

LYCOMING COUNTY

GEO Lycoming County Reentry Recognizes Reentrants for Second Chance Month

The Lycoming County RSC celebrated Second Chance Month on Tuesday, April 30, 2019. Beginning in 2017, April has been declared Second Chance Month by the President, to recognize second-chance opportunities to those with criminal backgrounds.

The Lycoming County RSC is just one of many programs allowing reentrants to learn skills to use in giving back to the community and becoming productive members of society.

The RSC offered free coffee and donuts to all program reentrants to celebrate their efforts in making positive changes. Lycoming County Adult Probation staff was also invited to the RSC to celebrate the accomplishments of reentrants and continue strengthening the partnership between Lycoming County and GEO Reentry Services.



Reentry Service Center Celebrates 9th Transition Celebration

The Lycoming County RSC held its ninth Transition Celebration on Wednesday, April 17, 2019, at the Community Theatre League. Twenty-nine successful reentrants were recognized at this event.

The ceremony began with opening remarks by Program Manager Michael Boughton. Among the guest speakers were Mr. Tony Mussare, Lycoming County Commissioner, and Ms. Yvette Jackson, Lycoming County RSC alumna.

Ms. Jackson addressed her initial thoughts about attending the program and how her attitude has changed since completing the program. She shared coping skills she uses today that she learned in the program.



Several graduates of the RSC spoke about their history of addiction and the effect of the program on their lives. **Graduate testimonies included what they have learned about honesty, trust, acceptance, and creating goals.** All graduates were announced and presented with a certificate of completion and a small gift for successfully completing the program.

After the ceremony, everyone was welcomed back to the RSC for a light lunch, refreshments, and open house. Several members of the Alumni group and community participated in the open house to help celebrate the successful graduates.

FRANKLIN COUNTY



Franklin County Producing High Level Outcomes

A key component of our programming is ensuring our work with reentrants **yields effective outcomes**. This component is one of the Eight Guiding Principles of Criminogenic Risk Reduction.

Since the first quarter of 2019, overall attendance has not fallen below 90%. Group and Individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy attendance also remain high. Since January 2019, the Franklin County RSC has seen 16 successful or neutral discharges compared to 3 unsuccessful discharges, with an average LSI-R change score of 6. There have been zero positive breathalyzers in 2019, and the employment rate is 88%.

Several key factors produced these positive outcomes including assessing each reentrant's stage of change, ensuring program fidelity, ongoing collaboration and communication with state parole agents, and holding each reentrant accountable. We pride our facility on our outcomes and are continuously striving to improve them.

PENNSYLVANIA REENTRY SERVICE CENTERS

RSC - Berks County	400 Washington Street, Suite 1202	Reading, PA 19601	T: 610.478.8800	F: 610.478.8800
RSC - Cambria County	499 Manor Drive	Ebensburg, PA 15931	T: 814.471.1801	F: 814.472.4699
RSC - Dauphin County	2151 Greenwood Street	Harrisburg, PA 17104	T: 717-561-9600	F: 717-561-9620
RSC - Franklin County	550 W Loudon Street	Chambersburg, PA 17201	T: 717.263.0450	F: 727.263.3016
RSC - Lancaster County	439 E King Street	Lancaster, PA 17601	T: 717.391.8202	F: 717.291.8206
RSC - Luzerne County	125 N Wilkes-Barre Blvd, Suite 4	Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702	T: 570.208.4858	F: 570.208.4874
RSC - Lycoming County	330 Pine Street	Williamsport, PA 17701	T: 570.323.1274	F: 570.323.1659
RSC - York County	1 E Market Street, Suite 301-204	York, PA 17401	T: 717-848-4448	F: 717-848-5448
RSC - Philadelphia Erie	3768 L Street	Philadelphia, PA 19124	T: 215.744.9601	F: 215.743.7230

If you have questions about any of the information contained in this newsletter, please contact the facility staff.



Pennsylvania Update

SUMMER 2019

WELCOME

Welcome to the Summer 2019 issue of the *Pennsylvania Update*, a publication of GEO Reentry Service Centers (RSC) throughout the state. In this issue you learn how RSCs are celebrating the success of reentrants as well as anniversaries of our facilities and hosting events in honor of Second Chance Month. And don't miss the special reentrant testimony highlighting the positive impact of RSC programming on his life.

Thanks for your support and at any time, let me know if you have questions.

