is the value of volunteers to an organization. Not only are volunteers inexpensive; many times, they are an untapped, invaluable source of information, expertise and knowledge. With the right volunteer and the opportunity for that person to provide a service for free, you have what we call a perfect match.

When you look up the word, volunteer, in the dictionary it reads: *A person who performs or offers to perform a service voluntarily* (American Heritage). I believe, the word means so much more. I have been the Programs Officer at Yakima County Department of Corrections since December 2005, and I have been given a lesson in what the word truly means by the many and diverse volunteers I have had the pleasure to work with. To perform a service for another person freely takes a special kind of individual, especially when working with the challenging population within our jails. These people are from our community and want to see change happen. They are not simply complaining about the problem, they are actively involved in the solution. These people are reminding us that there is an underlying message that all inmates must receive and internalize in order to be successful: the message of hope.

Our Department has approximately 100 volunteers who donate their time to a variety of programs including, AA, Religious-based Programs, Personal Wellness, and a series of Life Skills. Our volunteers are business owners, teachers, retired professionals, homemakers, parents, or Chaplains; and all have a common goal - to bring the hope of change for a better future to our inmate population. These people have their own work schedules, their own home lives, and their own personal challenges. These volunteers take time out of their everyday schedules and personal priorities in life to bring this message of hope into our facility.

To keep a volunteer interested in continuing to come back into a facility that often has many obstacles for entry, is a challenge. It takes a well-coordinated department to nurture not only the programs provided within the facility, but to nurture the volunteers as well. It is human nature to want to feel appreciated. To accomplish this, our Departments Programs Division publishes a quarterly newsletter, which is devoted to the accomplishments of our volunteers and to our many programs. Starting in the summer of 2009, we also made the commitment to honor our volunteers at a yearly Volunteer Appreciation BBQ. In addition, we provide a quality orientation to new volunteers, and a refresher every two years to our long-term volunteers. This orientation details the expectations when volunteering in our facility, as well as ensures that they will be part of the team when they enter our facility. Our staff members are also updated on changes and encouraged to see the value of our volunteer base. Programs taught by volunteers are two-fold, as they alleviate the stress in the inmates' life and can reduce the stress of the officers working the floors. Programming can also be used as a tool by staff, since some require the inmate to be infraction free for up to 90 days before applying.

Along with our volunteer-run programs, we have a number of other programs that are offered to the inmate population by paid subcontractors or jail staff including, Prevention Awareness, Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Stress & Anger Management (SAM), Intensive Relapse Prevention (IRP), Getting it Right, Forklift Certification, Flagging Certification, Makin' it Work, Strong Families and General Equivalency Degree (GED).

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Often times, a volunteer comes along who has a specific educational background or skills, and lots of time on their hands. We have an excellent opportunity to sit down with that person and ask the question, "What do you want to help with?" The more you let someone know that you have a real interest in what they have to offer, the more they will see their own value and the more excited they are to give that special gift away. As I stated earlier, with our economy declining, it is often hard to find the budget for certain programs; it is here where we can insert the prize we have found - a volunteer! This happened just recently within our department. Volunteer Suzanne Hale came to us with a teaching background and experience teaching Conflict Resolution. In October 2009, she started a two-day class twice per month teaching this class to our inmate population. She will also be tutoring in our GED classes.

The real value in volunteers is their willingness to teach what they know by both life experiences and their own specialized training background. Often, it is a case of "*they have walked-the- walk and talked-the-talk.*" Some of our volunteers are past inmates who are trying to mentor and show our population that there is hope for change. Some volunteers are victims of crimes who want to break the cycle of criminal activity, some are parents who have lost their children to criminal activity, and some are just people who want to see a change within their community and want to teach others that there is a different way to live. It is our goal to tap into this resource of willingness to help others.

Makin' it Work in Kitsap

Soft Skills Programming for Offenders Works in Jails

By Scott Billingsly

Programs Officer, Kitsap County Sheriff's Office – Corrections Division

I always get a little suspicious when I am asked to attend training seemingly out of nowhere. Even a little more so when I found out that it was "free" training for one person from the jail. I went, however. and for three days in April, I learned all about the *Makin' it Work* program. It is a program that focuses on the "soft skills", not the technical skills that make you proficient at the job, but the other skills that make you desirable as a worker. Myself and a group of about 25 seasoned Washington State Correctional Industries (CI) professionals, who by the way were amazingly accepting and kind, met Dr. Steve Parese as he began to "train the trainers" and certify us on this new program. Dr. Parese's teaching style is very engaging and he would begin the days with energizers to get us going each morning. From being led around by a stranger while blindfolded, to quizzes on jail and prison slang, to having to sit in a new place in the room by new people and have to reestablish your comfort zone; there was never time to get distracted from the class. The curriculum consists of 10 lessons which are broken down into four modules that each focus on a different set of skills.

- The first module focuses on cognitive awareness, and helps define what is needed to begin real change and the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions that we may use to justify behaviors that are harmful. This module closes by exploring the hidden expectations that employers may hold for us. Everything is going good; the class makes sense and is easy to follow. Dr. Parese is great at modeling the ideas and behaviors that he is talking about; let's see what is next. Well what is next is being assigned to teach one of the upcoming

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lessons that we have not seen yet.

