



September/October 2003
Volume 18, Issue 2

Inside this Issue

- 1 [Circling The Cellblock](#)
- 2 [Creativity Contest Update](#)
- 2 [MSDF Education vision](#)
- 4 [Coaches Talk About Overcoming Obstacles](#)
- 4 [Tutor Program Continues to Expand](#)
- 5 [A Chance To Look To The Future For Inmates Often Focused On The Past](#)
- 6 [Employability Skills Curriculum Nears Completion](#)
- 7 [You're Invited to A Job Fair](#)
- 7 [Check out Our Website](#)
- 7 [You're Invited to the Father's Fair](#)

CEA-W

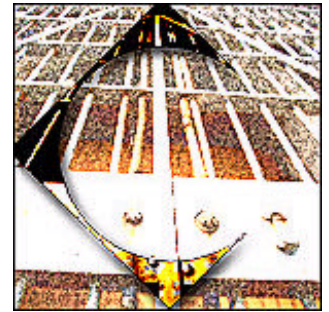
Wisconsin Resource Center
PO Box 16
Winnebago, WI 54985-0016
PHONE: (920) 426-4310 x 4160
FAX: (920) 236-4199
BEDNAGR@dhfs.state.wi.us

Correctional Education Association - Wisconsin

CIRCLING THE CELLBLOCK

This story by Ken Olsen originally appeared on www.tolerance.org, the Web site of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama. It is re-printed with their permission.

July 29, 2003 -- Racist graffiti disappeared from one of the cellblocks at Racine Correctional Institution last year soon after a volunteer teacher and the prison's education director started a race-relations course at the Sturtevant, Wis., prison. The timing is no coincidence



"It gave the inmates a way to talk to each other they hadn't had before," said Roseann Mason, the prison's volunteer teacher and the diversity circles director of the University of Wisconsin, Parkside. "It completely changed the way they interacted with each other." Mason is one of the people who initiated the diversity circles (using the Study Circles model) at the medium-security prison.

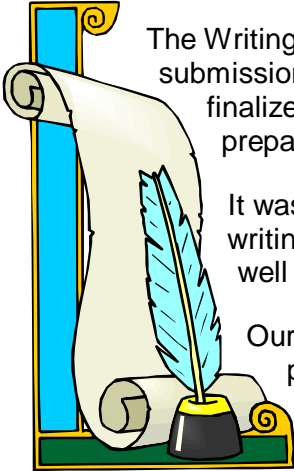
Success there is prompting the nearby Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility to start diversity circles for its prisoners, ages 15 to 21. These are the only two prisons known to offer the pioneering effort to get inmates to understand racism and how it affects their behavior. Much already is demanded of prisons, including drug and alcohol treatment, anger management counseling, sex offender treatment and other programs directly related to most of the crimes that send people to prison.

"It's not that obvious," says Jean Thieme, education director of the Belle Venture School at Racine Correctional, that diversity circles are something else that needs to be addressed. In fact, Thieme contends, this is exactly the kind of program prisons should be offering. "We try to create experiences and opportunities to decrease the likelihood of returning to incarceration."

And to change attitudes that might lead to crime and violence. Matt Leighninger, a senior associate with the Connecticut-based Study Circles Resource Center, met with several of the prisoner participants during a visit to Racine Correctional.

Continued on page 3

Creativity Contest Update



The Writing Initiative Committee met August 1st at the Wisconsin Resource Center to review the submissions for this year's creativity Contest. The winning entries for the new book are being finalized, and the Business Applications students at Racine Correctional Institution are preparing the selections for print.

It was a good year for submissions. The committee received approximately 169 entries of writing and art, and choosing the winning selections was not easy. Most institutions were well represented, but a few didn't have entries submitted.

Our next meeting is in December to distribute copies of the book to the appropriate people. CEA members that are interested in being part of this enjoyable and rewarding effort, please contact Mary Stierna at the Wisconsin Resource Center. You can email her at stiermb@dhfs.state.wi.us. We welcome new committee members!

By: Lisa Packard, DAI

MSDF Education Vision

To establish a direction for the development of educational programming at the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility, the MSDF education staff have created the following vision statement.

