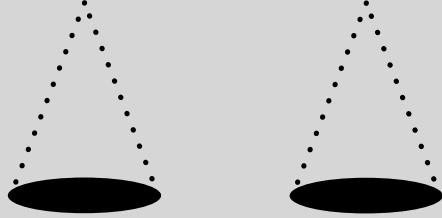


The



VICTIM ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Journey

Winter 2004, Volume 3, Issue 1

Restoration, like healing, is a *journey* that we all must make together. We lean on, support, learn from, give ideas, encourage, and grow in the attempt to heal, make whole again, and restore that which was taken during the commission of a crime. As correctional professionals, advocates, victims, community members and offenders, we are on a *journey* that will change our lives forever as well as those lives that we touch along the path of our *journey*.

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A Biography of Leah Wara

by Linda Sorensen

Leah Michelle Wara was born in Madison, Wisconsin, on September 24, 1971, to Linda Wara and Lee Brown. She became the stepdaughter of Keith Sorensen when he and Linda married. Leah was four. She was a loving and



protective older sister of Tressa, Keith II and Brent. At the age of seven, Leah and her family relocated and settled in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She is survived by numerous family members in Oshkosh, Green Bay and Madison, Wisconsin.

Leah was Linda's first child, and as is often the case, there was a special bond in their relationship. Leah's mother was a single parent until Leah and her sister were four and two, respectively. Leah had brown eyes and rich dark brown curly hair which she used to struggle with, trying as she grew older, to straighten it to the popular feathered look.

Growing up as a child, she was a publicly shy and quiet girl, but overtly entertained, argued, joked and played with her siblings, just like any other kid. In Leah's adolescent years, she began to break the "invisible shield" of introversion by making other people laugh at any open opportunity. She also enjoyed writing and reading stories which sparked her interest. "If It's Not Funny, Then Why Am I Laughing", was the title of one of Leah's short stories which gives a brief insight into her fun-loving personality.

She loved to bake chocolate chip cookies, but to satisfy her sweet tooth she would eat all of the cookies before anyone else had a chance to get their hands on the tasty treats; even the ones that ran together into one big "cookie bar". >>

Leah Wara Memorial



"This sculpture was created based on a 1928 photograph of a great egret just beginning to take flight, its toes still touching the water. The work represents some of what Leah was: a beautiful, healthy young woman about to launch into adult life. The piece was endowed with the grace and purity of an egret rising from a pond but moreover, to be symbolic of Leah's dignity which she preserved at the cost of her life."

*David Boland, Sculptor
August 2003*

>> As she blossomed in her early teens, she enthusiastically became involved with the Emerald Knights of Cedar Rapids Drum Corps. As a color guard member, she would spend her entire summer tirelessly practicing and traveling across the United States competing against other Drum Corps. Earning "Rookie of the Year" spurred her determination and commitment to the Corps. This group interaction served as both a social training ground and safe haven of friendly peers. To actively belong seemed to help temporarily suppress the journey of personal and group acceptance. Over those summers she began developing a stronger personality and confidence to voice her opinion. Leah especially enjoyed the times when she and her mother had countless late night "kitchen discussions" sharing their views and thoughts on life. Along the way, she would reassure her mother that she was mature enough to take care of herself and that Linda should be focusing more attention on Leah's younger sister. Leah grew into a beautiful young lady with a stunning personality to match.

Leah was very strong-willed and not afraid to voice her opinions. Leah had a sense of the value of life. She once wrote that you should live life to its fullest because you never know what the next day will bring and you might not get another chance so you shouldn't

take this day for granted. Leah had so many plans for the rest of her life.

As a sister, Leah is remembered for many traits including protectiveness. One of Leah's brothers recalls when he would be in trouble from guys picking on him while coming home from school, Leah would always show up out of the blue and come to his rescue. He appreciated that she was bigger than him and the guys that picked on him.

