

TRANSFORMATIONS

From the Executive Director

Two weeks ago I was driving to work along Rock Creek Parkway and I saw a man down by the creek taking what my mother would call a "sponge bath." Even though it was 40 degrees out, he had his shirt and shoes off, splashing water on himself to get clean. At the same moment, I was listening to **WAMU-FM's** report on the election, specifically the debate about whether or not those making \$250,000 a year should be expected to pay higher taxes. The juxtaposition of what I assume was a homeless man washing himself in the cold creek water and the thought of others making over \$250,000 and concerned about paying more taxes was jarring.

That same day, a man was dropped off with \$20 in his pocket. He had been in prison 22 years. He had no family and no place to stay. He walked around all night and then came to us, not having slept for 24 hours. We made a pallet for him on the floor in a back room so he could get a few hours of sleep while we tried to find a place for him to live. One of our Board members came in the afternoon and took him to dinner, bought him some clothes and paid for him to have a hotel room. The next day we were able to find him a 90-day shelter and started working on helping him get his birth certificate. A local restaurant has hired him as a dish washer. Having met this man, I am convinced that he will make a wonderful contribution to our community in the years ahead.

We are seeing more and more men and women coming to our area from state prisons, with little more than \$25 in their pocket. Many of them were caught up in the War on Drugs during the late 70's and 80's, and are now returning to us from having served 20-30 years in prison. We are continually amazed at their courage and determination to begin their new life. Their success depends upon us - all of us. Thank you for your encouragement and financial support.

Gail C. Arnall

HELP CREATE A HAPPY HOLIDAY FOR CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

Joe (age 8) and his sister **Mary** (age 3) will receive Christmas gifts from their father this year, even though Dad is incarcerated. The gifts, and the personalized note from Dad, are made possible through OAR's Project Christmas Angel.

Children of incarcerated parents are often overlooked in the discussions of crime and justice. You can help make this Christmas special for children in our community who will not be with their mom or dad this year.

One mother wrote last year: *You made a very difficult time in our lives a bit more pleasant for my family. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generosity and thoughtfulness to us on this Christmas.*

Here is how you can help:

Contribute financially to help cover the costs of delivery, postage, and supplies. We need to raise about \$2,000 to cover the out-of-pocket expenses.

Rehabilitation is a valid goal for prisons, but it is a goal that requires honest implementation and commitment. It is a goal that requires a change in the way prisons are run - a change in living conditions and an increase in programs. But some will ask: Why rehabilitation instead of punishment?

Punishment gives no framework for change; it offers nothing to replace the lifestyle or erroneous thinking that led to the committing of the crime. Five or ten years of punishment is counter productive.



OAR's Project Christmas Angel Wrapping Party 2007
768 children received presents

Donate new unwrapped gifts (NO clothing) for children up to 18 years of age; gifts for teens over 14 especially needed. Gift cards are usually a great gift for teens.

Attend the Wrapping Party on December 18, 2008 from 6:30 - 8:00 pm at **St. Andrew's Episcopal Church** located at 4000 Lorcum Lane, Arlington Virginia 22207. Snacks are provided. This is a great party; try to come! Don't forget to RSVP!

Volunteer to deliver the wrapped gifts to one or two families in your zip code.

If you are interested in donating to or help sponsor this special once-a-year event, please call **Elizabeth Jones** at 703-228-7441.

Let OAR know if you are coming to the festive Wrapping Party call (703) 228-7030 or email **ProjectXmasAngel@oaronline.org**

A NOTE FROM PRISON

The majority of the incarcerated are destined for release. One must wonder: Is punishment enough to deter crime? After many years of incarceration, do these individuals know how to function in a positive and crime free manner? No.

Punishment of years leads to institutionalization, anger, frustration, and no change in thought processes to deter someone from returning to a life of crime. The latter is important. Many prisoners come from lower income families and a lot of prisoners adhere to a sub-culture

that is pro-crime; reinforced by gangs, and gansta rap. This mentality needs to be replaced with a new way of thinking. That is where rehabilitation comes in. Otherwise we are faced with a repeating cycle, prisons as "swinging doors." That not only jeopardizes the safety of citizens, it results in building and maintaining an ever increasing number of prisoners. What a waste of taxpayer dollars.

