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Western Carolinians for Criminal Justice

WCCJ Women At Risk

WCCJ Men's Program

November 2007

Dear Friends,

Our organization, Western Carolinians for Criminal Justice, offers an intensive therapeutic alternative to incarceration for criminal offenders. Over the past 20 years, we have built a program that works. Now, research sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice has validated that our model of intervention succeeds.

Will you help us change lives at risk? Please consider a generous gift toward our effort to raise \$20,000 to help underwrite services in 2008. Gift dollars will be pooled with government and foundation grants, church, civic and corporate contributions, and client fees to meet the costs of helping women and men at risk. Your charitable support is crucial, providing funding to serve those who desperately need help but have no ability to pay for treatments.

At WCCJ for 15 years, we have pioneered a therapeutic program designed specifically for women offenders and the problems they face. Our new men's program was launched earlier this year. It builds on the success of the women's program while addressing the different situations and needs of male offenders, particularly violence and the use of force as problem-solving strategies. The goals for each are to help offenders develop the understanding and skills to avoid further criminal behavior, restructure their lives, improve relationships with their families and re-integrate into their communities.

Offenders come to us on court system referrals from judges, attorneys, probation officers, family or drug treatment courts or the pre-trial release program. Social service agencies refer clients to WCCJ, and some clients find us on their own. In each case, the person has a criminal record, typically for drugs, motor vehicle offense, assault, fraud, larceny, forgery or probation violation.

Our unique treatment model includes court advocacy, clinical services and case management. Services include a 16-week group therapy program facilitated by licensed staff therapists, one-on-one counseling, a 26-week "Deciding Against Violence" program for those with violent offenses, and Healing Path, intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment. Case Management includes help with job searches, education, affordable housing and, when necessary, childcare and transportation. In our WCCJ home-like setting, clients develop strong bonds with our supportive, caring staff members who promote accountability, not punishment and suffering.

With our help, chances for success improve. Our graduates are more likely to move on to a normal life, build good relationships with their children and develop economic security.

With your help, we will continue to change lives. As always, the most important beneficiaries will be the children of our clients. This is because their young lives are tied closely to the success -- or failure -- of their parents.

PO Box 7472, Asheville, NC 28802 • 828.252.2485 • Fax 828.252.5944 • www.wccj.org


WCCJ is a non-profit organization serving WNC with programs that embrace the principles of restorative justice. The WCCJ regional office and the Women At Risk Program/Buncombe County are located at 218 Patton Avenue in Asheville. The Women At Risk Program/Henderson County is located at 512 N. Grove Street in Hendersonville. The WCCJ Men's Program is located at 70 S. Market Street in Asheville.

OUR APPROACH WORKS

In 2006 and 2007, the U.S. Department of Justice funded research to study outcomes for Women At Risk. The resulting study by Dr. Pauline Brennan of the University of Nebraska followed 327 women who exited the program. Findings showed that participation in our program decreased the chances that a woman would later be re-arrested, re-convicted or incarcerated. This proved true even for those struggling with difficult problems such as mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence or sexual assault. Until this study, there had been almost no documented research about the effectiveness of community-based treatment interventions for women offenders.


GIFT SUPPORT HELPS US BUILD SUCCESS

- WCCJ provides the only state-licensed, outpatient treatment alternative for women offenders in North Carolina.
- In 2007, we launched a men's program and expanded to serve women in Henderson County.
- Last fiscal year WCCJ served over 300 clients, approximately half of whom were on track with their treatment program or had graduated at year's end.
- The costs for WCCJ treatment programs are very modest compared to incarceration which requires an investment of about \$25,000 per inmate each year.



SHARON

Sharon, a 38-year-old woman with a five-year-old son, was court ordered to WCCJ after a conviction involving drugs, robbery and larceny. A year before entering the program, Sharon was raped. She subsequently had two periods of inpatient treatment and a suicide attempt. Her history included alcohol abuse and long term dependence on crack and powder cocaine. In her recovery work, she began taking more initiative in getting treatment for diabetes and mental health challenges and for addiction relapse prevention. She graduated from our relapse prevention and therapy groups with flying colors, and has chosen to stay in touch with her case manager for help finding work and independent housing. With this progress, she hopes to take back primary care of her son, relieving her parents of this duty.



We hope that, like us, you see that an investment in Western Carolinians for Criminal Justice, the Women At Risk Program and the WCCJ Men's Program is a wise and sound investment.

Will you consider a gift of at least \$100? And if you can give more this year, please do so.

Thank you for keeping our successes in mind as you choose your gift to WCCJ this year. Your support is invaluable.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Pete Sansbury, President



Ellen Clarke, Executive Director

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