Leah also had a lazy way about her, as many teenagers do. She often lacked enthusiasm for chores. This was confirmed more after her sister told of how Leah used to pay her a couple bucks to do Leah's chores for her. There were also the dirty dishes that Linda found under Leah's bed after her death. Linda says she would give anything for those dirty dishes today.

Leah loved to sing and dance. Her friends remember a favorite pair of shoes Leah called her good luck or "party" shoes. The shoes weren't anything special. Leah didn't seem to get caught up in the name-brand stuff like many girls her age. They were the cheap, inexpensive slip-on tennis shoes you could buy at K Mart for five dollars. She preferred the inexpensive jeans such as "Bugle Boys" and an oversized sweater she purchased with her own money from her first job at Target.

Leah was so excited and high on life. She had a million dollar smile that would light up the >>

A Biography of Leah Wara

>> world around her. She was a beautiful young lady who was growing into a gorgeous young woman, inside and out. Still, she was shy in many ways. Leah was no different than any other young lady dealing with growing pains and life experiences. She definitely was a “glass half-full” individual, searching for the positive meanings of life.

Leah’s most favorite thing to do was to be around her friends. Many of her friends shared thoughts and memories of Leah after her funeral. They said that if they ever needed a person that would lend an ear and listen to you, Leah was there. If you needed a little help or free advice, she would offer that too. However, what they remember most was the love and compassion that shined through. She was always there for the person who might appear to be the underdog. The one person others might poke fun at, tease, or shun. Leah knew and could understand some of these feelings from struggles she had growing up. I’m sure it affected her more than she would let her family know and most likely contributed to her shyness and self confidence.

That was the part of Leah that made her try drinking alcohol with her older friends. She said that it gave her the courage to talk to the cute guys and to fit in with others around her age or older. This was one area that Leah and Linda continuously argued about and caused her to be grounded on occasion. Her friend did say that she did not



drink much and absolutely did not do drugs and would not be around anyone who did. Her friend also said that if they were out somewhere and Leah thought there was even a hint of drug use, they were out of there.

Leah was learning and growing everyday, until someone else decided to take away the life of this beautiful young woman. On May 7th, 1989, the night of her senior prom, Leah was violently raped and murdered. The man who murdered Leah was an acquaintance of Leah’s and two years older than she. Leah and the perpetrator met at an after prom party. He took her to his apartment in the third floor of an older home. Leah fought very hard trying to defend herself, but was out weighed by her attacker. She was trapped in a place difficult to escape and strangled till death after a violent sexual assault. She was found by her parents two days later in the closet of her offender’s apartment. Because of the condition of Leah’s body, her family was unable to see Leah’s face during the funeral, not even to say goodbye.

When her offender was asked what happened, he said “...she pushed me and I lost it.” He was convicted of Leah’s murder and is serving a life sentence, without the possibility of parole.

The Criminal Justice System and the community never validated the horror of the rape upon Leah. Her offender was never charged or tried for that part of the crime. The rape was minimized because of the murder, as if murder was unacceptable and rape was. Leah died a horrible death.

Leah cared so much for other people. In her memory, her mother has changed and devoted her life to advocating for victims, and their families continuing to reach out to those harmed by crime as a victim advocate. She has trained hundreds of people, including law enforcement, and medical professionals, representatives of the media, clergy and many others in the competent handling of murder cases and the sensitive treatment of families and friends.

The establishment of the Leah Wara Memorial fund assists the Rape Victim Advocacy Program in providing services to victims of sexual violence and their significant others. It is a tribute to her spirit.

Leah’s physical body may not be here, but her soul and the love and care she gave to others will live on, *forever*. ■

Alternatives to Violence Project:

a brief introduction

(AVP)

Dear Friends interested in promoting peaceful resolution of conflict:

This fall Marian Klostermann of Des Moines, Gordon Bivens of Ames, and I are beginning a project to introduce Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops into correctional facilities in Iowa. AVP is an international volunteer project committed to reducing interpersonal violence through experiential conflict management workshops in prisons, schools and communities.

