

'THAT'S MY MAMA!'

Several years ago, I was looking at a stats report from our ION website that detailed how many returning citizens were accessing the site after release from prison and how often. As I scrolled through the data, one particular profile stood out from the rest. The data showed that this individual had been logging in and searching for and exchanging messages with service providers at a prodigious rate. I decided to give him a call to ask if he'd found the help he was looking for and, also, whether he had any feedback for us.

When I called him and told him who I was, it was a little weird. He seemed confused—almost as if he wasn't entirely sure what the Inside Out Network was. After a bit more explanation, the lightbulb went on for him, and he knew exactly what I was talking about. When I pointed out that the records showed that he was signing in almost every day, he said, "Ah! Nah, man. That's my mama!"

So it turned out that it wasn't him personally logging in again and again after all. In this instance, the motivation to persistently pursue the help ION offers didn't belong to the returning citizen but to his mama. His mother wanted to help her loved one through the grinding process of reentry.

It isn't just that one mama who's highly motivated. That same motivation is there for untold numbers of parents, siblings, adult children, extended family, and trusted friends who are eager to find effective and practical ways to help their loved ones through reentry (ideally, while maintaining healthy boundaries).

But there's an irony and something of a tragedy here. On the one hand, there's both the widespread desire on the part of many family members and friends to help during reentry, as well as research (see the chart from the Vera Institute below) that shows that the overwhelming majority of inmates are expecting that family and friends will be the two primary sources of support during reentry. *On the other hand*, it's very common for correctional and parole staff to develop reentry planning for

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STAFF SPOTLIGHT: KRISTINA BERETTA

Hello all! My name is Kristina Beretta and I'm a Program Assistant for the Inside Out Network. Born and raised in Petaluma, California, the former "Egg Basket of the World," I started working customer service jobs at the bright age of fourteen. My first real look into the world of Criminal Justice (as opposed to the often-inaccurate crime dramas on TV) came while puttering my way through an English degree. After that taste I was hooked! Through my criminal justice classes, I became intrigued by our prison system and the many opportunities for change that remain. Now, here at the Inside Out Network, I get to work with a program that's just as passionate as I am about filling one of those voids our justice system desperately needs filled. My primary tasks mostly revolve around reaching out to our returning citizens upon release and helping ION in our push into Oregon. Outside of working part-time for ION, I work full-time at a local hotel as the night desk supervisor. When I'm able to get free time, I usually spend it writing stories and doodling in the margins of my paperwork while enjoying a wide range of music.

GRANT SUPPORT IN 2023 (SO FAR)

With gratitude, we want to report that the Inside Out Network has received, so far this year, grant support totaling \$89,100. Cardinals Charities, New Spirit Lutheran Church (Tucson), Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (Chandler), the Grand Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona, and the Sundt Foundation have given ION grants to support primarily our work in Arizona. The W.P. & H.B. White Foundation and the Irvin Stern Foundation gave grants to support our work in the Chicago area. These generous organizations and congregations, along with financial support from individuals and in-kind support from our volunteers make our mission possible. (See below, p. 4, for a story of the life-changing value of the work we do together.)

'THAT'S MY MAMA!' *(continued from Pg 1)*

inmates through referral to government agencies and professional organizations, without, at the same time, effectively engaging family and friends in the process in any strategic way. Bottom line: Mama is anxiously looking for a way to help during reentry, but there's often no clear path for her to do that.

We want to change that. We've just begun working on a plan to get Mama (and all the other family members and friends) meaningfully engaged in the reentry process up to year prior to release.

Here's how...

First, we're going to change our returning citizen registration form and online process to include some new data fields. At the time of initial registration, inmates will be prompted to consider sharing their login information with trusted family members or friends (F&F). If they are willing to do that, we'll ask them to share the F&F contact information with ION. That will allow us to email the login information to their designated F&F, explaining how ION works and instructing them how they can login, search for, and message with reentry providers on the inmate's behalf. We'll encourage them to be in contact with their loved one—by surface mail, phone call, or "jail mail"—to share developments during the reentry process. We're

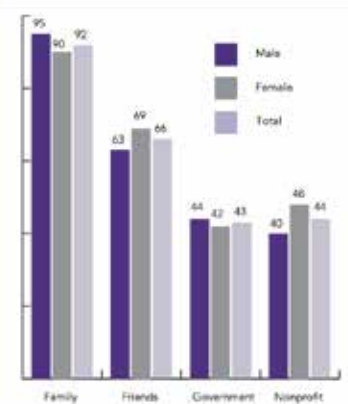
confident that engaging F&F in this way will lead to a much higher level of engagement pre-release, leading to better outcomes.

