



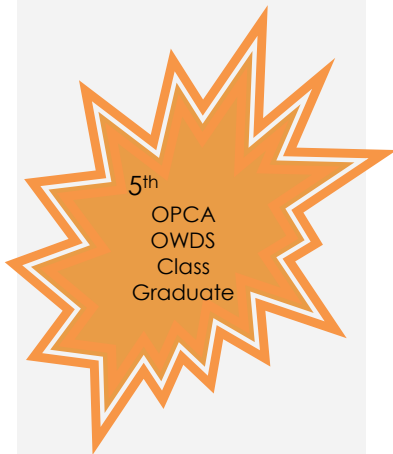
Robert M. Maccarone, Deputy Commissioner and Director
Bernard Wilson, Supervisor Contract Administration
Cynthia Blair, Editor-in-Chief

NYS DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives: IN TOUCH WITH Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS)

News

**Cattaraugus County
Probation Department
Pilots
RSW! for Persons in
Mental Health Recovery**

**National Institute of
Corrections'
Offender Employment
Retention Specialist
(OERS) Training**



Inside Highlights

**More graduation
news** C

GCDF News

Elaine Kost

And more

Welcome to *In Touch with OWDS* an electronic newsletter from the **New York State DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA)**, written specifically for OWDS and others interested in offender employment

Leading the Way... Cattaraugus County Probation Department held the first session of the **Ready, Set, Work (RSW)! for Persons in Mental Health Recovery** on May 14, 2012 with 11 probationers. 2011 OWDS graduate, Probation Officer **Denise Lengvarsky** is coordinating the effort.

Cattaraugus Probation Director, Gerry Zimmerman has most of his staff trained as OWDS. This can only benefit the new **RSW!-MH** project they are piloting. **Denise** and **Ann Faulkner**, Senior Probation officer and OWDS Instructor, attended training given by Thomas O'Clair and Joseph Swinford of the Office of Mental Health to learn about SSI, SSDI, work incentives, and supports for persons with disabilities. They also connected with service providers from the local Mental Health Association, PROS, and the Directions for Independent Living who were willing to present information to the **RSW!**

for Persons in Mental Health Recovery groups. Also assisting are **Collin Quigley** OWDS Instructor, **Karen Rogers** OWDS, and Christopher Woodring, a new Probation Officer who brings a background working in the area of mental health to his new position at Cattaraugus County Probation.

Offender Employment Retention Specialist (OERS) Training
Craig MacNeil from Albany County Probation, **Ann Faulkner**, **Dale Wilkinson** and **Collin Quigley** from Cattaraugus County, all attended the OERS training at the National Institute of Correction's new training site in Denver, Colorado.

Craig, Ann and **Dale** were a part of the January 2012 Class and **Collin** attended the May session. They join **Mark Pisano**, of Ulster County and OPCA's **Cynthia Blair** as certified OERS. For more information on this new training for certified OWDS' contact: **P. Elizabeth Taylor**, Correctional Program Specialist, *National Institute of Corrections* at petaylor@bop.gov



NIC's Pat Taylor and Albany County Probation's Craig MacNeil

5th OWDS Class Graduates

Twenty-seven (27) professionals graduated on June 14th in Albany. This year's OWDS Class Included county probation officers, reentry, DOCCS and ATI program professionals. The mixture made for lively discussions as participants examined issues and discussed challenges from different perspectives. Not only did this group have the most varied backgrounds but it was also our largest graduate class. This class brings the total OWDS trained in Albany by the DCJS/OPCA In-State Partnership with NIC to **114**.

VALEDICTORIAN



Stephanie Zaid was the top student for the class. Stephanie is a forensic case manager at the Bronx TASC Mental Health Court Program of NYC TASC

SALUTATORIAN



Pauline Franz, Probation Officer for Rensselaer County was this year's salutatorian as she finished right behind Stephanie.

SPEAKERS

This year two special speakers addressed our 5th graduating class: Pat Taylor, Program Specialist for the National Institute of Corrections and Rebecca Bell, Executive Deputy Director of the EAC program. Both speakers gave inspirational as well as practical thoughts for the graduates to use as they begin their new OWDS careers.