Our project has the support of several Department of Corrections administrators. We see AVP, in part, as enhancing restorative justice programs already in place. We have already conducted mini-workshops for staff at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility and will offer a three-day Basic workshop there for a group of fifteen inmates and five community members on November 7th, 8th, and 9th. In the coming months we will also offer workshops at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women in Mitchellville.

Each workshop is facilitated by a team, ideally composed of two facilitators from the community and one or more inmate facilitators. To sustain a program at one institution will require a corps of community facilitators who will be able to share the responsibility of offering monthly workshops. The Alternatives to Violence Project/USA is a non-sectarian, private non-profit educational corporation.

That is why I writing to you. You've made a commitment to put your belief in the peaceful resolution of conflict into practice through your work. Perhaps you also have teaching or training experience. If you think you might be interested in being a part of this effort here in Iowa or would like more information, please contact me at <lipchitz@netins.net> or by phone at 641.990.1199. We would be grateful if you would share this information with others in your community.

Our experience with AVP has convinced us that this program offers a deeply valuable approach to promoting more respectful and saner responses to conflict, from the interpersonal to the international.

For more information about the history and philosophy of the U.S. and international AVP programs, visit <www.avpusa.org>

Thank you!
Lolya Lipchitz

The program is based on the fundamental belief that a power for peace exists in each person, and that power has the ability to transform one's tendency to react to a situation with violence. The term "transforming power" has become the way that AVP workshops refer to this inherent human capacity, and an integral part of each workshop are activities designed to help participants tap into that capacity in order to deal with daily situations non-violently.

There are three levels of AVP workshops; each level is an intensive two- or three-day experience. The basic level focuses on primary conflict management skills with exercises focusing on affirmation, communication, cooperation and creative approaches to responding to conflict. Voluntary participation in the program on both an individual and an institutional level is a fundamental requirement. Role-playing scenarios suggested by the participants is often the most intense part of the session. Acting out and discussing how to handle real-life challenges pulls together the skills in sometimes very powerful ways.

The second level workshops focus on the underlying causes of violence. Each workshop deals with a single theme such as fear, anger, communication, power, forgiveness, relationships or AIDS. The experiential activities help participants and facilitators reach a deeper understanding of how these issues can lead to conflict and violence.

For those who have completed a basic workshop and at least one advanced level session and wish to become active in leading sessions, there is a training-for-trainers workshop that develops leadership skills and practice in planning, presenting and processing workshop sessions. It is an important aspect of AVP that inmate participants in the workshops are encouraged to become facilitators. Ideally, each workshop offered inside a prison is led by a team made up of both "inside" and "outside" facilitators. ■

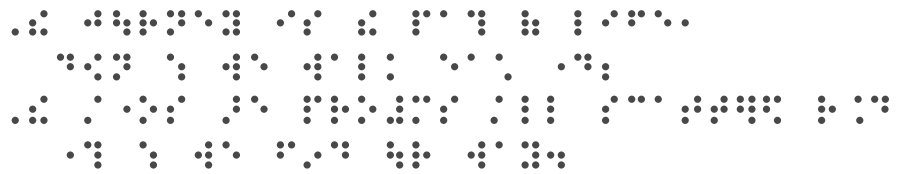
Giving the World Sight ... Six Dots At a Time

by Randy E.

In these times of budgetary struggle, it is something of a coup when a correctional facility can provide a program that provides meaningful work for offenders, offers a much-needed service for the community and does so in a financially minimal manner.

The Newton Correctional Facility (NCF) of Newton, Iowa has such a program operating at the medium-security prison with great success.