K. Brown - currently serving in a Virginia State Prison

OAR STAFF

Gail C. Arnall, Executive Director
 Erica Bishop, Re-entry Advisor
 Janaina Carvalho, Re-entry Advisor
 Jessica Clay, Community Service Case Manager
 Kathy Hollins, Director of Administrative Services
 Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, Director of Development and Special Projects
 James Powell, Administrative Assistant
 Jenna-Lyn Ryckebusch, Coordinator of Community Service
 Rachel Sparico, Director of Volunteer and Education Services
 Nicholas Tar, Re-entry Advisor
 Will Wilson, Director of Re-entry and Outreach

OAR BOARD

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 Tanya Beauchamp
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 Pamela Bulloch
 Michael Carleton
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 Bruce Griffin
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 Robert Price
 Elissa Rumsey
 Nancy Swift
 Tom Ward
 Gail Arnall

NEW STAFF ASSIGNMENTS



James Powell is a former Project Manager in Communications and an Artist who specializes in portraits and original oil paintings. In his spare time he mentors young people and at risk youth. He joins the OAR Staff as our new Administrative Assistant.

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Janaina Carvalho was born on Cape Verde Islands off the West coast of Africa. **Janaina** grew up in Arlington. She attended Trinity University where she received her BA in Criminal Justice

and Minor in Spanish. As an intern she worked at Sasha Bruce House in Washington, D.C. **Janaina** joins us as our Reentry Advisor.

Jessica Clay has recently finished her Masters in Forensic Psychology. She has previously interned at the Federal District Courthouse of the Middle District of Pennsylvania for the Clerk to the Magistrate Judge. **Jessica** joins OAR as our Community Service Case Manager.



Jenna-Lyn Ryckebusch moves to the position of Coordinator of Community Services.

CLIENT STORIES

Today, **Tony** called OAR to share some wonderful news: he will be moving into his own apartment on Tuesday! **Tony** has had a bumpy journey since he first came to OAR in March, but he has faced every challenge with persistence and enthusiasm that has resulted in some great achievements.

Now, **Tony** works full-time, is paying off his debt, taking action to regain visitation with his four year old daughter, and establishing educational goals. These are only a few of the goals **Tony** plans on reaching in the next two years. **Tony** has worked extremely hard to go from being homeless to having his own apartment.

While completing a training program and being unemployed, **Tony** was unable to pay the court ordered \$585 a month child support; he was charged and incarcerated for six months for failure to do so. When he came out he was homeless. OAR worked with him to get him into temporary housing.

Through the support of our community, OAR is able to help in a time of crisis for our clients. The good news is with our help they overcome the crisis and are able to move on with their lives. If you want to learn more about ways to help our clients please call us at OAR at 703-228-7030. Thanks for your support!

CHANGE STARTS INSIDE

By **Tom Ward**, OAR Volunteer and Board Member

Research continues to show that offenders are better prepared to successfully reenter society if they acquire new perspectives and skills. Instead of delaying intervention until an offender is released from custody, OAR starts the reentry program by bringing pre-release programs and courses into the detention centers. OAR relies upon a cadre of volunteers to offer a wide array of courses, including Anger Management, Financial Management, Leadership and Life Skills, Hispanic Life Skills, Business Principles, Computer Training, and Parenting, among others.

tears, as they admit their wrong behavior to their children and ask their forgiveness for being temporarily unavailable to them.

I have had the privilege of being a guest instructor in OAR's Parenting course in the Arlington County Detention Facility. It is always a rewarding experience to be face-to-face with offenders who demonstrate a willingness to learn something new. The letters they write to their children, required as the final project for the class, are moving beyond

When I've had the occasion to make my presentation regarding "Impact of Crime," which is usually the final class of the Parenting course, I am able to witness the sense of accomplishment the men and women have when they are awarded their course certificates. Class members demonstrate an attitude of gratitude for the opportunity to take the class, for the time that the instructor gave, and for OAR's educational program inside the facility. I have noticed the offenders' self-esteem reflects in their demeanor. Course completion while serving time in jail is a remarkable achievement and it continues to be my privilege to be a part of the rebuilding process.