Regards, John Hogan, Area Manager, Pennsylvania

BERKS COUNTY

Berks County RSC Incorporates Evidence-Based Contingency Management Program

The Berks County RSC has seen a lot of changes over the past six months including a new facility, a new substance abuse counselor, and a new name! Furthermore, in May, 2019, the RSC added to its list of "new things" a contingency management program rooted in evidence-based risk reduction strategies.

One of the Eight Guiding Principles of Criminogenic Risk Reduction, according to the National Institute of Corrections, is to **increase positive reinforcement**. The new contingency management program does just that. Now, in addition to reinforcers like verbal praise, social recognition, and certificates for accomplishments, reentrants have the opportunity to earn tangible rewards. The rewards include basic necessities like socks, toilet paper, or deodorant, as well as larger items like grill sets, family activities, and an Amazon Fire Tablet.

At Starting Point, each reentrant receives a card, on which punches are earned for milestones like attending services, reaching goals, and doing homework. When the punch card is filled, the reentrant has the choice of receiving a Tier 1 prize or choosing a Popsicle stick for a chance at a larger prize. Several reentrants have won smaller prizes, but they are continually motivated and working hard to earn a larger prize.

Staying motivated can be difficult, even for those who aren't under parole supervision. Giving reentrants opportunities to earn rewards identified as needs or wants is a great way to shape behavior. **The overall goal is long-term behavior change**, and the first step on that path starts with each punch on the card!



YORK COUNTY

Second Chance Job Fair a Huge Success in York



There are many barriers to employment for our reentrants, many of which are addressed within our Day Reporting and Workforce Development programs, but what happens when that barrier is a static factor? Criminal History alone can be a difficult barrier to overcome when seeking employment. The York County RSC, in partnership with the Department of Labor and Industry and PA CareerLink, worked together to develop a job fair specifically designed for individuals with criminal histories.

In order for employers to be invited to this job fair, they had to meet two criteria: They had to be open to hiring individuals with a criminal history, and they had to be actively recruiting for vacant positions. In all, 26 employers attended this event held on June 12, 2019. **More than 200 reentrants attended seeking employment**, with twenty of those reporting to the RSC on June 10 for help with resume development, mock interviews, and obtaining appropriate clothing.

Measures are currently being collected from employers to determine how many individuals were hired as a result of this job fair. We look forward to hearing the results as well as beginning planning of next year's event.

DAUPHIN COUNTY

Dauphin County Celebrates 5 years of Reducing Recidivism

Jacqueline Schap, Program Manager, Dauphin County RSC

On April 5, 2019, the staff of Dauphin County RSC hosted an Open House to celebrate the center's fifth anniversary. The event was attended by Honorable Judges, Pennsylvania Congressional Representatives, Dauphin County Commissioners, Dauphin County Adult Probation Officers, Pennsylvania Board of Parole and Probation Officers, State Parole Agents/Supervisors, as well as Department of Corrections personnel.

The event marked the fifth year the RSC has been in operation and was commemorated with a proclamation by the Dauphin County Commissioner's Office highlighting the positive impact of the RSC in the Harrisburg area. The RSC strives to help each person develop new ways of thinking allowing them to enhance their overall quality of life. Guests were shown how this is carried out starting with the intake process, assessment process, delivery of services, and discharge planning. Tours were provided and services and outcomes were discussed.



Dauphin County RSC Graduates 26 Reentrants

Jacqueline Schap, Program Manager, Dauphin County RSC

On May 9, 2019, the staff and reentrants of Dauphin County RSC gathered together with members of parole and probation, as well as loved ones to celebrate the achievements of reentrants who completed programming. The graduates represented were from Cognitive Behavioral Interventions, Day Reporting, and Workforce Development programs.

This event marked the fifth graduation of the RSC and spoke to the level of commitment to change of each reentrant in their respective journeys through the program. As graduates were presented with certificates, each was also awarded a planner, a coffee mug with the motivational saying "Be Strong, Be Brave, Be Fearless – you are never alone," and a king-size Hershey treat to go along with Hershey treats earned throughout in the program.

After certificates and gifts were handed out, the floor was opened for current graduates to speak and reflect on their time in the program. Mr. Brandon Holmes took this opportunity saying he was proud of himself and grateful that through the program he now sees a bigger picture of how his behaviors impacted his overall life. In speaking of how he plans to implement the tools he learned, he said he believes he can help make his community a better place, be more assertive, and, "Can now walk with my head held high."

Highlighting this event was keynote speaker Mr. Bryant Burroughs, an alumnus of the RSC. He began his speech explaining how resistance held him back at first, but as he attended, he learned about the process of change and started implementing those changes. Concluding his speech, Mr. Burroughs challenged the current graduating class with the statement, "I can do it, and now show me what you can do now that you are done."

