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Kings County Re-Entry Task Force

Bi-Monthly Meeting of February 4, 2016 – Minutes (Revised)

Meeting Date:	Thursday, February 4, 2016	
Meeting Time:	12:30 pm – 2:30 pm	
Meeting Location:	Office of CSEDNY – Conference Room 210 Joralemon Street, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201	
Attendees:	<p>ACCES-VR: Wendy Hersh APPELLATE ADVOCATES: Samia Shafi BRC-SPAM: Johnny Dome BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY: Nicholas Higgins CENTER FOR APPELLATE LITIGATION: Susannah Karlin CHURCH OF GETHSEMANE: Chibueze Okonie COG BC (NYPD): Mary Washington CSEDNY: Michele Nelson EVERGREEN BAPTIST CHURCH: Andre Palmer FAMILIES FATHERS & CHILDREN: Ellen Edelman FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: Richard Green FORTUNE SOCIETY: Ann Travers GANGSTA MACK: Hailey Nolasco HOUSING WORKS: Shawn Weston, Lane Lewis NCBL: Marisa Benton, Esq. NEW BEGINNING OUTREACH PROGRAM: Karsa Taylor NYCHA: Yolanda Johnson-Peterkin PSCH: Alyse LaRue REDEMPTION CENTER: Joseph Weston SHADES OF WOMEN: Stephanie Reid, Stephanie Riley UNITED METHODIST PARISH: Cheryl Robinson UNIVERSAL CHURCH: Marva Harris</p>	<p><u>KCRTF - KCDA</u> Christopher Owens, Co-Chair Designate Director, The Re-Entry Bureau Norma Fernandes, Case Manager Andrea Johnson, Case Manager Anne Broomfield, ADA for Compliance</p> <p><u>KCRTF – DOCCS</u> Michelle A. Yon, Co-Chair Designate</p> <p>Audrey Thompson- Co- Chair Designate Re-Entry Manager Petero Sabune</p> <p><u>KCRTF – DCJS</u> Margaret Chretien</p> <hr/> <p><u>KCDA – Executive</u> Renee Gregory , 1st Assistant District Attorney</p> <p><u>KCDA – ComALERT</u> Maria Abadia, Program Administrator Marybeth Melendez, Case Manager Lodoe Gyatso, Intern</p> <p><u>KCDA – Bureau of Youth Diversion</u> Tammy Eggleston, Program Administrator, Project Re-Direct Allison Ottley, LCSW, Project Re-Direct / YCP Tyrone Larkins, Case Manager, Project Re-Direct</p> <p><u>KCDA – Office of Public Engagement</u> John Watkins</p> <p><u>KCDA – Human Resources</u> Dana Martin</p>

