



# REENTRY

National Media Outreach Campaign

Volume III, Issue III

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## OUTREACH EXTENSIONS OFFERS NEW FILMS FOR COMMUNITY SCREENINGS

This month's youth-focused film offers include a bundle featuring youth JAIL HIGH SCHOOL, GIRL TROUBLE, and CENTER FOR YOUNG WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT.

### JAIL HIGH SCHOOL / Aired November 9, 2004 on WTTW in Chicago

JAIL HIGH SCHOOL is the story of two teenagers working toward their high school diplomas while they await trial for armed robbery. Both volunteered to continue their education at York Alternative High School, a Chicago Public School that is inside the Cook County Jail.



Domintric Mikel was never interested in school before his arrest. But when he started going to school in jail, all of that changed. He found that it was a surprisingly good place to get an education—the teachers seemed more dedicated than the ones at his old public school in Chicago. DeLoyal Kershaw is atypical of students at the jail in that he has a solid educational background. He was an honor student at a private school before he decided to drop out. Now this school has allowed him to pick up where he left off—he completed his GED, and he's working toward his high school diploma.

Domintric and DeLoyal are both in Ms. Horwick's class. Her classroom is a refuge from all of the violence and negativity that the kids encounter in jail. She allows her students to listen to music and to dance. She knows how to tap into their interests—she has been introducing poetry to the kids who like to rap. Mrs. Horwick also integrates horticulture into everything she teaches. She recognizes that many of her students have not grown up around grass and trees, and she feels that this is an opportunity for them to learn how to nurture and love.

JAIL HIGH SCHOOL was produced by Dan Protes, WTTW/Chicago.

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For more information, or to sign up for the Reentry bi-monthly e-newsletter, please contact:

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## COMMUNITY VIDEOTAPE OFFER, Continued

### GIRL TROUBLE / Airing on PBS's Independent Lens Series, 2005/2006 Season

GIRL TROUBLE chronicles four years in the lives of a group of 13–23 year-olds who have built the first youth-run organization for girls in trouble, the Center for Young Women's Development in San Francisco. These young women are living very adult lives with adult responsibilities. The film follows them as they negotiate a myriad of complex issues in the courts, continuation schools, hospitals, and



social service agencies. The girls at the Center are fighting for the human rights of their peers, challenging the system. Through their words and daily struggles, they reveal just how badly the system is failing girls, while offering more effective alternatives to it. GIRL TROUBLE is produced by Critical Images Inc. in association with Independent Television Service and KQED Public Television, San Francisco.

### THE CENTER FOR YOUNG WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT / 2004 (outreach video, not for broadcast)

This outreach video documentary provides additional information on the programs and practices of the Center for Young Women's Development (CYWD). *"All of the Center's programs have been designed with a holistic approach and recognizes that each young woman already has the experience and strength necessary to become a powerful leader and an agent for change."* The video can assist youth-serving or youth-directed organizations in developing local strategies to work with young women from the streets and the juvenile justice system, providing them with educational and employment opportunities and helping them build healthier lives and healthier communities. Produced by Dean Radcliffe-Lynes, this 15-minute video may be used on its own or as a companion to GIRL TROUBLE.

To apply for this youth programming bundle, please download the application form on the Reentry Web site at <http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/gt.htm>. **A usage report MUST be submitted following your outreach activities.**

## DETROIT PUBLIC TELEVISION LAUNCHES YOUTH REENTRY WRITING WORKSHOP



On June 20, 2005, DPTV will begin its next Reentry Campaign outreach activity in partnership with Eastern Michigan University's (EMU) English Department. Write Link is a one-week workshop, held primarily on EMU'S campus. The program is designed to increase high school students' exposure to various writing careers, including journalism, public relations, technical communications and creative writing, while at the same time, drawing their attention to critical local issues. The program further aims to direct youth away from violence by building their sense of community, enhancing their communication skills, and increasing their self-esteem. This year the workshop will involve approximately twenty high school juniors, many of whom are at-risk students from Upward Bound programs in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, Michigan, in an intergenerational project built around the theme of youth crime prevention.

Detroit Public Television will present an overview of different kinds of writing, including press releases, proposals, radio spots, on-air promos, publicity pieces, and Web content. A screening of EVERY CHILD IS BORN A POET will kick off the workshop and serve as a catalyst for discussion and inspiration for writing content. DPTV will also engage Joe Williams, CEO of Transition of Prisoners (TOP) and a published author, to address students about his experiences as a former offender.

Detroit Public Television will post student-produced works on its Web site and in *Signal* magazine. For more on DPTV's Reentry Campaign outreach activities, visit its Web site at [www.dptv.org/reentry](http://www.dptv.org/reentry).

## TO SERVE THIS PRESENT AGE: Reentering Through Faith



After much anticipation, the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign is pleased to announce the completion of **To Serve This Present Age: Reentering Through Faith**. This new production, available in both VHS and DVD formats, represents a collaboration of the Reentry Campaign, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the National Alliance of Faith and Justice of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice.