If you have a particular area of interest and would consider participating as a volunteer guest speaker or course instructor, I urge you to contact **Rachel Sparico** at OAR. I am glad I did!

Join us in Breaking the Cycle of Crime: Volunteer!

Contact OAR's Director of Volunteer and Education Services, **Rachel Sparico**, at rsparico@oaronline.org

WHY \$60 MATTERS!

By **Erica Bishop**, OAR Reentry Advisor

Can you imagine living in the U.S. for 24 years and never learning English? **Frank** and his father arrived in California 24 years ago from Mexico. They worked various jobs in an attempt to secure a future in the U.S. Neither of them knew just how difficult the journey would be. **Frank's** father was an alcoholic, and soon **Frank** became an alcoholic too. **Frank's** alcoholism led to a life of living on the streets, being arrested for petty crimes, and moving around the country. He continued to live the same life style everywhere he went. Ten years ago he made the move to Arlington. He was in and out of recovery programs, but always ended back up on the streets drinking.

A little over a year ago **Frank** had a life changing experience— his father passed away from

alcoholism. It was that day that **Frank** decided to change his life. He entered Nuevo Día, a recovery program for Spanish speakers, for the third time, and this time successfully completed the program. He has been clean for a little over a year now, and he couldn't be prouder. But, as **Frank** tried to put the pieces of his life back together, he realized just how shattered his life was. His Green Card was stolen; he doesn't speak English; he can't find a steady job; and he is living in a shelter. **Frank** has risen to every single one of these challenges. In fact, by working day jobs, he has managed to save \$400, the exact amount of money it will cost him to replace his Green Card. He is doing well in the shelter, and is complying with the rules, something he wasn't able to do in the past.

The first day I met **Frank** he had one request: in his own broken English, he told me that he wanted to learn English so that he could be successful. I told him that OAR would help. I found an ESL 3-month course offered by the **Hispanic Committee of Northern Virginia**. OAR will cover the \$60 cost.

We told **Frank** about the course, and that the first class would be in November. I don't know if it was the language barrier or his excitement, but he went to class the very next Saturday, October 18th, and was pretty disappointed to discover the classes had not started yet!

Thanks to the supporters of OAR, we are making a HUGE difference in **Frank's** life.

1,100+ SUITS DONATED BY MEN'S WEARHOUSE® DRIVE

During September and October, **Men's Wearhouse®** in the DC Metro area partnered with OAR to collect men's suits for our clients. Anyone donating a suit received a tax deduction for making a contribution to the work of OAR. And, contributors received 10 percent off on their next suit at **Men's Wearhouse®**.

The response has been incredible. In just two months, the following was donated: 1,188 men's suits: 414 sports coats; 459 slacks; 62 pairs of shoes; 462 dress shirts; 43 sport shirts; 31 overcoats; 596 belts, ties and other accessories. What an amazing partnership this is with **Men's Wearhouse®** and the community.

"Our clients need to be able to present them-

selves well at interviews and on the job,"

says **Will Wilson**, Director of Reentry and Outreach. "How you dress usually affects how you feel about yourself. We want our clients to go back into the world confident that they have a contribution to make," he said.



"We are so grateful to the men and women who work at **Men's Wearhouse®** stores across the Washington area for their extra work to take in these donations," said **Gail Arnall**, OAR's Executive Director. "And a special thanks to staff that collected the clothing for pick up. This truly was a community effort."

OAR is working with other non-profits in Northern Virginia to share this wealth in men's clothing. If you have needs for men's clothing for those coming out of jail or prison, please contact **Will Wilson** at wwilson@oaronline.org.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ABUNDANT AT OAR

Under the leadership of **Rachel Sparico**, OAR's Director of Volunteer and Education Services, OAR has expanded its educational programs both inside and outside of the detention center facilities.