ERIE OUTPATIENT RSC



GEO Reentry Second Chance Month

In honor of Second Chance Month, reentrants currently enrolled at the Erie Outpatient RSC were tasked with the opportunity to show their artistic skills by completing a poster representative of the group they attend daily.

Erie Outpatient facilitates a total of 18 group sessions along with individual sessions throughout the week. Reentrants are afforded **the opportunity to learn skills to assist them in becoming productive citizens** in their communities. For participation and as motivation, reentrants received "Second Chance" t-shirts and a pizza day. Each poster is on display for all to see.

LANCASTER COUNTY

Celebrating 5 Years of Criminogenic Risk Reduction with Our 10th Transition Celebration



On May, 22, 2019, the Lancaster County RSC celebrated its tenth graduating class in conjunction with five years of providing services to returning citizens in Lancaster County.

Twenty-nine reentrants were recognized and celebrated for their achievements at the Center. This transition celebration was the first to recognize those successful in the Batterer's Intervention Program. At discharge, every reentrant was either employed or receiving social security/retirement/disability benefits (accounting for only two of the 29 successful reentrants). As pictured here, reentrants received completion certificates and commemorated their successes on the RSC MRT® Tree.

Kimberly Reichenbach, Program Manager, provided opening remarks for the event highlighting the RSC's five year anniversary. **Since February, 2014, the RSC has assisted more than 800 returning Lancaster County citizens in their efforts to be successful in the community.**

Keynote speaker and Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole Agent, Travis George, spoke to the reentrants about the importance of seeing their accomplishments as a start of a new journey, not an end to an old one. He encouraged the reentrants to continue pursuing their goals, asking for help, and taking responsibility for their choices. He also highlighted the importance of staying connected to a support system like the RSC and encouraged them to regularly check in with the staff for continued support.

Happy fifth anniversary to all RSC staff as well as parole agent personnel who help to support risk reduction efforts and reentrants who continue to show that change is possible!

LUZERNE COUNTY

Reentrant Highlight: Mr. Smith

Mr. Jonathan Smith was a reentrant at the Luzerne County RSC from August 2013 through January 2014. He is active in the 12-step recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and spends his Friday evenings chairing an "introduction to AA" class at the RSC. He currently works at Olde Goode Things, a local architectural scrap yard. He is a master craftsman in the art of woodworking. He is also a musician/songwriter who you can see locally as a solo musician. Mr. Smith is the proud father of two children. He is pictured here with Mr. Matthew Shoener, Lead Therapist. **The Luzerne County RSC is proud of Mr. Smith's many accomplishments.**



Personal Statement: Mr. Smith

In 2014, I entered the RSC program as part of my sentence. Having had a significant history with 12-step programs, the program at RSC was easy to adapt to and offered a relatable but different perspective from the program I had been accustomed to.

In 2017, I relapsed which was nobody's fault but my own. I had stopped taking the same action that afforded me a life free from substances and the consequences were devastating. I was fortunate to have a family that supported me, and a recovering community that supported me as well and helped me get back on the road to recovery.

In 2019, I began working as a volunteer with RSC program. Honestly, I think they help me more than I help them. It has given me an added opportunity to be helpful and relate my experiences with recovery and relapse as well as adopting and implementing new ideas in my day-to-day life.

I am coming up on two years clean and sober, but the quality is better than it has ever been. I've had two relapses since I was 23 years old. One after six years sober and one after five years sober, both with devastating consequences on every plane of life.

I have been blessed to be able to rebuild everything I have lost better than it has ever been before. I am a respected administrative staff member at my Job, a good father, son, brother, and partner. I utilize the tools I have learned in recovery to navigate the day-to-day ups and downs. I am accountable, responsible and honest and I sleep well at night as a result of these attributes, the very attributes that seem common place for most folks but had to be taught to me not only in a 12-step setting but at the RSC where I learned and continue to learn with grace and dignity. I am humbled to be able to forge such a relationship with them and be a part of their teaching as I continue to learn myself.

CAMBRIA COUNTY



Celebrating Second Chance Month

On April 24, 2019, the Cambria County RSC celebrated Second Chance Month by hosting a **Community Connections Resource Fair**. Reentrants in the program and individuals on probation and parole in the county attended the event. Twelve vendors representing housing, mental health, substance abuse, legal, and employment services setup stations for reentrants to gather information and connect to their services. More than 30 reentrants attended the event.