



Santa Clara County Re-Entry Resource Center

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National Night Out at the Re-Entry Resource Center

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By Leah Dansby Ezeoha
Program Manager – Resource Specialist, Adult Probation

On August 7th, the County of Santa Clara hosted its first National Night Out event at the new Re-entry Resource Center (RRC). The RCC is an innovative approach to offering ex-offenders support, services and supervision for successful reintegration back into the community. National Night Out is an annual event held to create better partnering among law enforcement and the community, to promote public safety and to reduce crime. Many similar events were held throughout the county.

The Probation Department in collaboration with the Sheriff's Office, Supervisor George Shirakwa's Office, and the RCC co-sponsored the event. National Night Out event planning committee members Chris Ferry, Andrea Flores Shelton, Blanca Hoyt, Buu Thai, Mike Clarke and Leah Dansby Ezeoha organized a fun-filled family event for clients and their families. There were over 100 people in attendance!

Attendees enjoyed a healthy BBQ meal "complete with all the fixins", children were entertained with Jump Houses and a face painting artist, while everyone swayed to the Summer music sounds of a local DJ. Community-based providers, Catholic Charities, Center for Training & Careers, and Family & Children's Services were present to share information about their wide array of services.

Local retailers, California's Great America, Best Buy, Chili's, Panera Bread, Trader Joe's, Pizza My Heart, Los Gatos Yoga Source and Gilroy Gardens all donated items to be raffled as gifts. Individuals sat eagerly, waiting to hear their ticket number called so they could have a chance to "spin the prize wheel." The grand prize winner of the Wii Game and Family Fun Bundle happened to be celebrating her 12th birthday. Her father remarked, "How wonderful it was for her to win such a nice gift," he had not been able to purchase a birthday gift for her.

Brief speeches from Chief Sheila Mitchell, Sheriff Laurie Smith and Supervisor George Shirakawa were interspersed throughout the night, each acknowledging the significant milestones of the RRC and the importance of the event.



Sheriff Laurie Smith &
Chief Sheila Mitchell
at National Night Out

Back to a Productive Future

By Janice Gillies
Rehabilitation Officer, Department of Correction

Re-Entry into a highly competitive employment market can be stressful for the average person. For someone recently incarcerated, without a stable work history and who has a criminal history, it can be overwhelming. The RCP (Re-entry Correction Program) teaches job readiness and helps individuals overcome some of these fears so they can successfully integrate to the work force in the community. With the help of our community agencies, Ascent Employment Program, CTC, and Work2future we are starting to see success stories.

“SANDY” came to the program with several felonies, limited previous work experience and an overwhelming feeling she expressed, “I don’t think I will EVER be able to get a job now.” After completing RCP Phase I and then being released to RCP Phase II under the CASU (Custody Alternative Supervision Unit), Sandy attended Ascent Employment Program for job interview coaching and received assistance in completing her job resume and seeking and applying for jobs. She got responses to her applications rather quickly and began going to job interviews. Each interview she would share with staff her fears of questions that might be asked and how she could explain to an employer her criminal history and the changes she was attempting to make in her life. In the RCP classroom these fears are shared and discussed as a group to help all participants learn ways to overcome and be confident with the things they are learning, changing and applying to their life. Sandy was successful in her interview and was hired!

*“I don’t think I will
EVER be able to
get a job now”.*

She shared her experience with the group and it was evident her feelings of defeat had been transformed to excitement and was now encouragement to others in the group. She was transitioned to complete her time on work release still under supervision through CASU. She walked out looking like a new woman, going back to the community with a focus on a positive future. As we work together as a community we expect to support many others as they strive to become productive members of society.

Meet Peggy O'Hara

My name is Peggy O'Hara and I am very excited to be part of the AB 109 MAP Team as the new DADS Therapist. I have worked for the County for over 10 years. When I began in January of 2002 at DADS West Valley Clinic, I was an MFT Intern earning my hours. I worked as an Outpatient Substance Abuse Counselor until the clinic closed its doors in June of 2003. From there my work took me to Santa Clara County Main Jail as a Crisis Clinician in the Custody Mental Health Unit. I assessed newly booked inmates for mental health needs and would also see already housed inmates requesting mental health services. During my time at the jail, I became licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

In May of 2007 I went back to DADS for a brief time as a Dual Diagnosis Case Manager working with clients that were in Judge Manley's court. I left that job after 5 months to take another job with DADS as the Drug Dependency Court (DDTC) Therapist and remained there until July 1, 2012. I worked with parents who were court ordered for individual therapy as part of their case plan. It was wonderful to see so many parents make positive changes in their lives and get their children back.

I am very happy to be part of this new team here at the Re-Entry Center and to be able to help clients better their lives. I look forward to getting to know all of you.



Photo of Peggy O'Hara

Did You Know? San Jose State University Record Clearance Project

With convictions dismissed, a person faces better prospects for employment, professional licensing, student loans, public housing, public benefits, foster parenting, visiting relatives in prison and other opportunities.

The San José State University Record Clearance Project (RCP) is an award-winning legal, educational and research program in which undergraduates assist eligible people to clear their criminal records. RCP provides the following services:

- Prepares petitions for clients on eligible cases in Santa Clara County by drafting the pleading and Declaration and assembling supporting documents,
- Follows necessary legal procedures (files petitions in court, serves them on parties, pays filing fees (with reimbursement for the fees from the client, when possible)
- Helps clients prepare for their hearing through information from former clients and running a "moot court" hearing
- Presents community education presentations in English, Spanish
- Sponsors "Speed Screenings" where a large number of people can have one-on-one consultations regarding their situations

For more information, please check:

<http://www.sjsujusticestudies.net/research/record-clearance-project/>

Email: sjsurcp@gmail.com Phone: (408) 924-2758

Improvements at the Re-Entry Resource Center

Like the consumers who come into the Re-Entry Resource Center looking for opportunities to grow and reintegrate back into the community, the Re-Entry Resource Center’s physical appearance is undergoing the same transformation process. Through the hard work of many participants from the Public Services and Weekend Worker Program, the Re-Entry Resource Center received a complete make-over. The program participants painted the interior and cleaned the carpet throughout the building. The plants and flowers in the Courtyard are thriving and vibrant.

Currently, the Re-Entry Resource Center is undergoing its second phase of transformation. We are in the process of installing signage in the exterior of the building and upgrading the auditorium. The auditorium will soon be available to use as a place to gather and host community events.

If you are interested in getting a facility tour or would like to reserve a meeting space at the Re-Entry Resource Center, please contact Buu Thai at (408) 535-4236 or buu.thai@ceo.sccgov.org.



Photos of Re-Entry Resource Center

Upcoming Events: September/October 2012

Date	Time	Location	Event
Sepetember 26	2:00 PM	Franklin McKinley School District 645 Wool Creek Drive, San Jose	Re-Entry Network Meeting
October 18	9:00 AM	Re-Entry Resource Center 151 W. Mission Street, San Jose	Community Correction Partnership Meeting
October 18	11:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Re-Entry Resource Center 151 W. Mission Street, San Jose	Save-the-Date: Re-Entry Resource Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Open House

Wish List

The Re-Entry Resource Center is seeking donation for our clients. Do you have gently used clothes you wish to donate? To make a donation, please contact Buu Thai at (408) 535-4236 or buu.thai@ceo.sccgov.org.

Contact Us

Multi-Agency Pilot (MAP) Services – (408)535-4257
 Re-Entry Resource Center – (408) 535-4236

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