

## **Reentry Roundtable Session (Virtual)**

**Wednesday, August 18, 2021 2:00 PM**

### **Attendance:**

Pastor Ronnie Morton  
Pastor Ryan Hill  
Shamira Wright  
Shelby Valentine  
James Johnson  
Carolyn Perry  
Karen Peterson  
Tenisha Kelly

Lou Grillo  
Deborah Cozart  
Sharon Thomas  
Desiree Brooks  
Kisha High  
Melissa Elliott  
Alicia Johnson  
Tony Tosh

### **Welcome and Introductions of New Members & Guests:**

Reentry partners and guests were welcomed to the meeting. Several new partners were present and joining the Reentry Roundtable. They are:

- Pastor Ronnie Morton of the Greater Joy Baptist Church and Executive Director of Hope House shared information that Hope House combines Recovery, Responsibility, and Replication to enable each of our members to live free of the disasters of drug and/or alcohol addictions.
- Ryan Hill, Pastor of Congregational Care and Student Ministry at Clearview Church in Henderson have a Kindle outreach program for those
- Tony Tosh is with Prosperity Recovery Services. They have locations in Durham, Norlina, and other areas nearby. They teach the reentry population construction trades such as carpentry and plumbing.

### **Reentry Housing Committee Update:**

- Shamira Wright, chair for the Reentry Housing Committee, met with NC Public Safety and there is almost no housing for reentry participants in our area. However, there is a Bill on the House floor to review subsidized housing for those individuals.
- The Rapid Rehousing and the HOPE program (through United Way) have rental assistance available for those with a hardship due to COVID going 9 months backwards or 3 months forward. The application process is very simple.
- A suggestion is to obtain a list of landlords to discuss HOPE House Program.
- The NC Housing Finance Agency has mortgage assistance available.

### **Reentry Simulation – Tenisha Kelly**

The Reentry Simulator is a tool for outreach and highlights challenges that the reentry population face once they are released from incarceration. At the event, participants are given a card with their characteristics such as homeless. Tables with providers (DMV, probation, etc.) are set up and the participants go to the table to work through their challenges from the card they received. This experiment helps in understanding the challenges faced by reentry participants. A reentry simulation event will be planned for the Reentry Roundtable in the near

future. Lou said that they hope to host a reentry simulator event in the spring to invite local officials and reentry roundtable members to participate.

### **Service Provider Program Updates:**

#### **New Start:**

- Shelby Valentine, a participant in the New Start program, was incarcerated for 17 years and recently released. He shared with the group his challenges he faced. One of those challenges was technology and how much it has changed. The New Start Program helped Mr. Valentine to get the resources and support he needed to help in adapting to the changes in today's world. He completed 42 hours toward his Associate's degree while incarcerated. New Start helped by connecting with VGCC so that he could finish his schooling. In closing, Mr. Valentine asked that the community can help by listening to what the reentry population needs and also listen to their hopes and dreams. He said "Thank you" to New Start for their help and guidance. Mr. Valentine plans to become a mentor to the reentry population.
- Day to Day Dads program and Child Support group meetings are held on a regular basis at the Family Resource Center. Flyers will be sent out to group.
- KARTS is now transporting New Start participants.
- New Start may have potential participants from Bertie and Wake counties in the near future.

#### **Hope House Oxford:**

- Pastor Morton: applications are available for potential participants on the website [treasuresofjoy.net](http://treasuresofjoy.net)
- The phone number for Hope House is (919) 685-0290. They are located at 201 Lewis Street, Oxford, NC 27565.

#### **NC Works Career Center:**

- There are two hiring events planned. Person County will hold an event for Corning out of Durham at the B Deck on Friday, August 20, 2021 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. On Saturday, August 21, 2021, there will be a Community Job Fair and Community Resources event from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. There will be over 20 resource providers and employers present.

#### **Local Updates:**

- If anyone hears of an expungement clinic happening nearby, please let us know and if not, we would like to have one in the near future.
- A reminder and for new attendees, Durwood Hunter is the Reentry Specialist in the area and is at the Henderson Career Center Wednesdays through Fridays (252-438-6129) and at the Warren Career Center (housed at VGCC Warren Campus) on Mondays and Tuesdays (252-257-3230). Referral forms are located on the [kerrtarworks](http://kerrtarworks.com) site. Also Derwood's email is [durwood.hunter@nccommerce.com](mailto:durwood.hunter@nccommerce.com)

### **NEXT MEETING**

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at 2:00 pm.