High School Completion Program Started in October. We have formed a partnership with the **Arlington Sheriff's Office** and **EdOptions** to offer clients and their family members a high school completion program. No matter where clients went to high school, we can help them finish. This is more than a GED program; this is a computer-based program that will result in the client receiving a high school certificate from their original high school, or Blue Ridge International Academy. This program is available through a grant and the generosity of **EdOptions** (www.EdOptions.com).

Once clients sign up, they have a password that can be used with any internet connected com-

puter, anywhere, anytime. OAR is providing one-on-one support for clients who come to the office. Hence, we are always looking for volunteers who would like to support clients to help make their dreams of finishing high school a reality.

Over 400 offenders participated in courses in the Arlington Detention Facility so far this Fall. OAR staff and volunteers taught 12, 6-8 week courses in the early fall session: Creative Writing, Current Events, Employability Readiness, Stress Management, Parenting, Life Skills for Spanish Speakers, Key Train, Conflict Resolution, Anger Management, Impact of Crime, Money Management, and Keyboarding. The evaluation we have on each of our courses has been quite encouraging.

While some offenders start the classes saying it is a way to get out of their cells, most continue to attend the class because of what

they are learning. The teacher in the Impact of Crime class reports that several of the class members had never considered the impact of their crime on their own families – especially their children.

8 Courses will be offered in the Arlington Facility beginning in November and lasting through December. We have lined up a great list of courses for the late fall session: Impact of Crime; Money Management; Computer Courses for Advanced, and Beginner Students; Employability Readiness, Working World, and Health Awareness.

Would you like to observe a class? Would you like to attend the next Volunteer Orientation? Contact **Rachel Sparico** at 703-228-7031 or at rsparico@oaronline.org.

OAR Offender Aid and Restoration

Serving the County of Arlington and the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church since 1974

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Designation # 8078



Designation # 26226

OAR 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.

NOTE FROM A CLIENT

I feel the public thinks we are still the same as we were when we committed our crime or crime(s). There are so many barriers that an ex-offender faces every day of their lives and there are days and moments when everything can be so hard and frustrating. I am learning that as long as you remain positive in prayer and true to yourself you can succeed in all you do. I know that saying this is easier than living it everyday. However, we all have our own struggles, but it can be even more difficult for an ex-offender. Time can heal and change people. - age 36

SAGE FLOWERS

SAGE flowers is a unique, full-service flower shop that is owned by OAR. We opened our doors in October 2006 and we deliver daily to the DC Metro area. SAGE flowers offers the highest quality design, a thoughtful message with each arrangement, and the beauty of knowing that your purchase made the world a better place! Contact SAGE flowers for all your floral needs!



SAGE Flowers

7018 Commerce Street, Springfield, VA 22150
www.SAGEflowers.net

703-451-3021

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

- Computer Lab Monitors
- Spanish Life Skills Instructors
- Stress Management Facilitators
- GED & High School Completion
- Critical/ Life Skills Instructors
- Anger Management Facilitators
- ESL Facilitators
- Key Train Facilitators
- Why Try? Facilitators
- Researchers

OAR'S WISH LIST

- Holiday Wrapping Paper
- \$25 Holiday Gift Cards
- 2 Small or Medium Shredders
- Standard Xerox Copy Paper
- Ivory Resume paper
- \$10 Fast Food Restaurant Cards
- \$5.50 Metro Cards & Bus passes
- Backpacks and travel sacks
- #2 pencils and Color Pencils
- Manila & pocket folders
- Composition Notebooks
- Dry erase & over head markers, Whiteboard erasers, Transparency paper

SUPPORTING OAR

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to support the good work of OAR. 1- Visit www.OARonline.org to make a secure online payment. 2- Designate OAR on your Combined Federal Campaign (#26226) or United Way (#8078). 3- Send checks made payable to OAR to 1400 North Uhle Street, Suite 704, Arlington, VA 22201. Call us for more information at 703-228-7030.

Join us in Breaking the Cycle of Crime: Volunteer!

Contact OAR's Director of Volunteer and Education Services, **Rachel Sparico**, at rsparico@oaronline.org