Second, we'll develop a F&F reentry resource guide to send along as well. This will be a brief document that includes basics of the reentry process, some key checklists, tips for maintaining healthy boundaries, and links to other useful reentry resources designed for family and friends. We plan to have the F&F Reentry Resource Guide ready by the end of August and to launch this initiative by the end of September. We'll keep you—and Mama—posted.

~Fred Nelson, executive director

Vera Institute, "Piloting a Tool for Reentry: A Promising Approach to Engaging Family Members," March 2011 (updated)

Figure 2: Expected Sources of Support After Release from Prison (n= 267)¹²





OREGON UPDATE

Our Oregon team of staff and interns has been hard at work for several months now, and their efforts have been bearing fruit. We've managed to grow our reentry service provider database from 3 provider locations to 26 in the last four months. And, after many months of discussions, we finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with the Oregon Dept. of Corrections (ODOC), formally establishing how we'll work together in the coming year.



Reentry leadership team: Larry Bennett, Amy Bertrand, Melanie Reischke, Promise Parker, and Chris Criswell

To cap all that off, in the middle of May, our executive director, Fred Nelson, traveled to Oregon and spent a week meeting in-person across the state with a range of our partners and stakeholders there. The primary purpose of the trip was to demo the ION platform to a statewide gathering of county directors of Community Supervision (probation and parole) in Pendleton. We're now busy following up on that presentation and new connections—working with each county to surface potential reentry providers and enroll their parolees and probationers into ION. In addition, Fred was able to meet in Portland and Salem with...

- Esme Ringlestetter, our first intern from Portland State University (PSU)
- Chris Campbell, professor of Criminology at PSU
- Karen Cain, executive director of Oregon C.U.R.E., a family advocacy group
- Daryl Borello, administrative chaplain for ODOC
- transition coordinators and release counselors at the Two Rivers and Eastern Oregon Correctional Institutions

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ILLINOIS UPDATE

ION and the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) are currently exploring new options for returning citizen registration. During this process, pre-release registrations are on a temporary hold. However, we are now working with federal probation staff from Northern Illinois to register those who are under their care. Also, people leaving Cook County Jail are given our info upon release. Beyond that, we are staying involved with the re-entry community by increasing involvement with the Illinois Reentry Council's Support Service subgroup, Justice 20/20, and other coalitions. Finally, we have notified our Illinois service providers via email of all that's happening in Illinois.

Illinois Scorecard (as of May 30, 2023): 2368 returning citizens and 210 providers enrolled.



ARIZONA UPDATE

Our collaborative work in Arizona just keeps on getting better. Here are a couple of highlights.

First, in April, our executive director was invited to present to a statewide meeting of all the chaplains in the AZ Dept. of Corrections. He gave an overview of the ION platform, shared copies of the *Spiritual Survival Guide for Prison and Beyond*, and networked with many of the chaplains. That opportunity has now led to several prison units ordering cases of the *Survival Guide* as a book study for inmates and to new relationships with rabbis who are exploring ways to serve Jewish returning citizens.

Second, we've been able to really turn up the dial on meeting in person with frontline prison staff and inmate volunteers. Since the first of the year, we've visited an additional six prison complexes and presented ION at both the Correctional Officer Training Academy and the Parole Officer Training Academy. We're becoming more and more integrated into the standard reentry process in the state prison system.

Finally, we're slated to begin presenting the results of the statewide reentry mapping survey that we conducted last fall. Our Arizona Program Manager, Miranda Campos, will be presenting to the Pima County Reentry Coalition at their meeting in June.

Arizona Scorecard (as of May 30, 2023): 4263 returning citizens and 176 providers enrolled

OREGON UPDATE *(continued from Pg 3)*

- Daniel Gamboa, executive director of City Team Portland's homeless shelter
- Leticia Llongoria-Navarro, executive director of the Pathfinder Network, a large statewide behavioral health provider
- Ahmed Almayatree, federal probation officer in Portland and a huge supporter of ION
- Melanie Doolin, executive director of Oregon Correctional Enterprises
- and, finally, ODOC's warm and welcoming reentry leadership team: Larry Bennett, Amy Bertrand, Melanie Reischke, Promise Parker, and Chris Criswell

A little insider information for you: Our "expansion playbook" in Oregon has a defined numerical target for us to reach before we go live. We've reached an agreement with the Oregon Department of Corrections that they will start offering ION to adults in custody (AICs) when ION has registered 70 service providers. We want to have enough service providers onboard that when AICs begin to go online to search for help, they're able to find a reasonable number of choices and variety of services. The understanding is that we will have at least 50 providers in the heavily populated I-5 corridor, with at least another 20 providers coming from more rural areas of the state.

