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Welcome Home
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Address Correction Requested

PLIGHT OF INCARCERATED WOMEN: It is well documented that there are about 200,000 women incarcerated in the U.S. (in federal, state, local and immigration detention settings), a number that is growing exponentially and that makes up about 10 percent of the total prison population. Upon release their chances for making it are almost non-existent, causing a recidivism rate of greater than 90%. The minimum cost of incarceration is \$35,000. There are additional costs to the justice system for arrest and booking processing, as well as court and legal fees. This total number could be tripled if one factors in the potential for health expenses, the cost of foster care for their children as well as the statistical reality facing this next generation as they grow up.

WELCOME HOME MINISTRY (WHM): 1996 WHM was founded by Rev. Carmen Warner-Robbins the Chaplain servicing the women at the Vista Jail when she tearfully saw the plight of women exiting the facility. They were discharged at 5:30 am with no money, food, or family and often just old friends. Survival dictated that they called the only people they knew, who happened to be the same people that got them in jail. With no funding other than her own resources Carmen picked up the women upon release, bought them breakfast and gave them a phone card, bus card, letters of support from caring persons and the contact point for social service delivery organization. Over the past 12 years the program has grown to the point where it has a functioning notable Advisory Board, a credentialed and committed Board of Directors, a quality management team, a seven person staff and over 60 volunteers.

Each of the staff members is a graduate of Welcome Home. This peer to peer delivery system is critical to the success of the program. Much time and energy has gone into the development of the systems and protocols for dealing with the myriad of issues that face these women including historical addictions, low self esteem, numerous legal issues, minimal education, no family support, no job skills, and children in the foster care system, and the absence of hope. Welcome Home offers more than hope. It offers the assurance that if the women are willing to commit to changing their lives, their lives can be different. This loving gathering of women provides counseling, encouragement and access to resources that allow for near miraculous changes to take place.

To aid in this endeavor WHM has developed a series of critical relationships, the most important of which is with the Law enforcement and management personnel of the jail and prison systems. Because of the success of the program, WHM personnel have been granted access to the women prior to release. These initial interviews are critical. WHM has now received the go ahead of the Sheriff's department to open a dedicated housing unit in the county jail. WHM has also developed relationships with all appropriate service delivery organizations. They have accessed medical, dental and legal services. WHM offers job skills development, life skills development, educational opportunities and job placement.

Welcome Home Ministries

Open Door

I am the door: if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, ... John 10:9

Welcome Home Ministries Opens Future Ambassadors In Recovery (FAIR) Housing Unit Inside Las Colinas Jail.

Welcome Home Ministries (WHM) was recently approved to open a housing unit in the Las Colinas jail to help women with issues that led to incarceration. All that is needed are the funds to proceed. Women who choose to participate will be housed in F-2 to begin the process of recovery, change behaviors that lead to incarceration and strengthen their roles as women, mothers and sisters.

The following services will be offered in the jail and by participating help to improve the possibilities for a brighter future. All participation in the unit is voluntary. The only privilege that the participants receive at the FAIR Housing Unit is the opportunity to use their time incarcerated to begin a life changing process. Some of the courses offered will be:

Substance Abuse - Learning about addiction and how you can stay free from relapse and reoffending. Choice of various 12-Step applications will be

offered. **Parenting** - Court approved certificate to help you work through child custody and parenting issues.

Healing from Trauma - Helping you heal from past hurts and taking care of the core issues that cause relapse.

Life Skills - Learning how to live life managing those things that have been difficult in the past.

Peer driven re-entry planning with WHM staff and the beginning of a trust building relationship. A needs assessment and plan of action will be developed to address such issues as child custody and reunification, terms of probation, physical and behavioral health issues, residential treatment, or sober living.

Peer driven case management. Case management provides referrals to community partners for services including mental, physical and dental health referrals, employment, education, substance abuse services (including NA and



"I was in prison, and you came to

AA), and others as needed by the client.

Peer driven mentoring provided by women who are or have been in similar circumstances, and who have overcome the barriers to sobriety, including one on one mentoring. Our most precious services of support, love and encouragement engenders the most significant impact on the new member.

Therefore if any women is in Christ, she is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new thing have come.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Final SAMHSA Conference Report

On August 16, 2008 seven of our staff boarded a plane heading to Alexandria, VA to attend our final SAMHSA conference. We left a day early on Saturday to be able to spend all day Sunday sightseeing in our nation's capital. One day is just not enough. On Monday it was

down to business. Karla assisted our TA, Dr. Bonnie Veysey in her seminar, "Peer Driven Evaluation Workshop" and then was part of a joint workshop "Women and Relationships" that focused on working with women in recovery.



