

Volunteer Update

ISSUE 2

JANUARY 2007/ FEBRUARY 2007 ISSUE



From the Volunteer Services Coordinator

Happy 2007 to all! Well as you all know the New Year brings new challenges, new ideas, change, transition, and new opportunities. This is definitely true for me and for OAR.

productive and responsible life. Please contact me anytime to talk about your courses and programs. I can't wait to sit in on some of your sessions and observe your magic!

As some of you may already know, Melissa Rea has left OAR and her position as Director of Education and Training to pursue other interests. You'll read a few words from her in this Volunteer Update issue.

After some thought, we have decided that I will be taking over for Melissa as the new Director of Volunteer and Education Services. This means that I will work with all of you in many ways to continue with exceptional courses and facilitators and outstanding tutors and mentors, in hopes that each client that you work with will return to our communities to lead a more

Another important change is that our Executive Director, Gail Arnall, will also be working with the volunteers as our Curriculum Developer. This will allow Gail to use one of her many gifts and it will help our programming greatly!

Gail and I are excited about this opportunity and we are looking forward to working with each of you.

We are going to reschedule the Volunteer Workshop that was scheduled for February 10. I will send out information directly to you about the new

schedule.

In this issue of the Volunteer Update, you will get to meet our new Programming Interns and the Volunteer Services Intern.

You will also hear from Katy Steinbruck, Sage Flowers' Manager, with a special request for volunteers. Michael Anderson has chosen an article for this Volunteer Update that reminds us of how important art can be in the lives of our clients. If you know anyone who would like to facilitate art courses for OAR, let us know!

Make sure you save Sunday, March 25 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm for our Annual Volunteer and Partnership Lunch at Toscana Grill!

Elizabeth Jones Valderrama



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So what is Katy Steinbruck up to?

As Sage Flowers Manager and designer, Katy Steinbruck has been busy. Most Volunteers remember her as OAR's Director of Volunteer Services, since that is the position she held for close to 5 years. Recently, Katy has moved and is blossoming into her new role at Sage Flowers, where "Wisdom Grows." Sage Flowers is owned by OAR and provides training for and hires ex-offenders.

I recently had dinner with Katy and she told me how wonderful things at the Shop were going: "It's great to see an idea develop into this great establishment" Katy said. "It's hard work but it's fun and it's for a great cause". She was so excited to tell me about



Sage Flowers' new logo and her plans for the Sage Flowers' look for Valentine's Day: "I have these pink feathers that are going to go all around these two wreaths and we are going to paint some of these containers so that the display looks romantic". Like me, Katy's excitement is visible at all times.

Katy told me that Valentine's Day is going to be busier than the recent Holidays, and that we have already received calls from 1-800-Flowers letting us know that we should expect at least 400 orders coming our way that must all be delivered on February 14th! She told me that this was huge and that she has never had this many orders for one day

at any flower shop where she has previously worked. Katy said: "Elizabeth, I am going to need help!" Katy has asked me to share with all of you that she is in need of volunteers for the following dates: February 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th anytime between 9:00am and 10:00pm. She is looking for drivers on the 13th and 14th who will deliver to many locations in Northern Virginia and DC. She is also looking for volunteers to assist stripping roses, greening vases, rolling scripts, and much more. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Katy as soon as possible at 703-451-3021; so that we can make sure Sage Flowers' 1st Valentine's Day is a great success!

Farewell from Melissa Rea

Hello everyone. I wanted to let you all know that I will be leaving OAR. My last day of work will be January 17, 2007.

It has been a pleasure working with all of you. Thank you so much for your dedication to the clients. I greatly appreciate your efforts and commitment. I wish you all the best.



Melissa Rea

Please Welcome our new Volunteer Services Intern

I am excited to introduce you to our Volunteer Services Intern for Spring 2007. Chauncia Jones will be with us for about six months. If you need to reach Chauncia you may do so by emailing ChaunciaJones@oaronline.org or calling 703-228-7030.

And now a note from Chauncia:

"Hello everyone and Happy New Year! My name is Chauncia Jones and I am the new intern assisting Ms. Elizabeth Jones Valderrama with the Volunteer Services Department. I am 23 years old and originally from Washington DC. I have been residing in Arlington, VA for two and a half years. Currently, I'm a student at Everest College working on my Associates of Behavioral Sciences degree and have strong ambitions to further my education. In the next few months I will be working in the OAR office and I hope to meet everyone very soon. Remember, it only takes one person to change a life!" Chauncia C. Jones



Please Welcome our new Programming Interns

Rachel Sparico is originally from McKeesport, PA. For her undergraduate she attended the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown and majored in Psychology, with a minor in English Literature. Presently, she attends graduate school at Argosy University for forensic psychology.