Since 1998, the NCF Braille Center has been producing Braille materials for the blind community of not only Iowa, but other states as well. This program was originally created by Rhonda Sturtz as the Anamosa Braille Center located at the Anamosa State Penitentiary in Anamosa, Iowa., and later expanded to Newton. As a former teacher at a school for the blind, she understood and recognized the need for instructional materials for Braille readers. She also recognized that there was an opportunity to employ offenders to meet those needs. By training offenders to become Braille transcribers, it would offer a way for them to be able to give something positive back to the community, as well as to teach them new job skills and give them a sense of self-worth. After a few years of operating the Anamosa Braille Center, she helped to expand the program into other Iowa prisons, the first of these expansions took place in Newton.



*"The journey is the path of life,
down which we walk each day;
the stones are problems all scattered round
through which we find our way."
--from "Pipe Song" by Shanna L. Brown*

The Newton program is small in size, yet strong in production. With only five offender employees, they are able to produce Braille transcriptions of numerous literary works and textbooks per year. They also produce tactile graphics, which are the Braille version of pictures, diagrams, illustrations, etc. Each offender goes through an average of 9-12 months of training to become certified in Literary Braille Transcription. Considering that Braille characters are formed by using a combination of six dots, similar to a domino, it's an amazing system that is likened to a different language. To learn all of the combinations used is a feat unto itself. After training, employees have to submit a trial Braille manuscript for the National Library Service (NLS) of the Library of Congress for evaluation. Upon certification, they are authorized to produce transcriptions of literary materials. All of NCF Braille Center's employees have earned high scores on their final certification tests. Upon literary certification, they then move immediately into learning the additional complexities of transcribing and producing textbooks and tactiles for educational materials. This area is the primary focus of NCF Braille.

To become proficient in textbook transcription is something that takes a lot of time and education. Braille has several codes for various specialty areas—literary, textbook, computer, chemistry, music, and Nemeth (math and science). Music Braille, Nemeth Braille, and proofreading of literary and Nemeth Braille are the only other areas that are considered for further certification by the NLS. Textbook transcription still requires the knowledge and usage of these other codes, so a good transcriber learns all that they can about these areas. Since its inception, this program has produced one man who is not only a certified Nemeth transcriber, but is also a certified and much sought-after Nemeth proofreader. Three of the men are also presently taking the required >>>

Giving the World Sight ...

>> course on their way to becoming certified Nemeth transcribers. After that, one plans to become certified in music transcription, so that he can “help bring music to those who desire it.”

To produce tactiles, the team at NCF Braille use what is known as a collage method. This consists of using a combination of various sizes of strings, different weights of paper and cardboard, various grits of sandpaper, and other textures that they have created from their imaginations. They use these materials to create a variety of illustrations, such as, topographical maps, anatomical diagrams, mathematical diagrams, sample computer keyboards, puzzles, graphs, etc.—all of the same things that sighted students have readily available to them. After completion of the base model, the tactile is then thermoformed, which is a method in which plastic sheets are molded over the base model, producing a long lasting tactile that will withstand years of usage. In the past tactile graphics were commonly omitted in Braille textbooks, denying the full educational opportunities to Braille readers. The team in Newton has been a leader in making tactiles a standard part of the educational materials they produce, recognizing the need and desire of blind students to learn and to expand their horizons.

Beyond Braille transcription, the team at NCF Braille has also played a large part in teaching and assisting a blind offender how to read Braille, as well as to help him with his education and reading comprehension. By working with him in the prison education classes and in the Braille shop, he was able to learn literary Braille in about six months, faster than most sighted transcribers! With the cooperation of the recreation department at NCF, they were able to produce Braille playing cards and bingo cards so that he could participate in activities that the general population takes for granted. With the assistance of the Iowa Department for the Blind and through the support of the NCF staff, he was also able to receive an IRIS radio, which provides him with stations that read the days newspapers and magazines, as well as offer other shows for the listener’s entertainment. That offender has been released recently, with vast improvements in his behavior, attitude and self-confidence.