Way to go, Karla. Tuesday was a day for saying goodbye to our other 2004 cohorts who also have lost their funding. At Wednesday morning's closing ceremony we were blessed to have our Executive Director's daughter, Tracy Robbins sing a beautiful



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Upcoming Events:

- December 25th—Christmas
- January 21st—Board Meeting.

Welcome Home Offices will be closed December 24th—26th and December 31st -January 2nd.

rendition of "Hero". We leave behind our SAMHSA grant. We are sad and excited at the same time for and we know that God is leading us in a new direction but as of yet, we don't know where.

Welcome Home Wish List:

- **Women's Business Clothing**
- **Telephone System**
- **Clerical Assistance**
- **Flat screen monitors**
- **Telephone repair service**

- **Goodie Bag:**
- Toiletries**
- Panties**
- Brushes**
- Toothbrushes**
- Toothpaste**
- Notepads /Pens**
- Stamps**
- Cups / Coffee**
- Reading Materials**

The primary reasons that Welcome Home works are that it is a faith-based organization that uses a peer to peer delivery system. Frail persons fighting a history of abuse need God. Frail persons battling overwhelming odds see hope in the eyes of loving women that have already made it. Welcome Home counselors and case managers are not social workers; they are ex-felons who have been restored. Welcome Home is at the end of a four year \$1.4 million grant from SAMSHA. The grant industry is strange at best. In this instance, there is a forced one year gap in funding before resub-

mission is allowed. As a result, we have had to reduce staff from nine to six. Other grants and corporate sponsorships are being sought. All of this is made easier if Welcome Home can demonstrate a broad general donor base. If you have any room left in your "planned giving" budget please consider tendering some support to this organization that actually achieves victories. If you can't offer any financial support at this time I encourage you to go to the web below to see how and why Welcome Home works.

Rev. Linda Lyons
CFO/COO

Our Staff: Each issue we will highlight one or two staff members:

- Carmen Warner-Robbins: Founder / CEO
Linda Lyons : CFO/COO
Peer Coordinators:
Janie Hudson
Cindy Martinez
Deborah Vorgang
Behavioral Health Counselor:
Michelle Harrison

Visit us on our new website www.welcomehomeint.org

BACK TO SCHOOL

On August 15th a "Back to School" celebration was held at the Barnes Street office. Our ladies who are embarking on a new adventure, as well as those who have walked the halls before, were treated to a luncheon and were presented with backpacks, generously donated to WHM by Outreach for Humanity

through JW Floor Covering, Inc. and Re:Source Floors . Two of our ladies informed us that they

have been inducted into Phi Theta Kappa because they have worked very hard to maintain a 4.0 Grade



Point Average during their educational endeavors. Women who were just beginning the process were empowered by hearing stories of women just like them who were successful in their academic pursuits .

Karla Lomiglio
Education Coordinator

We are now able to accept credit card donations on our new website listed above.

Meet Deborah—Quality Intensive Supportive Services Program (QISS)



"For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'"

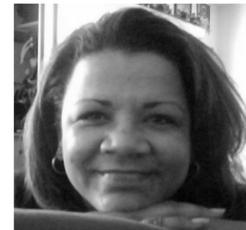
Jeremiah 29:11

I have been blessed to be a part of WHM for over three years. Since my last incarceration in November 2004, the WHM peers have mentored, trained and helped to equip me spiritually. I have personally experienced supportive services due to the community collaborative relationships WHM has developed programs for women coming home from incarceration. WHM's loving support and prayers have been instrumental in helping me complete court stipulations, legal issues, education opportunities, dental, health, and mental health needs with the end result of reunification with

my children and family. WHM patiently helped me to set goals and instilled hope in me for restoration so I could realize my hearts desires, and begin to plan a healthy future for myself and my family. WHM was and continues to guide, mentor and lift me up where I had once felt frighten and alone from the disease of addiction, and mental illness. The reason I know WHM works is the peers understand the shame that comes from the stigma that accompanies a once incarcerated person. I have experienced and witnessed the healing power of God. I know the importance in realizing I matter, and that I belong. WHM has always celebrated my accomplishments.