**Oregon Scorecard (as of May 30, 2023):
26 service providers enrolled, 44 to go**

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We want to say a big Thank You! to all of you who support ION: volunteers who get returning citizens registered on the site, individual donors, grantmakers of all sizes, and people who support our work with prayer. We (obviously) couldn't do this work without you. Without your support, so many returning citizens would be missing out on the opportunities ION affords them, and service providers would be missing out on opportunities as well.

We couldn't think of a better way to say thank you than sharing a story of the difference you're making.

Jason Jardine shared this story. Jason works for the Arizona Dept of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry and, among other responsibilities, goes into prison facilities around the state to train staff in the ADCRR's Convergent Case Management Process. Here's what he experienced at one of those training earlier this year:

"It was in March and we were at ASPC-EYMAN Complex implementing the Convergent Case Management Process (CCM) to three of the units. I was assisting with a Sex Offender Unit (SO), which makes the releasing process very challenging.

"I went over ION very briefly on one of the days prior to the actual ION presentation because I wanted the population to have a bit of an understanding about it before the actual presentation.

"After discussing it with some of the inmates and showing them an example, one of the inmates asked me how long ION had been around, and, when I answered him, he and a couple of others looked at me in a perplexed manner and one blurted out, 'Why haven't we heard of this until now? This is like GOLD!'

"Of course, one has to understand why these men were so impressed with ION and their very obvious 'want' for it. Having the criminal offenses they have in their history severely limits their opportunities and access to resources. Along comes ION, which reduces a lot of the stigma that these men carry with them. Once I explained that to them, they were very eager for the ION presentation. And on our breaks I was approached by many of the inmates who had questions and wanted as much info as possible about ION."

Thanks to Jason for sharing this story. And, again, thanks to all of you who helped make this happen!



BOOK BLURBS: WHAT WE'RE READING

POSITIVE CRIMINOLOGY,

edited by Natti Ronal and Dana Segev. New York: Routledge, 2015.

This is a fascinating and important collection of essays that helps introduce a new subfield in criminology, "Positive Criminology." Instead of the longstanding one-sided focus on negative aspects (risks, needs, and what's wrong or broken), positive criminology focuses on the positive elements in people's lives (positive experiences, assets, strengths, growth, and development). This shift in perspective opens up all kinds of new possibilities (social/interpersonal, intrapersonal, and spiritual) to help people as they not only desist from crime but thrive in life. The essays (many by Israeli and UK criminologists and practitioners) are grouped in three parts: Theory and Practice, Addiction Treatment, and Positive Victimology.

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING WITH OFFENDERS: ENGAGEMENT, REHABILITATION, AND REENTRY,

by Jill D. Stinson and Michael D. Clark. New York: Guilford Press, 2017.

For those who haven't heard the term before, Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an approach and technique for encouraging, enhancing, and accelerating behavioral change in individuals. Like the broader field of coaching, motivational interviewing involves deep listening, surfacing the individual's inner motivation to change, and asking powerful questions to help the person successfully change certain behaviors. This approach has been studied and has demonstrated great success in improving outcomes in health care, substance abuse recovery, and other fields. In this volume, the practice of MI is applied to the field of corrections and reentry, where it has found growing acceptance and positive results. The first half of the book is a great introduction and overview for the ordinary reader. The second half, however, is really designed more as a resource for the MI practitioner and feels a bit redundant for the reader who isn't actively engaged in doing MI with justice-involved people.

BOARD SPOTLIGHT: TORY LAROCHELLE

Tory LaRoche joined the ION Board at the March 2023 meeting. She has been working with Arizona Department of Corrections' Rehabilitation and Reentry Team since 2020 as part of the department's transition to supporting inmates through rehabilitation and reentry. She has a passion to serve God and to inspire, support, and bring positive change to everyone around her.

Tory is a Navy veteran who has worked with underserved populations for over 15 years including persons diagnosed with serious mental illness, people with substance dependence, and people leaving incarceration. She has a graduate degree in counseling through the University of Phoenix with the goal of better understanding people and, so, being better prepared to create change. She sees her life's work as serving God and others while "always believing in the good of humanity."