Using a team approach:

- We must recognize we can't meet all inmates needs;
- We must prioritize who, what, how long;
- We must focus on transition and connectedness to institution, community education resources;
- We must assess and make individual learning plans;
- We must respond to self-learning requests;
- We must focus on special needs to meet "IDEA";
- We must use maximum technology - CLN, Destinations;
- We must create structure of accountability to assure teachers' performance;
- We must stimulate interest in educational goals;
- We must involve CGIP



Executive Officers		The CEA-W News Review is published by the members of the Correctional Education Association Wisconsin Chapter.
President	Peggy Meyers, SCI	
President Elect	Betty Volquardsen, OCI	The opinions herein are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the executive officers, the Department of Corrections, or the body as a whole.
Secretary	Barb Rasmussen, RCI	
Treasurer	Mike Breszee, WCI	It is our hope that this newsletter will be used to communicate information concerning activities, special events, new directions and policies of the CEA-W and DOC.
Executive Board		
Maximum Security	Ray Schlesinger, WCI	Reports or articles for publication may be submitted to CEA-W News Review Editor at: The Wisconsin Resource Center, PO Box 16, Winnebago, WI 54985-0016
Medium Security	Conrad Reedy, KMCI	
Minimum Security	DeNeal Ericksen, REECC	
Juvenile	Chris Natzke, EAS	
State Agency	Vacant	
Local Education Agency	John Phillips, MPTC	
Member at Large	Jerry Bednarowski, WRC	
Member at Large	John Brueggemann	
Community Correction	Jan Brylow, MSC	
News Review Staff		
Editor	Jerry Bednarowski, WRC	
Computer Entry/Layout & Design	Sandy Sterr-Heavener, WRC	
Printing	University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh	
Proofreading	Neil Gleason, WRC	

- Circling...continued from page 1

During Leighninger's visit, a couple of prisoners identified themselves as former members of skinhead groups and talked about how the diversity circle helped them figure out why they gravitated to such beliefs. Leighninger recalled one of the men saying, "the circle gave me an experience where I could to clean up my own back yard." Others are looking for ways to apply what they've learned beyond the prison walls. "Despite being behind bars, they want to do something to help their little brother, to help the community" deal with racism, Leighninger said.

The history of Study Circles

The diversity program Mason and Thieme initiated at the Racine Correctional Institution is modeled after a five-week class created by the Topsfield Foundation in the wake of racial unrest sparked by the 1992 acquittal of four white Los Angeles police officers charged with beating Rodney King. Called "Facing the Challenge of Racism and Race Relations," the class was inspired by King, a black man, asking, "Why can't we all just get along?" in the midst of the conflict. Communities around the country began looking for ways to talk about race relations — and many turned to Topsfield.

The late Paul J. Aicher started Topsfield in the early 1980s after he sold his Rhode Island metal-cladding business. Long active as a community volunteer, Aicher initially focused on peace issues. As the Cold War disintegrated, the Topsfield group turned to population growth, sprawl and other pressing community issues.

Meanwhile, Aicher was increasingly convinced that grassroots dialogue would help resolve seemingly intractable public issues. He learned about small group discussions used in the late 19th century by the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle in New York, a movement that eventually included more than 15,000 "home study circles." Aicher twice traveled to Sweden to learn how that country used study circles to educate rural populations.

Topsfield's Study Circles Resource Center in Pomfret, Conn., provides small grants and free technical assistance to help communities bring busy citizens together to talk about difficult issues. The idea is that people who are meaningfully engaged will actively work to improve the community around them.

Bringing Study Circles to prison

Mason began teaching English classes in 1993 as a volunteer at the Racine Correctional Institution, soon after one of her students ended up in jail on drug charges. "It coincided with the opening of the Racine Correctional Institution," Mason said of the student's misfortune. "I thought, 'I blew that one. Maybe I can help someone else.'" After participating in a diversity circle at UW-Parkside a few years ago, Thieme asked Mason to bring the program to the prison.

Wisconsin's prison population had nearly quadrupled, and "as our prisons become more crowded, some of these issues boil to the surface," Mason said.

Each diversity circle involves a maximum of 12 inmates. The circle meets two hours a week for five weeks. Participants follow strict ground rules: Each participant gets a fair hearing, shares airtime, indicates when he hears something offensive and then respectfully explains why it is offensive. "For the most part, we find out people don't intentionally offend other people," Mason said. "And people don't realize they are offending others."

The diversity circle first explores participants' personal experiences, then examines the causes of racial problems and finally looks for solutions. What surprises participants the most is how much they end up learning about themselves.

"They learn there's another perspective out there, and it has credibility," Mason said. "It gets them to look at the big picture, not just their own personal angst."

Continued on page 4

Recently released inmate Steve Loveland's "big picture" involves plans for starting a diversity circle in his own community "as soon as I get on my feet," he said. Before participating in one of the diversity circles at the prison, "I was against everything," Loveland said. The program "was like therapy without the bill ... like an inhibitor for anger.

"Now I no longer worry about the small stuff," Loveland said. Loveland, a 13-year-veteran of the correctional system, believes the diversity circles will not only help people get along, but ultimately will help deter violent crime.

"If two people go through diversity circles, and understand how people think, and how people feel," Loveland said, "maybe someone won't get shot or stabbed on down the road."