This program has been a success for several reasons. The Iowa Department for the Blind has been a provider of equipment such as the manual Perkins Brailler writers, computers that use Braille transcription and translation programs, and a lot of material and moral support. Karen Keninger, the Director of the Library at the Iowa Department for the Blind, in particular, has been an awesome force in this endeavor. With her knowledge, skills and tenacity, she has helped the guys understand what is needed and why, as well as to encourage them along the way.

The Iowa Department of Corrections has been a big supporter and facilitator of this program, recognizing all of the positives that come

from opportunities such as this. The Director of Corrections, Gary Maynard, has been behind NCF Braille and supports any program that provides benefits for all. Warden Terry Mapes has been enthusiastic about the Braille operations at his prison and often gives encouragement to his transcribers, making sure that they know how valuable their work is and how much it is appreciated. Unit Manager Robert Coady has been the supervisor overseeing the operation since its inception at NCF and has been an integral part, acting as conduit between the shop and its customers. He also provides much encouragement and helps to keep the program running smoothly.

Lennie Miller, who now oversees the Anamosa Braille Center, provides much support and encouragement for NCF Braillists. With his help, NCF was given the project of a lifetime—a brand new history book to be transcribed for American Publishing House (APH), which is the elite of Braille book publishers. New doors are being opened and much of the credit belongs to Mr. Miller.

Rhonda Sturtz, who created the program, was not only a teacher, but was a mentor for the team. Sadly, she passed away suddenly in 2002, leaving a hole in everyone’s hearts. But, she also left everyone with a dream to be fulfilled. Her dream is our motto: “Giving the world sight ... six dots at a time.” ■

Attitude is Everything

submitted by Dean Lindeman, author unknown

Michael is the kind of guy you love to hate. He is always in a good mood and always has something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!"

He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Michael was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Michael and asked him, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?" Michael replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or ... you can choose to be in a bad mood. I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or...I can choose to learn from it. I choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or... I can point out the positive side of life. Choose the positive side of life.

"Yeah, right, it's not that easy," I protested. "Yes, it is," Michael said. "Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or

bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live your life."

I reflected on what Michael said. Soon thereafter, I left the Tower industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but I often thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it.

Several years later, I heard that Michael was involved in a serious accident, falling some 60 feet from a communications tower.

After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Michael was released from the hospital with rods placed in his back.

I saw Michael about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied. "If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?"

I declined to see his wounds, but I did ask him what had gone through his mind as the accident took place. "The first thing that went through my mind was the well-being of my soon to be born daughter," Michael replied. "Then, as I lay on the ground, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live or... I could choose to die. I chose to live."

"Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked. Michael continued, "...the paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the ER and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared. In their eyes, I read "he's a dead man. I knew I needed to take action."

"What did you do?" I asked. "Well, there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Michael. "She asked if I was allergic to anything. "Yes, I replied." The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled "Gravity"!

Over their laughter, I told them, "I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead. Michael lived, thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully.

Attitude, after all, is everything.

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." After all today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. ■

Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live your life

An Interview: Warden Jim McKinney, Rockwell City

In a conversation with Betty Brown, Administrator of Victim and Restorative Justice Programs for Department of Corrections, Warden Jim McKinney had the following to say about programs involving victims and the community in the prison at Rockwell City. He is very clear that this is a team effort...

The goal of the following programs is to offer inmates opportunities to make positive changes in their behavior, attitudes, and beliefs. The programs are diverse enough to allow men to pick and choose any or all of the programs.

When we hear the word, "prison" we have a variety of thoughts going through our mind. One may think of punishment, another would imagine rehabilitation, and many others will have thoughts in between the two. Yet, when we hear the word, "inmate" we all seem to have the ability to categorize them into one group. This ability actually hinders our attempts at trying to change behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. We seem focused on trying to find the "one" program that will enable these individuals to turn their lives around and remain crime free.