In October of 2007 God opened a door for me to give back to other women like myself who suffer with both addiction and mental health diagnosis. I am now receiving a continued blessing by giving back to other peers as the recovery worker for WHM QISS program. I am privileged to watch WHM women as they forge forward overcoming obstacles for their individual needs toward a successful re-entry into their community. With love and gratitude,

Deborah Vorgang
QISS Recovery worker



Meet Michelle -Quality Intensive Supportive Services Program (QISS)

I began working at WHM in October 2007 as a Behavioral Health Counselor for the QISS grant to support the women who suffer from being dually diagnosed. I am a Marriage & Family Therapist providing individual counseling while the women are incarcerated and continuing with them when they are released. I, along with two other staff, provide dually diagnosed therapeutic groups at the treatment facilities

to further educate them about their diagnosis as well as teach them new life skills so they don't continue to repeat the same negative patterns. Being a part of WHM has been an incredible experience for me both personally and professionally. As I grow in the Lord I am better equipped to plant the seeds necessary for the women who become a part of the WHM family to know Him and develop a desire to serve Him. It is such a blessing to be a part of this ministry and

fulfilling my God given purpose. One of the biggest struggles I have found is ensuring we have a place for every single woman who comes across our path. The need is vast for women in recovery as well as those suffering from mental illness. Not only have many of them lost themselves, family and friends; they have lost faith. WHM is an integral part of their restoration on all levels. As WHM continues to grow to the next level will be to provide them with the

shelter and support they need for complete restoration. Michelle Harrison Behavioral Health Counselor

"Be anxious for nothing but by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make all your requests known to God so the peace which passes all comprehension shall guard your heart and your mind."
Philippians 4:6

Thank you, Vista Assembly Church of God for allowing us to present to your congregation on Mission Sunday, December 7th. If you would like a Welcome Home Ministries peer to come and speak to your group or church please call us at (760) 439-1351.

Executive Director's Message

"...I was in prison, and you came to Me." Matthew 25:36

I am blessed and honored to have been chosen to lead this wonderful ministry. It has truly been a miraculous and wonderful journey for this past twelve years. This journey started in 1996, during a prayer time with a woman at the Vista Detention Facility, when the Lord revealed the words "Ask the women, in my name, what they need, and I will provide." All I had to do was to be obedient .

During the past twelve years, I have asked the women in the Lord's name, and He has been faithful in providing for the needs of Welcome Home. The women in the ministry have been an integral part of the planning, the implementation, and the evaluation of every aspect of program operations. We come together as family to celebrate the restoration of hope in the lives of the many women who make up Welcome Home Ministries. This celebration has ex-

panded to include the reunification of families and the realization of dreams, goals and aspirations as they live out our theme "From Cell to Celebration." As we move into the next decade, we seek our Lord's guidance and direction for even higher levels of excellence of ministry and service. Rev. Carmen Warner-Robbins, Executive Director, Founder



"And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary."

Gal 6: 9

Meet the Board

"With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
Matthew 19:26

Currently our Board consists of six active members and three non-voting members. This summer we welcomed the following two new members to our board.

Real estate broker—Daniel Maloney
Registered nurse—Danise Miller (who interned with us in the spring)

Our other board members include:
Pastor Gabriela Sainz Chairperson
Terri Peters, Esq.
Pastor Darryl Wright
Professor / Dr. Pam Kohlbray

Non-Voting members:
Pastor Bob Satterfield (Emeritus)
Dr. Jill Bormann

Dr. Mickey Parsons (Texas) Steven Hurst, Esq. conducted a board training in August at our annual Board of Directors retreat. He emphasized the importance of the Board in the continuation of WHM. He conducted exercises to help the Board formulate and refine our current Mission and Vision statements so that they are pertinent to the evolution of WHM. We all benefitted greatly from Steven wealth of knowledge and his ability to motivate and teach. Deborah Vorgang and Janie Hudson attended the meeting and gave

a witness to the board of the miracles that are happening daily at WHM.

We are sorry to say that a long time board member, Dr. Rita Callahan has decided to resign from the board because of other pressing issues. We will miss Dr. Callahan enthusiasm and wish her the best.

We are actively recruiting new board members . If you feel led to be part of this Ministry please contact our Executive Director, Rev. Carmen Warner Robbins at (760)439-1351

Next Board Meeting is January 21st at the El Camino Office. Pot luck beginning at 6:pm with the meeting following at 6:30 pm. All are invited.

**CAPA CONVENTION
OCTOBER 16-19 , 2008
SACRAMENTO, CA**

Rev. Carmen Warner Robbins was honored by the Institute of Prison Ministry at the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, in recognition of years of faithful service to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to prisoners. The institute commends this servant for tireless devotion to this ministry and for being a shining example for others to follow.