



CRP California Reentry Program

Letter from the Director

As we approach the California Reentry Program's 12th anniversary, we reflect on the thousands of lives we have touched and the countless volunteers we've engaged and inspired. Continuing this crucial work in the coming year, we're committed to growth in two major organizational areas: *measuring our impact and strengthening our team.*

Measuring Impact

The resources and services provided by CRP aren't provided by any other organization within San Quentin or by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Clients depend on us for support that helps them survive the most vulnerable transition of their lives. *However, without clearly defined outcomes supported by evaluation, CRP is missing out on crucial opportunities for funding, partnership, and growth.*

Therefore, we recently hired Dani Fishman as our Development Director to enable us to raise sufficient funds to hire full time staff to evaluate, broaden, and deepen our services to California prisoners

Program evaluations can cost time, money, and exper-

Continued on page 4

A Promising Future

Even though our volunteers work closely with hundreds of inmates each year, it's rare we get a glimpse of their lives after prison. Curtis Penn, 51, is one exception.

Originally sentenced to 29 years-to-life under the "three strikes law" for a second-degree burglary conviction in Sacramento, Curtis spent about 15 years at San Quentin. It was there he met a CRP volunteer.

"The younger guys have a hard time asking for help from the outside. They think they have all the answers," he said. "Guys who are older and have been in longer, they don't have the resources on the outside anymore."



Photo courtesy Curtis Penn

In 2012, Proposition 36 passed and modified the "three strikes law" to enable inmates with non-violent offenses to petition the court for early release. With the help of his CRP volunteer, Curtis worked up a resume, connected with Options Recovery Services in Berkeley and took classes at San Quentin. The volunteer assigned to his case also wrote a letter of

Continued on page 3

California Reentry Program Profiles

Development Director, Dani Fishman

We are pleased to introduce our new development director, Dani Fishman. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology with an emphasis on social change from the University of California, Berkeley and a master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of San Francisco. Dani has a breadth of experience in mental health, education, and nonprofit development throughout the Bay Area. After volunteering with CRP since 2013, Dani is thrilled to channel her passion and experience into this new role and we look forward to improving and expanding the program with her help.



Photo courtesy Dani Fishman



Photo courtesy Allyson West

Volunteer Cheryl Fabio

Our volunteers are as diverse as our clients. Most work or attend school full-time, but all are drawn to the California Reentry Program because they share a passion for helping those behind bars.

Cheryl, who's been volunteering with us for two years, is a Bay Area native who spent more than 25 years in film and television production. Recently, she took these skills and turned them on formerly incarcerated young men and women.

"I'll Tell My Story" is a series of five digital stories told by young people - they wrote and recorded a 3-minute story of their lives and accompanied them with photos and art. To learn more about the project created in partnership with The Center for Digital Storytelling and to watch the videos, visit <http://www.swfcenter4sj.org>.

All Dressed Up Ministry Provides Parole Clothing

The All Dressed Up Prison Ministry is a ministry from the Presbyterian Church of Novato in support of the efforts of the California Re-entry Program (CRP). The objective of this ministry is to provide a set of clothing to inmates who are being released from San Quentin State prison. The ministry receives the requests from CRP and creates a box containing new and used clothing that have been donated by the congregation at the Presbyterian Church of Novato to the ministry.

This is the first set of clothing that the inmate will have upon release from San Quentin. The clothing provided is intended to be used to support the released inmate's transition to society and to eliminate the need to purchase clothing (scrubs) out of their maximum \$200 gate money provided by the prison on the day they are released.

Our thanks to Mike Robinson and his wonderful team for all their support!



Photo courtesy Mike Robinson

A Promising Future, continued from page 1

support to the parole board. When Curtis was released later that year, the court decided that because he'd served such a long sentence, he didn't need to be put on parole.

"Guys who are older and have been in longer, they don't have the resources on the outside anymore."

— *Curtis Penn*

"In prison, the older guys especially, they sit around and play pinochle. It's just incredible boredom. The classes give you something to work for," he said.

A free man, Curtis now lives and works as a part-time counselor at Options. He also works as a machine operator and is enrolled in classes toward his bachelor's degree at San Francisco State University.

He hopes to work someday as a youth counselor.

Poet's Corner

"California Reentry Program"

Place of hopes and extended branches
Filled with grace and helping hands
Heartline of the prisoner to succeed
in their journey to freedom
Within the prison walls
they are full of darkness
CRP, brings light and rattle
like an elegant rose to a prisoners'
heart and mind
Flowing with resources and information
another prisoner accomplishes in life
With high, pure, and commitment by CRP,
You can see the difference
of prisoners characters
Through determination and decision
from CRP volunteers, a season changes
within the prisoner

Copyright © by former client Songkra
Kroung "Smiley"



Photo courtesy Ryan Smith

Front page photo courtesy of Arthur Chang.

Letter from the Director, continued from page 1

tise. But the benefits of these evaluations are tremendous. Through ongoing program assessment we can:

- Quantify the successes and reach of our work
- Improve our program operations
- Build up our advocacy and community engagement
- Invest in strategic partnerships
- Strengthen our relationships with current and new funders



Photo courtesy David Kilmer

Strengthening Our Team

California Reentry Program serves more than 200 men at San Quentin each month, and recruits and trains almost 100 new volunteers each year. *But our impact is limited by the absence of paid staff.*

With a core team of passionate, experienced individuals, exclusively focused on CRP's strategic direction, program operations, and community engagement, we can:

- ◆ Design more in-depth volunteer education and trainings
- ◆ Increase communication with volunteers, corrections officials, and policymakers
- ◆ Provide clients with more effective, innovative, and impactful programming

—Allyson West, Executive Director

Get Involved

Thank you for being a part of the CRP community. We're actively seeking meetings with individuals and foundations interested in funding our work.

For specific questions, please email dfishman@ca-reentry.org

Support for the California Reentry Program now comes solely from individual donations. Please help as you can. **Donate online today at ca-reentry.org/donate, or by mail to address below.**

California Reentry Program
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