Coaches Talk About Overcoming Obstacles

Imagine, you're a coach and you walk into a gym of over 200 offenders and even before you have an opportunity to speak, you receive a standing ovation. That is what happened a couple of months ago at RYOFC to Coach Tom Crean of the Marquette Golden Eagles.



During the month of May, Head Coach Tom Crean of the Marquette Golden Eagles, and Assistant Coach Jeff Jagodinzki of the Green Bay Packers were motivational speakers at the Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility. The two coaches discussed numerous aspects of leadership and what it takes to be part of a team. They discussed their personal challenges in order to be successful. Both coaches related their experiences with unsuccessful applications, interviews and personal life experiences that they had endured during the pursuit of success. In the end the coaches emphasized that it was persistence, guidance and education that paid them dividends in their careers.

Approximately a month after the respective coaches forums, the offenders and staff forwarded an oversized "thank you" card to each coach.

By: Ted Harig, RYOFC

Tutor Program Continues to Expand



Data from the Monthly Education Summary Report for July 2003 reveals that the Pro-Literacy America-Wisconsin Institution tutor program is continuing to grow.

During the month 70 additional inmates were trained and certified as PLA tutors. This brought the total of working certified tutors to 143, with others who are trained but not currently employed as tutors.

Tutor training sessions consist of up to 40 hours of instruction to inmates who are prepared to assist other inmates in improving their literacy in education programs and through the libraries in DAI. There is significant structure and stringent record keeping requirements as part of the tutor program, and there is an active steering committee of staff who work closely with the program.

The PLA program is significant in that the training is recognized in the community as well as the institution, giving those offenders another way to give something back to their communities after release.

A Chance to Look to the Future For Inmates Often Focused on the Past



STURTEVANT - Arthur Ptack graduated Thursday, more than 30 years after he left school after finishing the ninth grade.

Ptack, 46, dressed in a blue cap and gown, waved and smiled as he clutched his High School Equivalency Diploma. He did it in prison, where he is eight years into a 20-year sentence for sexual assault. Ptack was one of 38 inmates who graduated at the Racine Correctional Institution Thursday. They walked into the prison library to the sound of "Pomp and Circumstance," played on a boom box. Inmates who received their HSED's or certificates for completing vocational courses wore cap and gown. Inmates who were completing the prison's employment training program, to prepare them for their imminent release, wore prison green.

Some of the inmates are months away from being released. Some are years away. The focus of the graduation ceremony was not what they had done to wind up in prison, but what they have done to better themselves while there.

"I see human beings in here who want to do something," said Robert Turner, a state representative and Racine city alderman. Turner was the keynote speaker. "I don't care why you're here, that's not important. It's what you want to do tomorrow, in the future."

Dave Mickelsen, a Specialized Training Employment Program teacher, told inmates that their graduation was just the beginning, not the end. The certificates they earned are just pieces of paper that remind them of what they can accomplish. "Being a winner is a choice," Mickelsen said. "Winners are people who are willing to do what other people are too lazy to do." "Do not forget today. Do not forget your efforts," inmate Scott Mack told the graduates. Mack earned a certificate for completing the business applications program. "Go home. Be a part of your families. Try to give something back to your community."

Demell Glenn, 30, Madison, completed a culinary arts program at RCI. He has 30 months to go before he gets out of prison. When that happens, Glenn said he plans to go back to school and get an associate's degree in culinary arts. The program he finished in prison gave him 21 or 22 credits toward the 64 credits he will need, Glenn said. "This program just gave me the motivation and the resources I need," Glenn said.

Chad Williams, 35, Milwaukee, has spent almost six years in prison. It's his second time in prison for selling drugs and he said he doesn't plan for there to be a third. He is eligible for parole at the end of the year. Williams completed the first phase of the Department of Corrections' STEP. The program is reserved for prisoners who are nearing the end of their terms and have good prison records. There Williams learned to write a resume, handle his finances, anger management and how to deal with other people in a positive way. "I felt that I needed a change in my life," Williams said. "That's the main reason I went into this program, so I could learn about myself and stop all this criminal thinking."

Ptack's road to the HSED was perhaps longer than most. He has been studying for it for 4½ years. He started back when it was the GED. He was just a few credits away from getting his GED when they changed the program to HSED. He had to start over. Ptack is still 5½ years away from his mandatory release date from prison. Now that he has his HSED, he plans to study computers. "I'm the kind of guy that wants to better myself," Ptack said. "It feels great."

