

The View

F R O M T H E C H U

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CHU VOLUNTEERS ASSESS PROGRAMS, PLAN FOR FUTURE

What sets the CHU apart from other programs is the quality of volunteers who offer their experience and the broad base of programs we have as a result. Whether preparing for life on the outside, or just to bettering yourself while here, nothing is more important than good, quality programming.

Because of these programs, we are able to *commit* to a plan of action rather than just talk about it.

Recently, Warden Pate, Staff, and Coordinators, met with 14 volunteers and Mr. Dennis Patterson, Regional Director of Operations for SCDC to discuss ways to continually improve and grow the vision of the CHU.

“Many don't realize just how fortunate we are to have volunteers of this quality and stature,” said Warden John Pate. “Corporations have paid top dollar for these individuals to give their organizational and administrative advice and they are giving it freely to us.”

Meeting with the group:

Kent James and his wife Meg who have been with the CHU since its inception. Most recently Kent started a *Blueprint and Landscaping* class that designed and installed the irrigation system for our organic garden. He also started an *AutoCAD* class where students are being trained in Computer Assisted Design (CAD), a skill in high demand. He and Warden Pate are exploring the ability to install *AutoCAD* on computers at ACI so residents can get hands-on training.

Tom Conner is a management consultant from Hilton Head who has invested his time in helping the CHU define the big picture and assess what areas need focus and growth. As he says, we want to know our choices and “where are we, what have we done, and are we focused on the 'Big Picture'”. Tom also enlisted the support of **Lee Ozley**, a Human Resources consultant who has worked with the staff and coordinators to define attributes that are important to the success of the CHU program. Ozley has conducted surveys and met with staff and coordinators individually and as a group to discuss results and will hold a town hall meeting on the subject in the near future.

Rob Cushman, who spends half of his time in Italy and half in this area, has introduced residents to the world of *Beekeeping*.

“What we do here is very important and can really change the outcome for these guys,” he observed.

From hobby to potential business opportunity, he is facilitating courses on beekeeping. Rob informed the group that while he is a hobbyist, he recruited **Ron Weisberger**, a retired Clemson Extension Service representative whom he considers a “professional beekeeper”. Cushman is head of the Allendale Bee Cooperative (ABC). He also enlisted **Lee Lambert** of the Great Foods Coop., in Gardens Corner, SC to teach about crops, bees, and vegetables. Rob also informed the group that he has been in touch with Mike Hood of Clemson University who is very interested in the possibility of “distance learning courses” for residents once it can be resolved how to establish a link for this purpose. Mr. Pate and Mr. Patterson asked they will ask the questions and Mr. Patterson said he will put the CHU volunteers together with staff that can make those kind of decisions.

Ricky and Gail Henderson are focused on helping empower residents to own a small businesses and learn to think creatively “outside the box”. They recently purchased a house in the area and moved from Hilton Head. Residents are familiar with his “Ricky's Mart” internet shopping concept, and he is using the site to generate income that can be put back into the program. Henderson is also on the Board of the *Allendale Correctional Worship Center* and is helping to raise money to build a dedicated place of worship at ACI. His wife Gail has been teaching Spanish as one of the CHU classes.

Molly Whittlesey and four other ladies conduct classes on: One-on-One Counseling, Literature/Fine Arts, Reading Skills, Vocabulary, Self-Esteem & Confidence, Trust, Spirituality, Bonds, and Self-Expression, (arts and writing).

“We want to turn our artists into fine artists,” she quipped.

Tim Terry is a former 15-year inmate with the South Carolina Department of Corrections and President of JumpStart. He has been a driving force with the CHU since its inception and his JumpStart program offers a 40-week course designed at helping residents define their purpose and set goals. Once they successfully complete the JumpStart program and are released, residents receive help on the outside with transitional housing, mentoring, job placement, and practical skills such as budgeting.

“It's about matching talents and building bridges—whatever the inmate and the community needs,” he said.

Terry also noted that Allendale leads the way in low recidivism and credits it to programs like these.

“This is where the rubber meets the road,” Terry continued.

He noted that JumpStart has some major momentum and have set goals for housing in the area.

Les Knight, who also works with JumpStart has been a long-term volunteer at ACI, facilitating HIV/Hepatitis classes and providing one-on-one counseling.

Mike Znachko, has also been associated with ACI for some time. He has been in prison ministry in foreign countries for 4 years and is “in the recovery business”. He said he sees two needs: helping *long-term* residents and *short-term* housing for those scheduled for release in the near future.

Znachko and Terry spoke about the roles each of their programs plays in filling these needs and agreed to work together to avoid duplication. A “to-do list” for inmates with short-term needs will be developed so that certain things will be completed before a resident is released.

The volunteers identified new programs for which they will recruit others to facilitate: *Public speaking, Budget/Finance, Stress Management (particularly as it relates to getting out), and how to deal with condition of parole/probation and other societal restrictions.*

Coordinators are in the process of cataloging and evaluating existing programs. The goal is to have one, uniform directory of programs with all of the information residents will need to determine which programs best suit their goals.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MENTOR & COORDINATOR?



If you ask residents to define the role of a coordinator or permanent mentor, you're likely to get many different views.

