Reasons Mass Incarceration exists

Financial: $80 billion business
Societal: Social/Racial/Political Control
Cultural: White supremacy & white privilege is not acknowledged as the reality of Life in America.
High Crime Rate in poor Urban areas
Substandard Educational Systems
Zero Tolerance School Policies
Poor Juvenile Justice Systems
Combating Mass Incarceration in Philadelphia

- Forming reality based coalitions that work
- Leadership: Returning Citizens as Solutions
  - TCRC leadership has a unique understanding of environmental and societal change as it relates to transition and personal transformation.
  - Recognizes the need for collective responsibility and workload.
- Based on shared visions and experiences.

THE VISION OF TCRC

- Not a Re-entry Program but a System of accountability for:
  - Individual * Families * Communities
- Focusing on transition and transformation
  - Living wage employment * Transitional and permanent housing * Change in cognition and behavior patterns *
  - Blending into restructured family settings
  - Positive work (atonement) in the community
  - Created by Returning Citizens for Returning Citizens
- Creation of a coalition of returning citizens & their families,
  incarcerated citizens and their families, grassroots organizations, churches, faith-based organizations, universities, colleges and all conscious community stakeholders.
Social Accountability

× TCRC must promote a demonstration project meaning, we need to be able to show people our program in real-time so that people can see that it works. You measure a thing by its consequences. The problem with reentry is that the majority of people who come out of these programs never advance beyond living "pay-check to pay check" or simply go back to jail.

× We need to show that programs can transform Returning Citizens into a well organized, supervised, informed group of professionals. When your goal is only to get a job, you psychologically limit yourself. Our client base suffers from limited thoughts so why would we compound that? We need to promote an economic base centered on social values, relationships, conscious thought and distinct goals. All jobs do is create people with money in their pockets and people with money in their pockets, absent an economic base are "lambs for the slaughter"

× Social accountability and economic discipline must be our calling-card.

BUILDING COALITIONS THAT ARE REALITY BASED

× What are the realities?
× Who are the partners that matter?
× What are the problems that matter the most?
× What organizations can be worked with that carry the least risk and the most upside?
× Matching organizational cultures!
× Sharing responsibility, workload and funding.
× Crafting viable strategic planning
Empowerment of those most impacted

- Political transformation
  - Voter registration * voter education *
  - voter organization * citizenship
- Economic Transformation
  - Living wage * job creation *
  - entrepreneurship * economic literacy *
  - strategic partnerships

- Social Transformation
  - Linking returning citizens in neighborhoods across the city who will focus on the needs of their individual areas, building relationships that support mutual issues
- Cultural Transformation: Identifying cultural values that strengthen individuals, families & communities
- Educational transformation: Literacy * Computer Literacy
  - ABE-GED-Vocational * Re-entry Support Project CCP
  - Undergraduate * Graduate
  - College & Universities
  - Workshops * Seminars * Individual & Group Counseling
TCRC COALITION PARTNERS

- Goodwill Industries of Southern NJ & Phila.
- Good Shepard Mediation Center
- Gaudenzia Inc.
- Frontline Dads
- Alternatives to Violence Philadelphia & NY
- Decarcerate Pa.
- Formerly Incarcerated & Families Working Group Dpa
- CAMI Coalition Against Mass Incarceration
- Philadelphia Re-Entry Coalition

COALITION PARTNERS (CONTINUED)

- Broken on all sides Matthew Pillischer
- Human Rights Coalition
- Pennsylvania Prison Society
- Impact Earn Center
- CEC Community Corrections
- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting/ Society of Friends
- Unitarian Universalist Church
- St. Vincent’s Church
COALITION PARTNERS (CONTINUED)

- 2nd Baptist Church
- Mishkan Shalom Synagogue
- Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church
- Center For Literacy
- Yes Alternative School
- Nicetown-Tioga Free Library
- Mural Arts Program
- RealStreet Talk/Grateford Prison

OBJECTIVES OF TCRC

- What can be done on the inside to enhance the opportunities of the returning citizen population in the current job sector?
- What are the best methods to prepare individuals to ensure successful transitions?
- How can the Philadelphia County Prisons institute a comprehensive system that will lower recidivism rates, prepare prisoners mentally for freedom and success, & keep them out of the DOC?
- What real life programs are offered to ease transition within the state system?
PROBLEMS TO BE CONSIDERED

- Lack of employment opportunities for persons returning from prison
- Lack of marketable skills to become gainfully employed.
- Mental preparation & planning for successful transition.
- Overcoming the stigma resulting from societal perceptions & self perceptions of inadequacy
- Assisting transition in family & community terms
RESEARCH DATA

NEIGHBORHOODS MOST IMPACTED BY RETURNING CITIZENS

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GAPS IN RE-ENTRY PROGRAMMING

- Most Re-Entry programing concentrates on the actual re-entry process; the relevance of societal conditions are not given proper weight
- Perceptions and impressions of the persons transitioning are not often presented
- What is the criteria for success? This question is not placed into the perspective of success having various levels
SUGGESTED CHANGES TO CURRENT PROGRAMMING

- Educational and literacy classes that prepare prisoners for release
- Establishment of cultural principles that emphasis family & community
- Citizenship classes that establish a foundation for understanding the system
- Workshop series that promotes change in cognition and behavior patterns

WORKSHOP SERIES

- Life Skills
- Behavior Change /Critical Thinking
- Ethics
- Building Strong Relationships/Parenting
- Family Social & Community Responsibility
- Time Management
- Conflict Resolution/Anger Management & De-escalation of Aggression
- Legal Issues facing Returning Citizens
- Criminal Relapse Prevention
WORKSHOP SERIES

- High Impact Leadership Training
- Criminal Relapse Prevention (Round table w/community returning citizens)
- The Responsibilities of Citizenship
- Re-Entry Employment/developing marketable skills
- Entrepreneurship
- Measuring and Maintaining a Successful Transition
- Course Summary/Graduation Ceremony

EDUCATION & PREPARATORY CLASSES
FOR THOSE INSIDE AS A FOUNDATION

- 3 – 6 month course schedule
- Curriculum *History, Geography, Civics, Current Events, Arts & Culture, & Personal Health, Developing a World View
DYNAMIC INSTRUCTORS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Living INITIATIVE

Change the Hustle Entrepreneurship Program
Germantown Ave. Revitalization Project
Commercial Corridor Contracts
Building Networks of Responsive Employers
Creating Association of Returning Citizen Businesses

Goals

✓ Provide a living wage
✓ Assist families towards stability
✓ Involve business districts in the life and environment of the community
✓ Create partnerships among stakeholders in the community
SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

× An FDR style federal public works program that focuses on the formerly incarcerated population
× Create a political and social platform that supports employment for the formerly incarcerated
× Organize the formerly incarcerated population to register to vote, and vote in an organized manner in order to elect politicians who support the platform

REFERENCES
- Philadelphia Anti-Violence Experiment 2010-2011
- Jordan M. Hyatt, JD PhD Jerry Lee Center of Criminology, University of Pennsylvania
- J. Jondhi Harrell (Coursework 2014) MSW Program Temple University