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IN TOUCH with OWDS

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

They're off and running...

New Ready, Set, Work! Groups

- **Erie County:**
September 5th
- **Catholic Family Center:** September 11th
- **Orleans County:**
September 15th
- **St. Lawrence County**
September 18th

Not so New RSW! Group

Albany County: ongoing RSW! groups currently holding 2 five week groups, one at ACPD and one at Trinity Institution in Albany

Highlights

Congratulations

Collaborations

Employment Matters!

Probationer Employment Numbers by County

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

Leading the Way... Nancy Chu began first new RSW! group on September 5th

Nancy Chu, Erie County Probation Officer, was excited about starting her new group. During my visit with Nancy in Buffalo on August 7th, she said, "I'm going to become the *Matt Charton of Western NY*" She has big shoes to fill but I'm sure she can do it!

That is of course if **Leanne Serrato** doesn't beat her to it. **Leanne** began her **Orleans County RSW! group** on September 15th. She also has an Employer Breakfast scheduled for November. **Bernard** and I visited with **Leanne** in August and she was eager to get the ball rolling. **Leanne** is poised to take her OWDS training and the RSW! program and make a real difference in Orleans County.

Art Cooney, Cattaraugus County Probation Officer, will be working with **Ray Paladino, Sr. PO**, to get the RSW! program up and running in their county. I was given a tour of the One Stop and met a participant **Ray** is working with through their DPCA TANF program. After observing their current collaboration

with the One Stop, it appears that this relationship will be very beneficial when they start the RSW! program.

Mike Pasquale has enhanced his program by incorporating some of the RSW! modules and NIC information into the **Center for Community Alternatives' (CCA)** existing employment program. **Bernard Wilson** and I met with **Mike** on August 19 and learned about the exciting work being done by **Mike** and others at CCA in Syracuse.

Shawn Bartlett and **Jeff Crane**, both of **Onondaga County Probation**, are on track to begin their RSW! soon. They plan to work with Jobs Plus in Syracuse and to hold their groups on Mondays and Fridays.

We met with **Danielle Jones** at **Catholic Family Center** in Rochester on August 27th. She began her RSW! Group on September 11 with her TANF participants. While in Rochester we also met with

veteran OWDS, **Rochelle Cohen Lempert** and new OWDS, **Jennifer Ball**, at **Monroe County Probation**. They plan to get the Monroe RSW! group restarted in the next few weeks.

Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency (FLACRA) employee, new OWDS **Mickey Record**, will facilitate RSW! groups in the Day Reporting unit at **Ontario County Probation**.

Amy Harvey of **St. Lawrence County Probation** held her first RSW! group on September 18th. We congratulate her and all of these OWDS on getting right to work to help improve offender employment.

Of course our original RSW! **Star**, **Matt Charton**, continues his ongoing RSW! groups with the help of newly certified OWDS, **Craig MacNeil**. **Matt** and **Craig (Albany County probation)** finished their 10th and 11th groups for this year in September. Visiting **Matt** and **Craig's** group on August 12 to see a successful group in progress were **Elizabeth Bobela (Dutchess County Probation)** and **Mark Pisano (Ulster County Probation)**.

(Continued on next page)

Highlights

BREAKING NEWS!!!

Global Career Development Facilitators

Mark Pisano is the first of the NYS NIC Albany Partnership Class to receive his **GCDF**.

Many congratulations to Mark for his accomplishments!

Albany County to Begin Retention Counts!
(see article, this page)

Collaborations Work!

The NYS Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives' OWDS activities are a collaborative effort with The NYS Department of Labor and County Probation Departments.

Employment Matters!

On Wednesday, September 17th an Employment Matters training was held in Elmira. In addition to Chemung County, officers from Steuben and Tompkins Counties were in attendance. The next day the training was held in Syracuse with officers from Oswego, Madison and Chenango counties joining Onondaga for the training.

New OWDS **Craig** MacNeil, (Albany County) joined **Matt** Charton (Albany County) **Elaine** Kost (NYS Department of Labor) and **Cynthia** Blair (NYS DPCA) for the Chemung County training.

Maintaining Employment... **Retention**

Counts! Matt Charton is set to restart his Retention Counts group on November 6th. He plans to have a panel of employers speak with employed and yet to be employed graduates of his RSW! program on **Conflict Resolution on the Job Site**. **Retention Counts!** is the third phase of the NYS DPCA Pathways to Employment Program.

And On OWDS Go...

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Matt and Craig will begin their 11th and 12th groups for the year on September 30th. They invite any interested OWDS to attend a session of the upcoming groups beginning on September 30. Contact Matt at (518)-487-5180 or MCharton@albanycounty.com for more information or to arrange a visit.

NYC Visits

On September 11th a visit to the **Center for Employment Opportunities** (CEO) found **Victor** Ellis excited about starting a group and using the competencies learned in the training on a regular basis both with his retention staff as well as in his work with clients. He has become known at CEO as Mr. OWDS. **Victor's** excitement for the lessons of this training is contagious.

NYC Probation has run two RSW! groups lead by OWDS **Roberta** Posner. Associate Commissioner **Lorene** Gilmore expects to continue the NYC groups and to add

another borough before the end of the year. My meeting with AC Gilmore on September 11th garnered useful information on the important employment issues facing NYC.

On September 12 Bernard Wilson and I met with **Virginia** Nepa (**Women's Prison Association**), **Alma** Sehovic (**Education and Assistance Corporation**) and **Jose** Vasquez (**Osborne Association**) otherwise known as the **Remsen Street Terrific Trio** (RSTT). Being located in the same building uniquely positions these three new OWDS for collaboration. Plans are in the works to jointly train staff from each agency. They are scheduling a half day training for their staffs on Assessments in October using the Basic Skills Curriculum provided by NIC. We expect big things from the **RSTT** and their cooperative undertaking.

NYS Probationer Employment

Do you know what your county probationer employment rate is? Please visit our site for information.

Visit our website at <http://www.dpca.state.ny.us>

Keep in touch:

Let us know as soon as you receive your **GCDF** or any other honors/ certificates etc. we will tell all your friends. Also, if you have an announcement, we would love to help. Don't forget to let us know when you will be starting your groups so that we can spread the good news.

Coming soon to a column near you ⇨ ⇨ **OWDS**

Corner. We invite original articles from OWDS (veteran and new). We will try to share one in each issue contact **Cynthia Blair** at 518-485-5162 or cynthia.blair@dpca.state.ny.us

Didn't see **your** name here? Let us know what you are doing.