*By: Jeff Wilford
The Journal Times
Reprinted with permission*

Employability Skills Curriculum Nears Completion

The DAI Employability Skills Workgroup is nearing the completion of its mission. The workgroup is comprised of; Diane Birch, SCI; Ronald Clayton, MSDF; Russ Dangerfield, JCI; Garry French, MSDF; Jennifer Hellenbrand, RCI; Dale Huck, TCI; Reinal Kunz, RGCI; Linda Lentz, JBCC; Larry Perkins, MSDF; Pam Petersen, REEC; Darrel Prue, WRC; Antoinette Saunders, TCI; Ronna Swift, OSCI; Jean Thieme, RCI; Joseph Weber, RYOCF; Mary Wood, TCI; Dianne Zenz, PDCCI.

The purpose of the Employability Skills Workgroup was to gather together Employability Skills teachers from all the adult institutions to agree upon uniform competencies and objectives to be included in Employability Skills classes throughout DAI. In order for the curriculum to meet the needs of the variety of institution settings and purposes, specific learning activities have not been made mandatory for meeting the objectives.

One group needing Employability Skills is HSED students. The group recommended 20-24 hours for presenting the HSED Employability Skills in a group instruction setting. For individualized HSED Employability Skills, basic required objectives have been identified as core and must be part of the course of study.

Employability Skills is also a broader category that can apply to lower level students, graduates, and inmates nearing their release. Because there are no specific requirements to be met for these, it is recommended that as much information as possible be gathered to determine specifically what the level of employability skill need is, in order to most efficiently meet those needs, and to serve as many inmates as possible. The four modules and the identified competencies for each are listed below.

A. Career Assessment and Awareness

1. Analyze capabilities, interests, and skills
2. Assess personal needs and values
3. Develop strategies to produce career plans with realistic goals

B. Job Seeking

1. Link interests and skills to current job market
2. Identify potential employment resources
3. Interpret potential barriers to employment
4. Organize identification documents for job search

C. Job Application

1. Produce a portfolio
2. Demonstrate an employment interview
3. Develop strategies for maintaining motivation

D. Maintain Employment

1. Identify objectives of employers
2. Exhibit communication skills
3. Investigate life management resources



One product of the workgroup's efforts is an instructor's manual, which breaks the competencies into modules and provides teaching guidelines. The workgroup has also designed a draft of an Employability Requirements and Verification form to document the competencies achieved.

By Lisa McClure, DAI

YOU'RE INVITED TO A JOB FAIR

To support their mission to provide opportunities for the successful transition to society of inmates upon their release from the Department of Corrections, the Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution will be hosting the KMCI 3rd Annual Inmate Job Fair on Thursday, October 2, 2003 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM.

Anyone wishing to attend must contact David Picard at 920-526-9202 by September 19, 2003.



For Information on CEAW and correctional education in Wisconsin, check out CEAW's website at

www.ceawisconsin.org

If you would like to contribute information for the Directory or add other items to our website contact Mike Breszee at his email address:

Mbreszee@charter.net

YOUR ARE INVITED TO THE FATHER'S FAIR

You are invited to join the Racine Correctional Institution's staff for their **Fourth Annual Father's Fair: Community Connections** on September 29, 2003. Last year, RCI's Belle Venture School hosted over thirty community agencies that provided information to inmates on becoming better fathers/community citizens and the resources available to help them accomplish that task. We hope to have an even bigger turnout this year.



Father's Fair: Community Connections hours are 9:00AM to 3:00PM. Drop by any time during the day and spend as much time as you have available. Lunch will be served at 11:45 AM. However, due to the state budget constraints we are asking for a contribution of \$2.00 per person for lunch.

We hope that you will be able to visit RCI for this exciting, unique event. To help us plan gatehouse passes and meals, please contact Sandra McGill at Racine Correctional by September 15, 2003, at (262) 886-3214 ext. 520 or by e-mail at sandra.mcgill@doc.state.wi.us with your availability.

CEA Membership Application

Please print your name and address carefully. List your name and address, as you would like them published in the annual Directory of Correctional Educators.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip/Postal Code _____

Type of Membership:

- Individual \$50 year
- Institutional/Library \$85 year
- Student/Volunteer/Retiree \$30 year
- Clerical/Support Staff \$20 year

Mail to:

CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
4380 Forbes Blvd, Lanham, MD 20706

Phone: (800) 783-1232
Fax: (302) 918-1900

Referred By: _____
Membership #: _____

We Accept VISA or MasterCard

Card No. _____

Expiration Date: _____

For More Information Contact:

Barb Rasmussen, CEAW Secretary

Phone: (262) 886-3214 Ext. 520

Email: barbara.rasmussen@doc.state.wi.us

check here if you are a Federal Bureau of Prisons Employee

CEA-Wisconsin News Review
Wisconsin Resource Center
PO Box 16
Winnebago, WI 54985-0016