Rachel writes: "Albert Einstein once stated, 'A life lived for others is a life worth living.'

I strongly agree with this phrase, and therefore was attracted to OAR. The forensic psychology program I am studying and the principles of OAR, as well as the concept of restorative justice, are all concepts about which I am passionate. This passion has led me to OAR. I believe



every member of society may benefit from this program: clients, children, community members, correctional staff and many others.

My experience at OAR will serve as an introduction to the correctional setting and reentry services provided by OAR.

Continues on Page 3

Michael Anderson's Article Pick

Each month Michael Anderson, OAR Volunteer, researches and selects a news article that is featured here in the Volunteer Update. Enjoy!

Art lets inmate escape isolation

Aaron Mims takes on a bleak, desolate look as he strolls across the dusty yard of the state prison he calls home... As he escorts his visitors into a small classroom, Mims' eyes shine with pride. The walls of the classroom are adorned with several inspirational murals... They are only a sampling of the artwork Mims, 24, has done in the more than three years he's been behind bars... he said he uses his artwork to combat the loneliness of prison life.

Mims said he and his twin brother, Adrian, have both been avid artists since they were old enough to hold a pencil. "We've both drawn since as long as I can remember," Mims said, his voice a deep rumble from his chest. "It gives me something to do.

I'm able to express myself with it, do something creative in here."

Levan Thomas, assistant warden at Staton [AL], said Mims is not the only inmate who has turned to the creative arts to survive prison life. Several hobby-craft shops on the prison grounds are a testament to that. "We get a lot of orders for arts and crafts supplies," Thomas said. "A lot of the inmates do beadwork or leather crafts." The inmates can order supplies from a catalog of pre-approved materials. The prison has strict guidelines and, occasionally, guards "shake down" cells looking for contraband, he said. All of the state's 19 prisons have a number of self-taught artists, said Brian Corbett, an Alabama Department of Corrections spokesman. "You'll find inmates with different talents at each facility," Corbett said. Corbett explained that for some inmates, their crafts are not just a means of self-expression. For those who don't have family or friends helping them from the outside, it can be a way of making money to pay for

their commissary items.

Mims said he has sold some of his artwork to inmates who commissioned him to do portraits of family members. Besides murals and portraits, he does sculptures and leatherwork. He does have the support of his family, though, who receives the majority of the art he does. "It gives me something I can send my family to show them I appreciate them staying with me," Mims said. "None of them has missed a visit since I've been locked up." Mims said he doesn't consider himself an inspiration to the other inmates but does hope they take something from his work. "I hope they look at what I've done and see that I'm trying to do something productive while I'm here" he said.



<http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061226/NEWS/612260318/1001>

New Programming Interns

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OAR's drive to rehabilitate offenders and restore them into productive members of society is among the future aspirations I plan to maintain throughout my career as a forensic psychologist. As a forensic psychologist I would like to work on an individual level with offenders. I believe my background with OAR will be visible through my words and actions. Therefore, I will become a more genuine therapist and hopefully reduce recidivism rates on a personal level."



Jessica Pennington who goes by Jessye was born in Boston, Massachusetts, but moved to Rochester, NY, at a young age. She currently attends the University of

Massachusetts at Dartmouth, where she is a third year undergraduate student.

Jessye writes: "I chose an internship with OAR in order to obtain the opportunity to learn about the social and psychological

issues that are magnified within correctional facility environments. Additionally, I'd like to learn how to help a very vulnerable population. I hope to obtain the skills and experience necessary to further my understanding of professional conduct, and the philanthropic practices involved in helping this particular population. After I graduate, I hope to go on to a graduate school where I hope to obtain a doctorate level degree in Psychology. Eleanor Roosevelt once said 'People grow through experience if they meet life honestly and courageously. This is how character is built.' In turn, I hope OAR helps me to build the type of character necessary to continue and succeed in my future."

Jessica Rinehart was born in Baltimore, but has lived in Montgomery County most of her life. She is a fifth year senior at Frostburg State University in Western Maryland. Jessica writes: "My recent enrollment in a deviant behavior class got me interested in



the criminal justice system. I hope to go to law school. I would like to do work in either the non-profit sector or with the government. As far as the exact field, I am still unsure of where I see myself. This is something I hope to discover in the months to come. I am looking forward to working with the great group of people I have only begun to meet at OAR. I know the organization has a lot to teach me about the criminal justice system and the opportunities which exist beyond it. Marilyn vos Savant said, 'To acquire knowledge, one must study; but to acquire wisdom, one must observe.' This is exactly why I wanted to do an internship. I can take as many classes as I want, but ultimately it is how I can perform in a work environment that will make me successful in life. I searched for many internships, but my one criteria in choosing was that I wanted an internship that had me performing duties that would benefit people along the way. This internship gives me that. It gives me the chance to help people while I work to better my future."