Albany OWDS Class of 2012

Sara Ampel	Family of Woodstock
Betty Bellamy	P&P Rock Initiative Reentry Program
Wendy Brown	The Center for Community Justice
Conny Colome Del Rio	NYC EAC TASC
Jenine Cruz	Center for Community Alternatives
Maribel DeJesus	PVRC -Basics/Promesa
Brian Delaney	NYC EAC TASC
Amy Dowd	The Center for Community Justice
David Driscoll	Altamont Program
Jonathan Duncel	Chenango County Probation
Craig Eckert	Community Transition Center
Pauline Franz	Rensselaer County Probation
Valerie Franz	NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Tarik Greene	Tomorrow's Workplace
Robert Hart	NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Tanya Henderson	Altamont Program
Afeisha Julien	Fortune Society
Kristin Kuchko	Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility
Angela LaSpisa	Center for Community Alternatives
Jorge Morales	Family of Woodstock
Matthew O'Connor	Community Transition Center
Andrew Roberts	NYC EAC TASC
Theresa Rodriguez	NYC EAC TASC
Melinda Vick	NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Justin Williams	NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Ronald Wood	Altamont Program
Stephanie Zaid	NYC EAC TASC

Probation Director is an Offender Workforce Development Specialist!

Chautauqua County OWDS and RSW!

Chautauqua County Probation Director, [Linda Shields](#), attended and completed the intense 180 hour OWDS training held in Jamestown. This makes **Director Shields** the first Probation Director in NYS to complete this rigorous training. Jail officials, led by OWDS program manager, **Patrick Johnson**, warden of the Chautauqua County Jail held their second round of the Offender Workforce Development Specialist training this year. The training, supported by a National Institute of Corrections grant had 29 graduates, and 18 were from the Chautauqua Probation Department.

READY, SET, WORK

Director Shields, wanted to use this program as a way to help her department initiate the **Ready, Set, Work!** program, a job readiness program for offenders on probation and others with a criminal history. "A lot of the people that we work with don't have the skills, so we want to give them job skills to help them be in a better position," said Shields. "We want to help them overcome barriers to become gainfully employed." Also **Director Shields** states, "**Compliance with probation restrictions doesn't change behavior; giving them (probationers) skills and helping to change the way that they think does.**"

*Chautauqua County has already begun to implement the **Ready, Set, Work!** program and thus far, has seen a very good success rate for their probationers finding and retaining jobs, which reduces the caseload for their probation officers. **Director Shields** also praised the great success that **Albany County Probation**, which originally piloted the program, has had in both offender employment and retention.*

thanks

Thank you to the many people who help to make the OWDS training happen. **DCJS/OPCA Thanks:** **Beth Bobela**, P.O. Dutchess County Probation; **Patrick Fitzgerald**, Industrial Superintendent Coxsackie Correctional Facility, NYS DOCCS; **Craig MacNeil**, Probation Officer Assistant, Albany County Probation; **Mark Pisano**, Probation Officer, Ulster County Probation; and **Alma Sehovic**, NYC TASC, for their training assistance during this training. We also would like to thank **Elton Maynard**, CORES, Director, NYC Probation who has volunteered many hours of his nights and weekends over the past 5 years to score practicums. This year **Rosemarie Salinger**, SPO also from NYC Probation and **Alma Sehovic** of NYC TASC helped out with the scoring. And many thanks to the Probation Directors and Agency heads.

OWDS Reentry

On June 27th **Cynthia Blair** joined the Schenectady County Reentry Taskforce to give the group information on Pathways to Employment, **Ready, Set, Work!** and of course OWDS. **Wendy Brown**, Reentry Coordinator who just finished the 2012 OWDS training, asked Cynthia to speak at the quarterly meeting. Over 30 community representatives attended the meeting held at the Schenectady County Community College. There was a lively discussion on the best ways to assist those returning to the community from incarceration, including the need for quality employment. Schenectady County District Attorney, **Robert M. Carney**, also spoke to the task force about a new initiative: *Project Safe Neighborhoods*.