It was a belief that inmates cannot be lumped into one category that spurred our facility to seek many different types of programs that all surrounded around restorative justice. Each inmate does have some similarities. Each individual has a victim. Whether that victim is specific or society in general. Each inmate has taken something from someone and they need to restore that person or society.

Recognizing those needs, our prison has implemented many programs that are all under the umbrella of restorative justice. We have implemented a huge community service work program, victim impact classes, writing workshops, Leader dogs for the blind, doll house projects, Bikes for Tykes, as well as the typical inmate programs. Each of these programs emphasizes the fact that we are giving back to society.

Leader Dog for the Blind: We take in six to eight week old puppies and for one year live with and train these dogs to be guide dogs for the blind. Each inmate selected for this program realizes that they will only have one dog in their life to be able to train. These inmates give their all to ensure that the dog they return back to the company is prepared to assist a blind individual. They also realize that as that dog leaves the prison after one year, that they have a small sense of what being a victim is all about. Someone you love, care for, work with, etc. is suddenly gone. Some of these inmates are men who have taken a life and though not quite the same, they understand what losing someone close to them means and they are able to relate to those other individuals impacted by the loss of a loved one.

Bikes for Tykes: Throughout the year we take in old bicycles. We take these bikes and begin to disassemble them, keep the best parts on each bike, and then reassemble these parts into a practically new bike. The inmates in this program do not receive any pay. They do this on a voluntary basis. Then at Christmas time, we bring under-privileged children into the prison. An individual dressed as Santa Claus presents each child with some candy, a bicycle helmet, and finally, with a new bike. The elves (inmates who have worked on the bikes throughout the year) then work with each child to adjust the seat, handlebars, and pedals to that the bike fits perfectly. The inmates are able to stand back and see the joy they can give by giving to someone other than themselves. For some, it is the first time they have thought of another person other than their own selfish desires.

Writing Workshop: This class starts out as a writing class. Inmates sign up to improve their writing skills. They quickly learn that it is not the writing, but the content of the writing that will have a huge impact on their life. The class starts with writing about simple things that have affected their lives. Maybe their first date, first kiss, a Thanksgiving Dinner at home. Then the writing assignment switches to a personal story to the person they most owe an apology, asking for forgiveness from their victim, or reliving >>

Jim McKinney, Warden

>> the crime that they committed to be in prison. The stories are real and they are personal. The tears are just as real and just as personal. What truly separates this class from others is that a victim of a crime is in class with them and writing about the same content of the stories. The men learn how a victim feels through the stories that they write and share with the class, while the victim learns about the real feelings, thoughts, and desires of the inmates. For many, including the victim, this is one of the few times in their lives where they have really opened themselves up to others and they find the experience rewarding.

Community Service: These inmates are given opportunities to work in the communities. They perform all types of manual labor as they work along side citizens of the state who work for the cities, counties, or the State. They learn skills about the jobs they are performing. More important, they learn to work with others, they learn to be responsible, and they can give something back to the city, county, or state by the work they perform. For some of these men, it is one of the first times someone has entrusted them to be responsible.

We do not have a measuring tool to determine the success or maybe the failures of the programs. We merely have the words spoken by the inmates who participate in the classes. Words such as, "I have never opened up before" "This is the best program I have ever attended in the many times I have been in prison" "I never realized that I hurt someone by what I had done" and over and over the words are repeated. Men, who rarely talked, never smiled, and barely acknowledged staff's presence now laugh, enjoy life, and are friendly to all. ■

Continuing Debt

I was a prisoner of my own life.
The remedies I had tried
In stumbling upon who I am
Led to an event where three others died.

Voices screaming in my head,
Reminding me what I had done.
I would have escaped from myself
But there was nowhere I could run.

Lying still I closed my eyes
Daring my mind to dream,
To come up with an idea to make
A contribution to the human team.

I accept the challenge with faith.
Give me strength, God, I pray,
To get up and embrace
The start of each and every day.

Good fate and fortune
Won't just drop in from the sky.
Fear of disappointment will not
Keep me from attempting to try.