- The second module focuses on self-control and begins by helping to identify what may be high-risk situations. Emotionally charged situations where you may be tempted to behave in self-destructive, harmful, or illegal ways. The module then goes on to offer a step-by-step strategy for calming down and controlling your emotions. The new trainers all rise to the challenge as we teach these skills to each other and use colorful stories from our workplaces as well as personal experiences outside of work.
- The third module focuses on problem solving. It offers help to analyze difficult situations, break them down into objective problem and goal statements from both points of view, and then go on to explore all possible choices before making an impulsive decision.
- The fourth module focuses on interpersonal skills for handling confrontations. It gives a step-by-step approach for expressing complaints and receiving criticism in a professional manner.

Everything comes together in a final closing before the last quiz is given to reiterate the main points of the lessons. The "soft skills" taught in *Makin' it Work* almost seem like they were there all along. They were just never put into words and were maybe taken for granted by those of us who can get along well with other people and not self-destruct. (I guess our parents are to blame) It is a good reminder of some basic skills that may get pushed to the side in a correctional environment and, after seeing Dr. Parese model these skills while conducting the training, it really shines a light onto the idea that maybe some of our clients would be receptive to not only a new program, but a role-model to go along with it.

I returned to the jail and conducted my first class with a group of seven females about two months later. I held the class in a multi-purpose room and used an easel with paper for my visuals. Aside from ordering the workbooks, the cost was almost nothing. I set aside 2-2 ½ hours a day, 2 or 3 days a week until the class was completed (about 20 hours total). It ran smoothly enough and I was surprised at how well the material stayed with me after the training. My only real problem was an argumentative participant who I should have removed but, after all, this was a class about resolving conflicts, so she got to stay. The inmates surprised me in how quickly most of them grasped the material and even how well spoken they were when removed from the confines of the day to day. They generally seemed to look forward to the class and believed they could use it to effect change. The feedback forms were all positive and I am constantly asked by other inmates when the next class will be offered.

Following this first class, I was invited back to CI in Tumwater to participate in a follow-up training with Dr. Parese. We all got together again and shared our teaching stories and got helpful hints for improving our class, such has how to get the inmates to role-play more (yes there's role-playing) and what to do with difficult students. We learned that Dr. Parese would be working with CI to re-write sections of his manuals to better fit with the inmate population and that CI would start a condensed class to familiarize all of their staff with the basics of the *Makin' it Work* program. It was once again a pleasure to work with the CI staff and, after some more team building at a local park, Dr. Parese sent us back into the world.

I conducted a class of twelve male inmates after I returned and it went great. Again, the participants all had positive things to say and, with my new skills, I was able to get more examples out of them and lead the discussions where they needed to go. I even got coffee sent from the kitchen, as Dr. Parese likes to keep the mind and body energized at the same time. I was able to keep to task and really create the structure necessary to provide what I think was a good environment for the program.

Makin' it Work is very amenable to teaching in the jail. It does create some stressful time crunches for me during the week, but overall I would say it is a welcome addition to any current programs and I hope to continue *Makin' it Work* at the Kitsap County Jail.

Why We Do What We Do…

"I truly appreciate the opportunity to obtain my forklift safety certification on the sit-down counter-balance "Hyster." This program is a great privilege that provides a positive step in obtaining employment upon release from YCDOC. The instructors Beernink and Jennings are NO-NONSENSE! They stress Safety First and make sure you understand that there is a great responsibility when operating heavy machinery. C/O Beernink makes sure everyone is a part of the classroom training and helps keep all on task with her inclusive teaching style, she makes the class fun. C/O Jennings calm, patient, demeanor keeps stress levels during the actual test to a minimum. The combination of the two makes the class an enjoyable experience. I think there should be more opportunities like this, giving inmates the "tools" and chance to change their lives for the better. As long as inmates do their part by not getting write-ups, working and respecting officers, staff, and other inmates, they should be given the chance to change thru positive programs! Adding more programs, add to the possibility not to come back."

Forklift Graduate - Yakima County Jail

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.
-- **Carl Brand**

Developing a Jail Industry: A Workbook

The link above takes you to the foremost authoritative work on developing an industries program in your jail. It not only provides answers to common misconceptions like those below, it provides a step-by-step approach to program development that has been successful across the nation.

Not enough space in jail:
Strafford County, New Hampshire, started its pioneering private sector electronics program in little more than a closet. Hampden County, Massachusetts, found space outside the jail. Arlington County, Virginia, uses dayroom space. Many types of industries can operate in space currently available.

Not enough funds for an industry:
Belknap County, New Hampshire, created its private-sector program with no additional funds or staff. Arlington County, Virginia, uses existing county employees from other departments to expand the program's workforce.

Not large enough for an industry:
New Hampshire's Strafford County (100 beds) and Belknap County (50 beds) are highly successful industry programs in small jails. An even smaller jail in Minnesota produces wood products.

Not allowed to operate an industry:
Restrictions on the use of inmate labor vary by state, but meaningful opportunities exist in every state. For example, Pennsylvania law restricts the public-sector market for jail products, so the Philadelphia program successfully creates and sells its products within those parameters.

No support from local businesses:
Business and labor have become some of the strongest or labor unions supporters of jail industry programs, after having a chance to help develop and shape them. Consult with them at the outset, but be ready to accept some of their conditions. In Iowa, labor unions have become one of the strongest supporters.

Security risk too great:
Products and services are carefully selected to complement security concerns. Montgomery County, Maryland, routinely consults with security staff when any new work project is being considered.

Not enough long-term, sentenced inmates:
Successful jail industries shape their programs to the unique characteristics of the inmate workforce. In Strafford County, New Hampshire, some industries use pretrial inmates, classified as medium-security risks, who spend as little as 3 weeks in confinement.

http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/182506.pdf