FLIPPINGBOOKS AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE

If you like the convenience of reading online but also enjoy the hands-on feel of turning pages, then check out ION newsletters and our *Spiritual Survival Guide to Prison and Beyond* on our website. We're using a



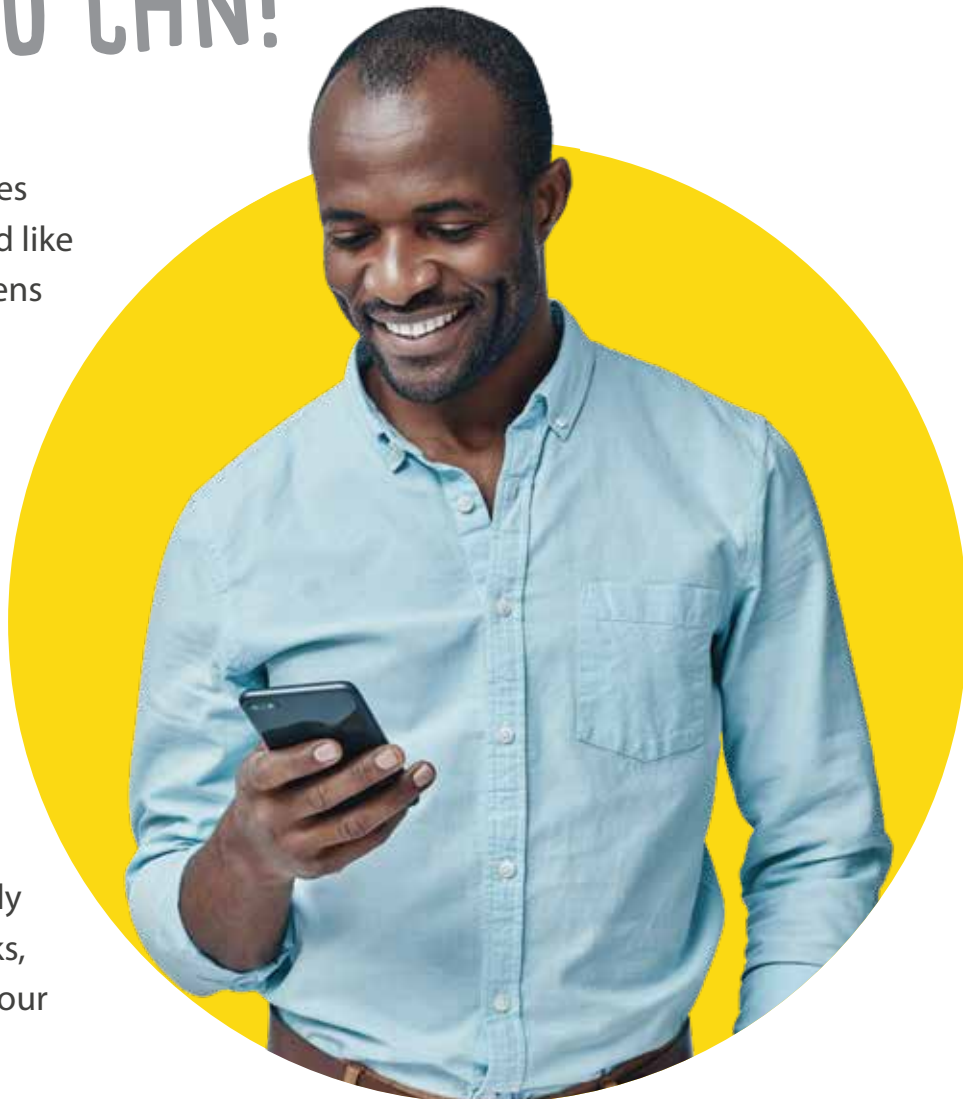
program called FlippingBook that allows us to put our printed content on the website in an engaging, easy-to-read format—much more fun than scrolling through a long PDF.

Anyone can now read the book and newsletter on the site or download them, which means more people can access the *Spiritual Survival Guide* without shipping costs and without delay.

If you're not reading this on the ION website already, you can check it out by going to insideoutnetwork.net, clicking on "Continue as Guest," then click on "About Us" in the top menu and go down to Resources. Happy flipping!

CAN YOU HELP? YES, YES YOU CAN!

The Inside Out Network welcomes contributions from anyone who'd like to help empower returning citizens to take control of their own reentry and get the support they need. You can give by clicking on Donate on our Facebook page or in the top menu on our website. Or you can send a check to ION at the address below. You can also contribute by spreading the word about ION on social media, to service providers, ministries, corrections staff, family members of justice-involved folks, news media, grantmakers, and your prayer group. It takes a village!



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The Inside Out Network is always a free service for returning citizens

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