

# SVdP District Council of Attleboro Immersion Reentry Update for September 2021

95 Pine Street, Second Floor, Attleboro, MA 02703 ~ HELP LINE 508-455-2054 - EXT. 1 ~ [reentry@svdpattleboro.org](mailto:reentry@svdpattleboro.org) ~ <http://www.svdpattleboro.org/Reentry/Reentry.html>

## IMMERSION COMPONENTS WHAT WE DID IN SEPTEMBER 2021

- 1 TRANSITIONAL PLANNING**

1. Completed intake interviews, goal setting, life skill assessments and prioritization, in person and virtually, with **8** new individuals. 2. Talked with the County Sheriff about when COVID restrictions would allow us to come back inside the House of Correction to present Getting Ahead While Getting Out and to work one on one with inmates scheduled to return to the community. The Sheriff informed us that plans were underway to bring Wi-Fi and tablets to the inmate population. We agreed that this would improve family-inmate communications, facilitate better pre-release planning and research, and help refresh inmate literacy - a key to survival and competitiveness upon release.
- 2 MENTORING**

1. Responded to daily calls for assistance & information, visited in person and via phone with **18** returning Immersion Participants whom we assisted in prior months. Typical conversations and advice focus on landlord relations and threats of eviction during COVID, renewing personal identification, providing clothing and retail gift cards, renewing state and federal benefit flows, job finding strategies and general encouragement. 2. After supporting rental and other expense needs of formerly abused mother in recovery, working on planning, advocacy with RMV and courts, trust building through the loan of a donated laptop, and encouragement to take back her life, this neighbor has obtained job, substantially resolved legal and RMV hurdles, and hopes to reconnect with her two sons, who live in another state, in the foreseeable future.
- 3 EDUCATING RETURNING CITIZENS & FAMILIES**

1. Working with Pave Your Path, identified two new mentors for returning women. 2. Assisted returning citizen in enrolling in Bristol Community College to pursue training as a substance abuse counselor while playing a role in their athletic program.
- 4 EMPLOYMENT**

1. Encouraged neighbors in need with resume help and with on-line and in-person interviewing tips. Helped at least five returning citizens find part time and full time employment. 2. Worked with SVdP Microloan Committee and former Getting Ahead While Getting Out (GAWGO) participant who successfully obtained \$1,500 SVdP Attleboro Micro Loan, paid off RMV Reinstatement fees and acquired Drivers License so he can legally drive his car to a new job as a pipefitter.
- 5 HOUSING & OTHER DIRECT ASSISTANCE**

1. Paid for shelter in transitional housing for **26** returning citizens and worked with numerous Sober House residents to plan for increased self-sufficiency as they move to apartment rentals. 2. Assisted three returning citizens with utility bill payments. 3. With help from St. John's Clothing Center, outfitted four returning citizens with clothing. 4. Worked extensively with National Grid Community Advocate and Housing Authority official to enable a returning citizen in recovery to reopen a closed electric service account with an unpaid \$1000 balance "in collection" and use their Arrears Management Program (AMP) so that he could receive a long awaited HUD Section 8 Voucher and move up to an apartment in Attleboro.
- 6 ADVOCACY**

1. Advocated for returning citizens with local courts, probation officers, Registry of Motor Vehicle hearing officers and landlords in order that their voices be heard and that officials in power take needs more seriously. 2. Worked with senior staff in the Massachusetts Legislature and Department of Corrections to facilitate transfer of \$15,000 appropriated in FY'22 State Budget for the SVdP Attleboro Immersion Reentry Program. 3. Working through our Beacon Hill delegation, we reached out to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security Justice Program Grant Office regarding future funding available through their Emerging Adults Reentry Initiative Grant Program which we plan to apply for in early calendar 2022.
- 7 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

1. Attended virtual and in person meetings with Source Collaborative, YMCA and Self-Sufficiency Coalition and SVDP National Reentry Task Force. 2. Continued to work with social service agencies in connecting returning citizens and their families with relevant services and benefits throughout the region and the state. 3. Attended a social networking event hosted by the Bristol County District Attorney where we continued to strengthen our working relationships with the legal and law enforcement communities, including the Bristol County Sheriff.

[The SVdP Attleboro Immersion Reentry Program is now a featured resource on the Catholic Prison Ministry Coalition website.](#)
- 8 EDUCATING VINCENTIANS & VOLUNTEERS**

1. In response to our Poster Session at the SVDP National Meeting in Hooton in late August, we followed up with at least a dozen SVdP representatives from throughout the United States on how to start and operate a grass-roots, community-based reentry program using the SVdP Immersion model. 2. Delivered status report to members of the seven conferences making up the District Council of Attleboro (our Board of Directors) at their meeting on September 13 where we outlined accomplishments and strategic and leadership challenges for the future. 3. Partly as a result of this presentation, we are in the process of welcoming new, much needed, volunteers into our program.

[View a "Town Hall" presentation by the SVdP Attleboro Immersion Reentry Program from July 2021 to the Catholic Prison Ministry Coalition.](#)
- 9 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

1. Collected, entered and analyzed data on ServWare and Grant Maximizer for program management and evaluation purposes. 2. Continued to develop social media presence for eliciting Reentry Program participation by returning citizens and community partners. 3. Continued to explore strategic planning and program sustainability options with Attleboro District Council members and Catholic Social Services of Fall River. 4. Continued to strengthen and develop effectiveness of our efforts under the eight foundational components of the national SVdP Immersion Reentry Program above.

[To learn more, visit \[svdpattleboro.org\]\(http://svdpattleboro.org\) and select "Reentry Program", email \[reentry@svdpattleboro.org\]\(mailto:reentry@svdpattleboro.org\) or call 508-455-2054, ext.1 and leave a voice mail message. We'll call you back.](#)

[To learn more about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, visit \[svdpusa.org\]\(http://svdpusa.org\), write to \[hfullerton@svdpusa.org\]\(mailto:hfullerton@svdpusa.org\) or call Heather Fullerton at 314-576-3993, Ext. 217.](#)