

# Seeds of Hope Jail Ministry Newsletter

Summer 2012

Second Chance Reentry Initiative Mentoring Program

(SCRIMP)

## SCRIMP Enters its Final Quarter... *Are We Making a Difference?*

With only one of eight calendar quarters remaining SCRIMP records show that all program goals have been met or exceeded. On 7/1/2012 SCRIMP had served 46 participants and twelve were actively participating. Seven had successfully completed all program components. The probation revocation rate for active SCRIMP participants was 17.4%. This represents a 40% reduction compared to the 2009 baseline rate of 29%. None of the participants who completed the program had

## **New Website Coming Soon!**

Plans are under way to create a new Seeds of Hope website which will offer SCRIMP mentor training online. In addition to making mentor training more convenient it will be accessible to a much larger audience of potential volunteers. The website will also provide information about starting and managing a reentry coalition.

*"MRT made me think about what's gone wrong in my life and what I can do to change things. Having people to talk to and work through the exercises with really helps. I plan to keep coming after I finish, just because it's a good thing to do."*

*-Anonymous 2012 SCRIMP Participant*

been re-incarcerated. A total of 45 potential volunteers had attended SCRIMP mentor training and 11 were actively serving as mentors. Funding has been secured to continue weekly Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) groups, which provide a comfortable place for relationships to form naturally between mentors and mentees with the support of SCRIMP and Catholic Social Service staff.

## **Thank you!**

### **2012 Board of Directors**

-  Sid Thomas
-  Obed Fernandez
-  Beth Beavers
-  Lana Urteaga
-  Scott Schurle
-  Rhonda Goodloe
-  Scott Sherwin
-  Marian Mason
-  Nikki Herman

## **Finnup Foundation Funds MRT in 2012- 2013**

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Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) is recognized nationally as a highly effective cognitive-behavioral program. MRT was created specifically for individuals experiencing repeated incarceration after earlier rehabilitation efforts proved to be insufficient. MRT helps participants develop higher levels of honesty, responsibility and moral reasoning.

MRT groups will be held in the Southwest Kansas Regional Prevention Center October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013 with funding provided by the Finnup Foundation. For more information, email [becky.seedsofhope@gmail.com](mailto:becky.seedsofhope@gmail.com) or call Becky Upshaw at (620) 290-7916.

Seeds of Hope's Board of Directors grew from five members in 2009 to nine in 2011-2012. New members include a church Pastor, probation officer and members of three churches not previously represented on the board. Our goal is to have representatives from every faith community teaching and mentoring men and women in and outside of the jail every day of the week. In this way we hope to reach out to people of all faiths and those who have no religious affiliation.



## Community Partners

None of our successes would have been possible without the support of these and many other partners and supporters:

- ✚ Catholic Social Service
- ✚ Finney County Sheriff's Department
- ✚ Finney County Attorney's Office
- ✚ 25th Judicial District Community Corrections and Court Services
- ✚ Salvation Army
- ✚ First Christian Church
- ✚ Kansas Department of Corrections
- ✚ Finney County Community Health Coalition Center for Children and Families
- ✚ The Southwest Kansas Regional Prevention Center

## Mentoring4Success Comes to Garden City

Seeds of Hope recently partnered with the state-wide Mentoring4Success Coalition and the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) to offer the first Mentoring4Success training in Garden City on August 19-20. Mentoring4Success will provide mentors with additional training and opportunities to connect with prisoners throughout the state who will be returning to southwest Kansas after release. The training will be hosted by First Christian Church in the Fellowship Hall at 306 N 7<sup>th</sup> St. in Garden City.

Participants will have two sessions to choose from:

- Option 1. Sunday, 8/19, 3-9 p.m.
- Option 2. Sunday, 8/19, 6-9 p.m.
- AND Monday, 8/20, 6-9 p.m.

For more information or to register call Brook Lopez at (620) 272-0010 or email [bhamlinlopez@catholicsocialservice.org](mailto:bhamlinlopez@catholicsocialservice.org).

## What can we do better?

A recent funding application to continue transportation and job search assistance for SCRIMP participants was denied because we lack funding to retain a staff member during the coming year. MRT participants will be referred to other agencies for case management services until funding to retain a full-time staff person becomes available.

Lack of transitional housing for those with violent or sexual criminal histories continues to be a problem. Without basic necessities these individuals often have few options. This makes it more likely that they will give in to the temptation to return to crime as a short-term solution.