Project Safe Neighborhoods: The Governor is awarding \$1 million dollars to six communities – Newburgh, Albany, Schenectady, Brownsville, the Bronx and Manhattan, that are most impacted by gun violence to develop strategies to reduce it. Two prominent academics who have focused on crime and gun violence, Professor Tracey Meares of Yale University and Professor David M. Kennedy of John Jay College, will work with the localities to implement this strategy.. For more information go to

<http://www.governor.ny.gov/press/02182012reducingsgunviolenceinitiative>



Global Career Development Facilitators

Congratulations to **Amy Colon** from the Family of Woodstock and **Cyre Crandle**, from NYC EAC TASC, both OWDS graduates from the 2011 Class.

Amy and Cyre each received their GCDFs and are now full fledged Global Career Development Facilitators. The OWDS training is only one of the qualifying criteria for obtaining this certification. The reviewers at the Center for Credentialing and Education in Greensboro, North Carolina also assess education and experience before granting certification. Again, congratulations to **Amy and Cyre** on this noteworthy accomplishment.



NIC OERS
Training
Sep. 24, 2012 - Sep. 28, 2012
to qualified OWDS
Training Site:
Norman, Oklahoma

For more information Contact:

P. Elizabeth Taylor, Correctional Program Specialist, National Institute of Corrections at petaylor@bop.gov

OPCA-DOL Collaboration

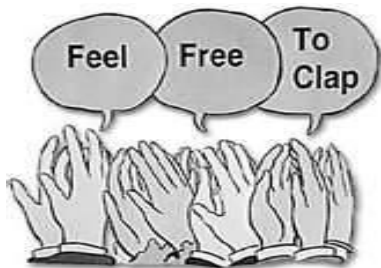


Elaine Kost

NYS DOL Representative

Retires

Elaine Kost began working with OPCA back in 2003 when the then DPCA approached DOL about how the agencies could collaborate to help stem offender recidivism through employment. OPCA was able to have Elaine's services to visit almost every county in the state and present the Pathways to Employment Program. Elaine traveled to Oklahoma City for the training with the original NYS OWDS team which authored the **Ready, Set, Work! Curriculum** as their NIC action plan, a required part of the training. The team also authored the **Employment Matters!** curriculum and eventually **Retention Counts!** and other specialized offender job readiness and retention materials. Elaine was the Federal Bond Coordinator for NYS and she also was known as the "go to" person on anything pertaining to offender employment not only throughout NYS, but nationally as well. Although her DOL duties continued to expand into other arenas she still, as a certified GCDF Instructor, facilitated at least one module every year since the In-State OWDS partnership with NIC began in 2008. Her module was a highlight of the training for many of the participants who gave her glowing reviews. **Elaine will be greatly missed but we wish her the best in her future endeavors.**



Ready, Set, Work! Performance Outcomes

Ready, Set Work is now being held in many counties around the state and is also being looked at for implementation in other areas of the country. As we gather information on the effectiveness of the program we would like to share it with you.

In 2011 OPCA obtained information from **15** agencies, which held a total of **98 RSW!** groups. There were 432 offenders who completed the RSW! groups and 226 of those obtained employment within 90 days. This is a 52% employment rate for 2011. Looking closer at the information, **8** County Probation departments reported holding **25** groups with **175** completers and **105** employed within 90 days, for a **60%** employment rate. The other agencies were Probation Violation Residential Centers (PVRC) and 200% of Poverty programs. These **8** programs held a total of **73** groups. **257** offenders completed the **RSW!** program and **121** obtained employment, for a **47%** employment rate.

Worth highlighting is the **New York City EAC TASC 200% of poverty program, Enhanced Employment Initiative, (EEI)**. This vocational program is designed to provide court mandated TASC clients with employment placement and other transitional services, enabling defendants and their families to gain financial security and independence. borough provide services

to job seekers whose incomes fall below 200 percent of the federally established poverty level. Program staffs attend an Offender Workforce Development Specialists training program sponsored by D C J S/O P C A, County Probation departments, NYS DOL and the National Institute of Corrections. **Alma Sehovic**, Program Director and OWDS graduate from the inaugural OPCA class, reports that there were **55 RSW!** groups during 2011, **142** participants completed and **83** found jobs. NYC TASC has sent 14 staff to the training since the program began in Albany in 2008. The commitment to changing the lives of those they serve through equipping their staff with the necessary skills is evident. **Alma**, who has her GCDF, was also a support trainer in Albany for the 2012 training.



EAC 2012 OWDS Graduates



Alma Sehovic 2012 OWDS in Albany