Greetings!

This week is Thanksgiving! This is a time of being grateful and giving thanks, and I want to thank YOU so much for being on the journey with our participants. At OAR we are so very grateful to be in a community that understands the struggles that our participants face when coming home after incarceration.

Many of our participants are not able to spend the holidays with their loved ones. They may be incarcerated or may have lost their family connections while they were away. This is an incredibly difficult time of year to be away from those you love. In addition to the emotional turmoil, we can't forget the financial crisis that can occur when a family member is incarcerated. OAR is grateful that we can be here, on behalf of the community, to bridge the financial gap, and to welcome individuals home and to assist them in reuniting with their loved ones. Read the note below from an incarcerated individual describing his family's struggle while he is away and his simple request for a happier holiday season. Thanks to your support we will be able to meet his request through Project Christmas Angel, which helps connect those who are incarcerated with their children. You can read more about Project Christmas Angel below.

With the holidays in mind, please consider purchasing a raffle ticket for a chance to win a trip for two with roundtrip airfare and seven nights stay! All proceeds from the ticket sales benefit OAR. What a wonderful holiday gift this would make for a loved one! You can read more about this below, as well.

We hope you have a very happy Thanksgiving, and please know that OAR is so grateful for your support and the support of our community.

Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, MA, CVA
Executive Director

A Letter from a Participant

We received the letter below from an individual incarcerated in the Arlington County Detention Facility this month:

"Hello, my name is Curtis and I'm housed at the Arlington jail
and I would like you all to send my loved ones gifts because I'm in a predicament where I cannot do anything. My family is going through a crisis right now, and they cannot afford Christmas gifts this year for the kids, and I'm reaching out to you for help.

I've provided a mailing address for you to reach my family. They have no cell phone because there's no funds to pay the bills. I appreciate all you are doing and cannot tell you how much this means to me.

I am due to be released in February and would like to volunteer to do any work for you all free of charge to show my appreciation. Happy holidays!

We are happy to report that we will be able to provide holiday gifts to Curtis's three children thanks to your support of Project Christmas Angel!

Help Provide Gifts for Children of Incarcerated Parents

Project Christmas Angel is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14, 2016 from 6:30-9:00pm in Arlington! This is OAR's annual event where we, on behalf of the community, provide holiday gifts to children of incarcerated and recently released parents. Join us at our Wrapping Party to select and wrap gifts for the children! You must RSVP to attend, and you can RSVP online here.

Last year, we distributed nearly 1,200 gifts for 395 children ages newborn to 18. We anticipate a greater need this year, and we need your help! Gifts for teens are especially needed! We have an Amazon wish list with gift ideas for teens, and we also accept donations of gift cards. Denominations of $20-$25 to places such as Target and Amazon are most needed. Donations can be shipped to us at 1400 N Uhle St, Suite 704, Arlington, VA 22201 or dropped at our office during business hours.

Volunteers are also needed to assist with administrative support prior to the event, including making phone calls to the children's guardians and entering information in our database. Volunteer hours are flexible and include weekday evenings. Please contact Heather Pritchett for more details at hpritchett@oaronline.org or 703-228-7435.

More information can be found on our website about Project Christmas Angel.

Win a Trip for Two and Support OAR
OAR is raffling off a trip for two! The trip includes **roundtrip domestic airfare for two** people and **seven nights accommodations** in a Wyndham Resorts property.

Each ticket is $100, and you can purchase as many tickets as you would like. A maximum of 300 tickets will be sold!

Tickets will be on sale until December 14, 2016. **Purchase your tickets here** until December 12, or in person until December 14 at OAR's office during our business hours. Tickets will also be sold (if tickets remain) in person at Project Christmas Angel on December 14. The winner will be drawn and announced at **Project Christmas Angel**. You do not need to be present to win.

Proceeds from the raffle ticket sales will benefit OAR. To read more about the raffle, including the official rules, **click here**.

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**Join Us for a Tour**

Did you know that OAR holds free one-hour Tours twice per month? These Tours are open to the public and are a fabulous introduction to our organization and mission. Guests will get to meet members of the OAR team, see our office, and hear about all of OAR’s programs in detail. Upcoming Tour dates are **December 6th at 6:30pm** and **December 20th at 12:00pm**. Click **here** to view more dates or to register to attend.

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**OAR Featured on "Choose to be Curious" Radio Show**

OAR was recently featured on the radio show "**Choose to be Curious**" on WERA. OAR Executive Director, Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, discusses the intersection of curiosity and trauma in the 25 minute segment.

In the show, Elizabeth states, "When you are incarcerated, you have an incredible amount of anxiety... there’s anger, trauma, shame, all of that within incarceration. You really are in survival mode. So your curiosity and creativity are about staying alive and being able to survive that... It’s about how to survive right now, and then afterwards, it's about how to survive once you come home."

Listen to the show for free online **here**.

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Save the Date:
Second Chance Fundraising Breakfast
March 1, 2017

Mark your calendars! Our ninth annual Second Chance Fundraising Breakfast is scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, 2017 from 7:45am to 9:00am. The event will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott (1700 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Arlington, VA) once again! Last year, nearly 600 guests attended to hear personal stories from OAR participants and to get inspired about OAR’s mission. Please plan to join us!

RSVP today by emailing Heather Pritchett at hpritchett@oaronline.org.

Support OAR

1. Make a monetary donation to OAR by clicking http://oaronline.org/donate-now/
2. Donate through United Way designation #8078
3. Donate CFC designation #26226
4. Donate Target Gift Cards in increments of $10 each for clients
5. Shop on our Amazon Wish List: OAR’s Amazon Wish List (http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist?ref_=cm_wl_search_rvp_wl&cid=A29JY6MLB94BCD&pldnSite=1) Don’t forget to let Heather hpritchett@oaronline.org know who you are so we can send you a thank you note.
6. Attend a one-hour OAR Tour or an OAR Event and bring your friends: http://oaronline.org/oar-tours-upcoming-events/

OAR: Strengthening Community Through Second Chances
1400 North Uhle Street, Suite 704
Arlington, VA 22201
703-228-7030
www.OARonline.org