A promotional campaign is currently underway to recruit new volunteers and solicit ongoing monthly or annual financial donations from individuals, faith-based, community-based and fraternal organizations. Additional grant funding applications will be submitted during the fall of 2012.



## James' Story ...continued

Our last newsletter told the story of how James Brown first came in contact with Seeds of Hope Jail Ministry in the Finney County Jail in 2008. After joining SCRIMP in December 2010, James earned his GED, completed probation and MRT as well as the first year of a two-year Automotive Technology program at Garden City Community College. James

will soon wave goodbye to Garden City as it disappears in the rear view mirror of his new SUV. He and his family will be moving back to his hometown in Georgia this summer to be near his family. He is registered to finish the Automotive Technology program at the community college there and plans to partner with his brother in a full-service automotive body repair business. With the hard work and dedication he has displayed during his participation in Seeds of Hope activities, he's sure to succeed. We will miss James. He and his family will be in our thoughts and prayers.

## Jessica's Story...continued



Jessica joined SCRIMP three days after she was released from prison. The program provided a cell phone and gasoline which enabled her to find a job during her second week. With the help of Seeds of Hope and Grow Healy, she and her seven children soon moved to a lovely home in Healy, KS, where they continue to thrive.

Jessica works full time at the grocery store and the kids enjoy lots of school activities, friendly neighbors and a plenty of room to play. Healy is clearly their new home town. Jessica says the entire family is quite content living there and they appreciate the support they continue to receive from Grow Healy and from her neighbors and coworkers.

## And then there was Junior...

Okay, his name isn't really Junior. The name has been changed to protect the not-so-innocent. You'll understand why after you hear his story.

Once upon a time, a high school senior named Junior was hanging out with a couple of friends who got into a fight that ended with the death of their opponent. As a result Junior was arrested, tried and convicted as an accessory to murder.

Junior's attorney had received a letter about Seeds of Hope's SCRIMP program and thought it would be a better alternative for Junior than prison. He arranged an evaluation for Junior in the jail which showed that Junior was a good candidate for the program. The Judge was merciful and allowed Junior to join the program as long as he complied with the rules of the program and his probation conditions.

Junior managed to find a good job but soon realized working the night shift on the maintenance

crew wasn't how he wanted to spend his life. He set a goal of completing SCRIMP and transferring his probation to a place where he could earn a four-year college degree.

Things went along just fine until he reached step 9 in the MRT program. Working the night shift and trying to sleep days didn't leave much time or energy for the ten hours of community service required to complete step 9. Week after week, Junior came to MRT without making any progress. Looming college and financial aid application deadlines finally motivated him to push past the ten-hour mark and through three final steps of MRT. Junior proudly presented his certificate of completion to his probation officer, who processed his transfer the very next day.

Junior's mentors and peers in SCRIMP congratulated him and encouraged him to reach for his dreams. He admitted that he left the program with a strange mix of emotions; pride and sadness, excitement and fear. Fortunately, something he learned in the program helped him face his fear and move forward. He learned that fear stands for **False Evidence Appearing Real**.

Of course, this isn't the end of Junior's story. We believe he has a bright future and we look forward to seeing his next certificate of completion in the form of a college degree. Please join us in keeping Junior and all SCRIMP participants and mentors in your prayers.

## Changing lives by sharing God's love...

- Please **PRAY** for this ministry... that those who are caught in the cycle of crime, addiction or recidivism will be receptive to God's transforming love; that God will provide workers to help show His love to these individuals; and that God will provide resources needed for this ministry.
- Donate homemade ice cream or baked goods and/or volunteer to work in our fundraising booth at the Tumbleweed Festival on August 25 – 26.
- Consider providing a one-time or ongoing monthly or annual financial donation to help support Seeds of Hope staff salaries. Add a donation for Seeds of Hope to your church's annual mission budget.
- Direct us toward funding sources or service opportunities that would allow us to earn funding for this ministry.
- Lead a Bible study in the Finney County Jail or at your church. Web-based volunteer training will be available in early 2013 on our new website (pending final approval from the Dept. of Justice).
- Donate good used Bibles (study or large print if possible), inspirational or motivational magazines, or paperback books with staples removed for the jail library.
- Provide employment opportunities for those returning from jail or prison. Information about government bonding and tax credit programs for employers is available.
- Join us in organizational business and planning as part of our Board or Directors or by serving on a committee or offering your professional expertise on an as-needed basis.

For more information, contact Becky Upshaw at (620) 290-7916 or [becky.seedsofhope@gmail.com](mailto:becky.seedsofhope@gmail.com).

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