ITEM #	ITEM	DESCRIPTION AND ACTION ITEMS
1	Call to Order	This meeting was called to order by Mr. Christopher R. Owens, KCRTF Co-Chair designate, at 1:00pm. The Chair asked Mr. Lodoie Gyatso, an intern with the King's County District Attorney's Office ("KCDA"), to record minutes of the meeting.
2	Opening remarks	Opening remarks and presentation of the agenda for February 4, 2016.
3	Presentation of meeting minutes: November 12, 2015	The Chair requested the attendees to review the Minutes from the November 12, 2015 KCRTF Bi-Monthly Meeting, and to contact the co-chairs if there were any comments or concerns that required correction.
4	Introductions	<p>Those in attendance introduced themselves and the organizations they represented. The Chair also acknowledged the presence of staff members who are part of the KCDA.</p> <p>The Chair introduced the other KCRTF Co-Chair designate, Ms. Audrey Thompson, Re-Entry Manager from the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS).</p> <p>The Chair then introduced Maria Abadia, Program Administrator of ComALERT. He also mentioned that GRASP is now under the ComALERT umbrella. GRASP is the DA's re-entry program serving younger women who are returning to the community from various forms of institutionalization and not just incarceration.</p> <p>The Chair noted the absence of Dr. Vanda Seward, Coordinator of the KCRTF.</p>
5	Coordinator's Report	<p>Coordinator's Report</p> <p>CBI Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrea Johnson spoke about the third cohort of the <i>Thinking for Change</i> program (T4C). The class started on February 2nd and 12 participants have enrolled. Thinking for change is a 13-week program, including anger management, given by the KCRTF at the DOCCS main Brooklyn office (15 Second Avenue, Gowanus/Park Slope). • Norma Fernandes discussed the <i>Ready Set Work!</i> program that she facilitates. The workshops focus on making a client work ready. Since the start of the workshops, there have been 50 clients who have participated -- many of whom have attained employment. • Mr. Owens mentioned that, in terms of the referrals from DOCCS to KCRTF, there are no particular referral challenges at this point. Ms. Thompson added that DOCCS continues to improve its process. . • Mr. Owens invited Michele Yon from DOCCS to further elaborate on the above topics. Michelle Yon stated that there have already been two successful cohorts of T4C where all the graduates have transitioned into the community. Clients with the higher risk levels were also able to successfully transition, which is a major achievement for KCDA, KCRTF and DOCCS. Such achievements would not have been possible without the help from the KCRTF. Most of the clients that have graduated from the T4C group have been able to positively change their supervision level which equates to a change in parole supervision and less visits to parole.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Fernandes mentioned that, with the assistance of Ms. Johnson, Ms. Thompson and Ms. Yon, a job fair was held on January 15th with DOCCS. One of her clients was interviewed and hired. This was the first DOCCS/ KCRTF job fair and the hope is for many more to take place. • Mr. Owens highlighted the strong relationship and cooperation between DOCCS and the KCRTF, and his hopes for the continued growth that will benefit all clients. Mr. Owens also mentioned the creation of a new database for the KCDA re-entry programs and the potential benefits regarding reports -- specifically for DCJS. <p>KCRTF committee update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Event update: <i>Here to be Seen: Women And Justice</i>, the collection of original vignettes co-produced by the KCRTF and co-sponsored by the DA's office, is "on the road" and will going to John Jay College first and then showcased in different parts of New York State. The organizers are also trying to promote it in Albany as well. KCDA will keep everyone informed on the venues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ▪ Credit Concepts: Maria introduced the crowd to Kredit Koncepts. Kredit Koncepts is an organization which helps individuals with financial literacy and assists clients with repairing their credit -- ultimately improving their credit score. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ▪ Aging Offender: Maria also introduced a topic Dr. Seward has been involved in: the aging offender. The KCRTF was able to get a 78 year-old man from Bellevue to stable housing in Far Rockaway, Queens. The re-entry needs of this clientele are different; specifically, more care services are needed. Both KCRTF and Com ALERT will offer continue to offer assistance in this area. Ms. Marybeth Melendez (KCDA) then emphasized that when we talk about this particular group of individuals, we are talking about a group including various disabilities -- individuals with hearing, cardiac, walking and visual impairments. Ensuring that this clientele has their social security benefits, SSI and Medicaid is as important as the need to assure transportation means for these individuals. Another attendee shared his concerns about this topic and mentioned that he knows a 71 year-old male that served 45 years in prison and is in need of services. He was invited to come to the office for further assistance. ▪ Sex Offender Conference: This conference was hosted last year by KCRTF with great reviews. The video is now available and will be posted on the KCDA website soon. ▪ ATI Employment Collaboration: Three County Task Forces in New York City (Bronx, Brooklyn, New York) met last November with Osborne and Fortune Society (CEO is a participant, but was not present at the meeting). The meeting was convened by DCJS. These programs are primarily geared towards helping parolees, in addition to probation. They have tried to develop a referral relation between the Task Force offices and the organizations to find appropriate programs and services. The collaboration is making its best efforts to make connections to the most appropriate programs. They are also working closely with DOCCS. A gentleman spoke about how these programs had really helped him with where he is today in his life. He emphasized how, after serving so many years in prison, most of these individuals have certain types of behavior and attitude, and it is essential to offer them life skills training programs. Mr. Owens emphasized that KCRTF, ComAlert, Fortune Society, Osborne and other offices out there are trying to promote the importance of such issues.
6	Fiscal Report	Tabled by the Chair.
7	Reports / Concerns	No new reports or concerns.

8	Guest Presentations	<p>Lane Lewis (Housing Works):</p> <p>Housing Works was known to service individuals with HIV/AIDS and those who are enrolled in the substance abuse programs. Today, however, housing works assists clients with physical and mental illnesses. A large percentage of individuals with mental health problems are also in need of proper housing.</p> <p>HW realized that if there is no housing plan attached to the medical assistance, then there is no comprehensive plan to assist the needs of the client. HW has taken the initiative, therefore, to offer a housing program for clients once they have enrolled with HW and have a case manager assigned.</p> <p>Ms. Wendy Hersh (ACCES-VR) stressed the importance of expanding collaborations between different organizations to achieve the best results possible.</p> <p>Mr. Nicholas Higgins (Brooklyn Public Library) mentioned that BPL has extended hours on certain days during the weekdays and has other available resources as well.</p> <p>Johnny Dome (Director, BRC Span Program):</p> <p>BRC stands for Bi-Residence Program and SPAN stands for Service Planning Assistance Network. BRC has 28 different programs for homeless individuals, including operations in six or seven shelters. SPAN has been in existence for about 15 years.</p> <p>SPAN does not individually assist people with their own services; rather they reach out to different community partners and organizations and connect them to the proper agencies. The clientele is primarily mentally ill individuals, specifically individuals identified by Rikers Island discharge planners as “Brad H.”</p> <p>Audrey Thompson (Re-Entry Manager, NYS DOCCS):</p> <p>DOCCS is focusing on employment and healthcare. Initiatives include the <i>Work for Success</i> (WFS) and <i>Pay for Success</i> (PFS) programs.</p> <p>WFS targets individuals with low risks scores and provides help with resume-building and job searches. PFS works with NYC to offer employment opportunities for individuals with high risks scores, who are referred to specific programs to find jobs. There are also interesting collaborations in the near future with the Harm Reduction Program – focused on reducing heroin and opium addiction.</p>
9	New Business	There was no new business.
10	Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.