Classroom Tips– Disruptive or Defiant client

Situation: Mr. Dahal is being disruptive or defiant in group.

Possible Solution: This is a frustrating and complex situation. You need to stand back and look at what is going on and why, rather than reacting with emotions of frustration and anger.

Possibly he is "grandstanding" to boost his ego, using the group as his forum to create conflict with staff to obtain status. If this is true and you follow your instincts to challenge his behavior with your authority, you



feed into the game. It's a game you cannot win.

One of the ways to combat this defiance is to defuse Mr. Dahal by inviting him to explain or define the subject being discussed. Allow him to state his view in detail. In fact, request more detail. Then thank him for his input. Don't worry about his statements being in conflict with the material that you are pre-

sented. You most certainly are not the only one in the group that can see through his behavior.

Often when you give an offender what he wants, in this situation attention, it works in your favor. You turned the tables by allowing him the floor without creating conflict.

If this does not reduce the problem, you may need to remove this offender from the group and talk to him about the problem one-on-one.

Events of Interest

2nd Annual Volunteer and Partnership Luncheon: OAR would like to thank all of our volunteers and partners for their contributions to restorative justice. We would like to cordially invite you to our Volunteer and Partnership Appreciation Lunch on **Sunday, March 25, 2007** from **1:00pm to 3:00pm** at **Toscana Grill** located in **Courthouse**

Plaza. We will honor our Volunteers and Partners, recognize our Volunteer of the Year with the Ms. Elizabeth "Betty" Ahern Award, salute outstanding deputies, and celebrate change! Come share our gratitude and be inspired just as you inspire US! **Please RSVP** to Chauncia at 703-228-7030 no later than March 1, 2007.



Ms. Ahern and Mr. Anderson being recognized in the 2006 Volunteer and Partnership Luncheon

OAR Offender Aid and Restoration

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Save your Holiday Wrapping Paper or purchase some now at
really low prices to donate for the 2007
Project Christmas Angel Wrapping Party!

Please take Note!

Reminders

- * We are always collecting donations to pay for postage for Project Christmas Angel. Tell a friend, colleague, family member, or an agency! Ask them to contact Kathy at 703-228-7030 to make their Tax-Deductible contribution.
- * Effective immediately there will be no programs or visitation allowed in the Alexandria Detention Center on **Tuesdays**. This includes all types of visitation: professional, pastoral, social and volunteers. If your program is affected by this change please contact the coordinator of the program.
- * There have been lockdowns recently at the Alexandria Detention Center. Please call first before you go in case they have to cancel your class. Alexandria: Central Control (CPJ1) 703-838-4017.
- * **Arlington Tutors:** For our records please write the name of the client you are working with on your sign in cards on the 2nd Floor.

OAR's Mission

OAR, a community-based restorative justice organization, blends compassion and accountability to assist offenders in leading productive and responsible lives, to the benefit of all.

History and Purpose

The OAR movement began in 1968 when a group of concerned Citizens led by Jay Worrall Jr. responded to a prison riot in Charlottesville, Virginia. These citizens envisioned an improved criminal justice system in which inmates are assisted by trained volunteers from the community. Through ongoing contact with community volunteers it was hoped that inmates would be empowered with information and encouraged to transform their experiences toward responsible and productive lives. The ultimate goal was to break the costly cycle of recidivism and create a more just system. OAR serving Arlington, Alexandria, and Falls Church, began in 1974.

Volunteer Opportunities

- * Spanish Speaking Volunteers are needed to facilitate courses with an established curriculum in the detention facilities and at the OAR office. Flexible times: Weekday, Evenings, and Weekends all available.
 - * Mentors are needed for our clients in the detention facilities. Training and Materials provided!
 - * Volunteers are needed at Sage Flowers to assist with this Valentine's Day creations and deliveries. Call Katy directly at 703-451-3021.
 - * Facilitators are needed for Parenting, Impact of Crime, Personal Development and much more.
- If you or anyone you know might be interested in Volunteering with OAR please have them contact Elizabeth, Director of Volunteer and Education Services, at 703-228-7031 or at ejones@oaronline.org

Calendar

February

3 OAR Staff Retreat

9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 Volunteers needed at Sage Flowers

10 Volunteer Workshop— **Postponed**

February (*continued*)

19 OAR closed in observance of the Holiday

March

25 Volunteer and Partnership Lunch at Toscana Grill