



# WAC WORKS



Western Alternative Corrections. Inc.

## January 2017

Well it's that time again for the quarterly WAC Works newsletter! We have been quite busy since our last newsletter in October. We have provided residential reentry services to 76 participants since the Vocational and Life Skills Program (VLSP) grant began in July 2016, and we're only into our second quarter! Our waiting list grows larger by the day from referrals we receive from Nebraska Department of Correctional Services and Nebraska Probation Administration. Our staff is excited to continue to make a positive impact.

We are proud to announce that Brent Hultine, Home Reintegration Specialist and Tara Shafer, Case Manager, successfully completed the 180-hour, evidence-based Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) training curriculum in November 2016. Brent and Tara were able to participate in this training through collaboration with the Kansas Department of Corrections and National Institute of Corrections.



The training occurred over a 4 month period and the final assignment included the development and presentation of an action plan involving how they plan to utilize OWDS at Bristol Station. Tara and Brent discovered throughout the training that they have already been utilizing some of the concepts from the OWDS curriculum such as vocational assessments, resume development and teaching problem solving skills! Tara and Brent agreed that this training was extremely beneficial in the continued development of transition interventions for the offender population.

We are also proud to announce that our Executive Director, Angela LaBouchardiere, was selected to serve on the Reentry Court Subcommittee through the Nebraska Supreme Court Problem Solving Courts. The subcommittee has been tasked with development of proposed Supreme Court Rules for establishing, governing and operating a reentry court, developing best practice standards and progression plans for reentry courts, among other things. We are excited to have Angela represent Western Alternative Corrections, Inc. as Nebraska takes positive steps toward development and implementation of reentry initiatives.

On December 14th the Western Alternative Corrections Community Relations Board met for their quarterly meeting. Board members include community stakeholders, law enforcement and county officials. Our newest Board member includes Senator-Elect Steve Halloran. Members were given updates on the Vocational and Life Skills Grant with regard to employment, programming components, and volunteer experiences. We appreciate the members of our Community Relations Board and value their support of our program. The next Community Relations Board meeting is scheduled in April 2017.

In November and December students enrolled in a substance abuse class at University of Nebraska Kearney traveled to Hastings for a tour of Western Alternative Corrections. The students were informed about the program at Bristol Station and given a tour of the facility. A few of our residents shared some insight into their experiences with the program with the students as well.



(Bristol Station employees enjoy holiday games at the employee Christmas party.)





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Bristol Station residents have put in many hours of restorative justice projects in the Hastings area. They supported the Hastings Arboretum and Kiwanis Club by helping lay mulch at the Arboretum in preparation for colder weather. Residents assisted the Hastings Downtown Association by helping set up for the annual Celebration of the Lights in the downtown area. Residents helped the YMCA set up for adoption day, as well as packed "Supper in a Sack" with the local Salvation Army.

at D & P. Doing the hiring, firing, scheduling and running my own crew." Overall he stated that the program at Bristol Station was helpful for his transition. "There was nobody to remind me to stay on the right track if I wasn't at Bristol Station." He stated that the structure and rules were helpful "even though I didn't care for them at first."

Jorge utilized the programming at Bristol Station and community resources to the fullest. He successfully completed substance abuse treatment, utilized vocational rehabilitation services, attended NA meetings regularly, and although he successfully transitioned out of the program in November 2016 he continues to participate in Moral Reconation Therapy on a weekly basis.

### JAMIE

Jamie entered Bristol Station in July 2016 and within a week of her arrival began working at Wipe it Clean. Jamie took much pride in her job with Wipe it Clean. When asked what she enjoyed most about her job she stated "getting the chance to work by myself and being trusted to be able to work alone." While at Bristol Station Jamie utilized community resources for substance abuse treatment, mental health support and attended NA meetings in the community.

Unfortunately the stress of everyday life became too much for Jaime and she relapsed. With the support of her Bristol Station Case Manager, Tara, and Parole Officer Jamie was given an opportunity to participate and complete a treatment program in Columbus, NE. Upon completion of treatment Jamie returned to Bristol Station.

Since her return Jamie has maintained her sobriety with a positive attitude. She indicated that Bristol Station has been very helpful "being able to come talk to you guys when I have a problem because normally I'd just run, and knowing how understanding everyone is."

Jamie indicated that she believes her biggest success since entering Bristol Station has been "being able to open up more and become more honest." Jamie continues to utilize the programming at Bristol Station, in addition to building a support system in the community.



(Bristol Station residents volunteer at the Salvation Army)

## PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHTS

### JORGE

Jorge entered Bristol Station in May 2016. Shortly after he arrived he began working at Gibbon Pack. A few weeks later he was offered a job with D & P Construction, making less money, but Jorge accepted the position as he felt he would enjoy the work more. As it turns out his decision to change employers was the right one! He was hired at the end of June as a laborer and is now a foreman with several supervisory duties. Jorge stated "having a job I enjoy and employer who is supportive was worth making less money." In a few short months Jorge was making more than he was at Gibbon Pack.

Jorge stated "I wouldn't have my job if I hadn't come to Bristol Station." He indicated that he believes his biggest success since his release from incarceration has been "getting the position I have