When four inmates at Perry Correctional Institution envisioned the character-based

program, they saw coordinators as architects of the program, visionaries, program coordinators, and liaisons for the CHU. Essentially, they fill the following needs:

- *Designers*
- *Developers of ideas and concepts*
- *Organizers of all activities*
- *Inside Spokesperson / Representative*

As re-enforcers of the respect-based culture, at the very least coordinators lead by example in how they live as they organize everyone's best interests, ideas, efforts, and concerns for the community. Mentors should also possess the same characteristics since this is the pool from which Coordinators are sought.

Coordinators are responsible for overseeing the quality of the CHU, sustaining outreach efforts to enrich the quality of life and maintain an environment that helps residents' rehabilitation and re-entry into society.

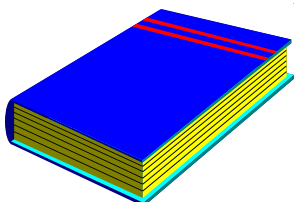
Coordinators organize things to provide rehabilitative services, mediate to insist peace between residents, bring resolution to problems, and teach others how to avoid problems.

They inspire and stir residents to reach their full potential, are challenging and constantly encouraging others to progress, grow, and advance.

Finally, coordinators act as a think-tank to create, conceptualize, review, and facilitate new ideas to further the community's quality of life.

Coordinators are residents first and ideally are the highest contributors in the community. They are human, too, and each and every one of the community must hold each other accountable within our community protocol and rules. We must lift each other up, correct each other when we fall, and always remember that the program is bigger than any one person. It has to be. Even when somebody's personal situation is sympathetic, the program must thrive for the higher good. When each

resident does his part, everyone moves forward.

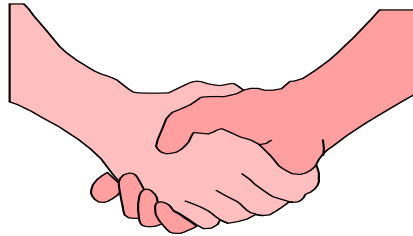


ENGAGEMENT PROTOCOL

When you witness a violation of the social contract or CHU rules, every resident is called to respectfully approach the offending resident and let them know of the violation, reminding them of *our* social contract. Since the term "engagement" has become overly associated with a negative action, perhaps it will be easier to understand and accept if we just refer to the process as "holding someone accountable" to the contract they signed. After all, that is what peer-to-peer accountability is.

The social contract is all of ours, and we all signed it in order to be accepted into the CHU. It's not an option for us to pick and choose what we agree with or disagree with. Sure, it's not easy to change our old ways of thinking, but we are committed to try. "Peer-to-peer accountability" is what facilitates change.

If you're really trying to follow the path you've chosen when you entered the program, you will be open to someone reminding you when you stray. That's what this is all about. We know it's not easy, but the person to be angry or frustrated with is not the one bringing the correction to your attention. Use it as a learning experience to deal with accepting constructive criticism.



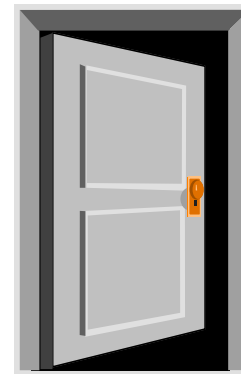
If you're here just to hang out, enjoy living in a good dorm, "doing you" with no concern for your fellow residents, you'll buck when somebody tries to help you be accountable. We label those guys as *consumers* and hope you'll get with the spirit of the program and be true to your word when you signed the social contract.

While most residents accept responsibility in formal engagements before the coordinators, many have childish responses such as: "so-and-so was doing it and you didn't engage him...". Really? That's the defense? It's a prime example of not taking responsibility for your own actions. If we accept the informal peer reminders without excuses, a pattern won't develop that leads to a formal engagement. Just be receptive and correct it for your own growth and benefit.

"If you replace the word "respect" in the CHU social contract with the word "honor", you will find that this sets a higher standard by which we must live our lives...honor others, honor your community, honor your parents, and honor yourself,"
Coordinator Darrell Felder added.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW COORDINATORS

Lawrence Sheedy and Tony Shuler were elected by the Coordinators and Administrative Board to replace Jonathan Green and Wesley Alexander who were recently transferred. Sheedy holds an Associates of Arts Degree in Substance Abuse Counseling from Western New England College in Massachusetts and has experience in programs as the institutional representative for Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous. He is employed as clerk in the Carpentry Department. Shuler attended OC Tech in Orangeburg County and majored in electronics. He left to pursue a career in carpentry before earning his degree. Since incarceration, he has experience in carpentry, as an IRC representative, and 17 years experience in Prison Industries. He also holds a certificate from Blackstone Paralegal Studies.



WELCOME NEW RESIDENTS

We welcome the following new residents to the CHU during the past month, and wish them every success

in this program: *Markeith Fisher, Elijah Strickland, Daniel Staggs, Ronald Padgett, John Padgett, Raymond Adams, Ervin Chancey, Henry Brown, Therl Taylor, Anthony Caruso, Joseph Grizzle, Daniel Dewey, David Green, Alonzo Richardson, Brannon Russo, Derrick Swinney, Grady Taylor, Jarriel Whittrel, Kamathene Cooper.*

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Lack of willpower has caused more failure than lack of intelligence or ability.

Flower A. Newhouse

CHARACTER TRAIT OF THE MONTH

Patience vs. Restlessness

Accepting a different situation without giving a deadline to remove it.