Of dull and boring times
There will be no excess,
Toiling to climb each rung on
The metaphoric ladder of success.

What the future holds
For certain I do not know,
Other than the conviction
A person reaps what they sow.

I am gaining control of my life.
My actions lining up with the solution,
Manifesting faith, hope, and love
To humanity my restitution.

*James W., Writing Workshop
Newton Correctional Facility
11-07-03*

Staff Victimization and Support Services Policy is signed....

With great enthusiasm and pride, Iowa Department of Corrections announces that Director Gary Maynard signed our new Staff Victimization and Support Services Policy in December 2003. The policy provides assistance and intervention to employees and their families during and after times of personal and professional crisis.

This policy brings together 3 existing programs under the guidance of a Staff Victimization and Support Services Coordinator in each institution and judicial district in Iowa Department of Corrections.

The programs include:

1. *Emergency Staff Services (ESS)* which manages emergency/critical incidences with the human element of the situation for staff and families.
2. *Peer Support Services (PSS)* that provide support services for the long run to staff on an everyday basis, and supports staff in times of personal and/or professional crisis.
3. *Staff Victimization Program (SVP)* that provides information to staff victims of crime and provides referrals.



Gary Maynard, Director, Iowa Department of Corrections

Other highlights include:

Calling upon the Attorney General's Crime Victim Assistance division's Iowa Crisis Response Team to offer debriefings for staff after traumatic incidences. In fact, many DOC employees have had the extensive training, helped out in NYC, and are eager to assist.

As quickly as possible, connecting staff that are sexual assault victims or domestic violence victims with advocates in the community.

Training will be provided by DOC's Training Center in May 2004.

We are very proud of the support this policy offers our staff.

If you have any questions please call Betty Brown, Administrator of Victim and Restorative Justice Programs at 515-242-5742 or by email at betty.brown@doc.state.ia.us.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead

Victim Advisory Council Goals

- Expand victim outreach programs and services.
- Assist judicial districts in providing victim services in community corrections agencies and other related community agencies.
- Enhance public awareness concerning victim rights and services through public education programs.
- Assist other agencies in the development of victim education efforts and assist in cross-training programs with allied criminal justice and victim service professionals.
- Develop legislative and Department proposals to enhance victim rights, services, and programs.



Front row: Mary McCoy, Teri Gillenwater, Candis Lockard, Luann Smith;
Second row: Leanne Buell, Betty Brown, Mary Roche, Shannon Federer;
Third row: Cyndi Ruzicka, Chris Baker, Claudia Atkinson

DOC is fortunate to have the enthusiastic participation of the victim, community and corrections representatives on the Victim Advisory Council to ensure the victims' voices are heard.

**We make a living by what we get,
we make a life by what we give.**

—Winston Churchill

Mark your calendars:

National Victim Rights Week
“America’s Values”
April 18th-April 24, 2004

Annual Victim Advisory Council’s
Victim Impact Panel
“Voices of the Children”
Commission for the Blind
Des Moines
April 22, 2004, 10 a.m.

Wanted:

Journalist, teacher, professor, community member interested in leading Writing Workshops in prisons based on restorative justice principles—victims, offenders and community members sharing the impact of crime, learning together to write, and seeing one another as human beings. For more information call Betty Brown, 515.242.5742 or E-mail betty.brown@doc.state.ia.us

also ...

Victim (staff included) interested in telling their stories to offenders taking Victim Impact Classes in the community and in prisons. Who better to teach offenders the ripple effect of crime than those most impacted. Please contact Mary Roche, 319.234.1745.

Thank you Erin for the fresh new look of “The Journey.” Your hard work is very much appreciated.

Editors of *The Journey*:

Cyndi Ruzicka, ICIW
Erin McGee, Volunteer

Iowa Department of Corrections
Victim and Restorative Justice Programs
420 Watson Powell Way
Des Moines, Iowa 50309