The production capitalizes on the black church's growing commitment to play an active role in addressing the substantial impact of crime and imprisonment on families and communities. The need for the video is based on the large numbers of men and women, disproportionately people of color, who are returning home following incarceration. Many seek assistance from houses of worship, which are striving to meet this demand. The goal of the video/DVD is capacity building and competency training for interfaith and interdenominational lay people and clergy.

**To Serve This Present Age: Reentering Through Faith** and its accompanying Viewer Resource Guide are organized around five modules:

- Reentry Support and Mentoring of Formerly Incarcerated Men and Women
- Mentoring Children of Prisoners
- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Strengthening Families and Communities
- Disproportionate Minority Confinement

Offering specific strategies, the 54-page guide functions as a "call to action," encouraging clergy and lay people to create or strengthen their local ministries or programs to assist former prisoners and their families. Each module provides brief profiles and contact information for organizations and houses of worship presented in the video/DVD, and ends with scriptural references. Additional resources include a glossary of reentry terms, suggested federal funding sources, and a list of national organizations that may be helpful in developing a reentry initiative.

Read more about this project, download the Viewer Resource Guide, and view the promo video on the Reentry Campaign Web site: <http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/faith.htm>. To order a copy, please complete the following order form:



Yes, please add my name to the pre-order list for *To Serve This Present Age: Reentering Through Faith* in  VHS or  DVD format. I understand that I will be asked to submit a report detailing my use of this important resource.

<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
_____	_____	_____
<b>Address</b>	<b>City, State, ZIP</b>	
_____	_____	
<b>Phone</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>Email</b>
_____	_____	_____

**Send to:**  
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## XIARA'S SONG Documentary

XIARA'S SONG documents a young girl's struggle to stay connected to her father through their mutual love of music, and a mother's battle to keep her daughter from following in her father's dangerous footsteps. Seven-year-old Xiara's father Harold has been in and out of jail throughout her life, and his current sentence will keep him locked up until she's 17. Combining present-day footage with home movies to explore a father-daughter relationship under extraordinary circumstances, this is a moving portrait of one of the millions of American children with a parent in prison.



Like many girls her age, Xiara likes to make up songs, eat ice cream, and play with her best friend. A real “daddy’s girl,” she’s pretty and independent, and dreams of being a superstar one day. And like ten million other American children, Xiara is the child of a prison inmate. Xiara idolizes Harold – who is serving a ten-year federal prison sentence after a third-strike weapons possession conviction – from afar. But her mother tries desperately to keep her daughter from following him down the brutal and self-destructive path that led to his incarceration.

Combining modern-day footage with family home movies, XIARA’S SONG finds the sadness, joy, anger, love, loneliness, and fear in the eyes of a precocious seven-year-old coming to grips with the fact that her father won’t be free until she’s practically an adult. While XIARA’S SONG does not romanticize Harold, who has been in and out of jail for her entire life, it does reveal the gentle side of this handsome, charming rapper who finds inspiration in his deep love for his daughter. Harold and Xiara’s relationship is played out over monitored phone lines and supervised monthly visits, expressed through the songs they write and sing for one another.

“Xiara is a testament to the resiliency of the human spirit and the transcendent power of familial love,” says producer and director Liz Garbus. “At the same time, she is a painful reminder of the millions of unintended victims of America’s spiraling incarceration rates.” Producer and director Liz Garbus is an Oscar®-nominated, Emmy-winning filmmaker who has produced documentaries for HBO, Lifetime, A&E, Court TV, The Learning Channel, MTV, and Oxygen. Producer Rory Kennedy has produced and directed award-winning documentaries for HBO, Lifetime, A&E, Court TV, Oxygen, and The Learning Channel, covering such topics as the global AIDS crisis, human rights, domestic abuse, poverty, and drug addiction. Garbus and Kennedy are the co-founders of independent documentary production company Moxie Firecracker Films.

While XIARA’S SONG is a moving testimony of children with incarcerated parents, it is an extremely realistic, gritty portrayal of this life and the challenges faced by families. **The film has graphic language and scenes with mature content.** Adult viewers should determine its suitability before showing it to pre-teen youth. XIARA’S SONG would be most suitable for organizations working with children with incarcerated parents, formerly incarcerated men and women with children, at-risk teens and young adults, and married couples or partners with children. Read more about the film on the Reentry Web site: [www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/xiara](http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/xiara). Community screening copies of the film will be offered later this summer. **You can watch XIARA’S SONG on Sunday, June 19, 2005, at 7:00 pm., on CINEMAX.**

For more information about how to support a child with a parent in prison, beginning June 13, 2005, visit the Federal Resource Center for Children of Prisoners at [www.childrenofprisoners.org](http://www.childrenofprisoners.org). The Resource Center has current statistics, information about the child welfare and criminal justice systems, programs for incarcerated parents, their children and families, a listserv with the latest research and funding opportunities, and more.

*Have you missed an issue of the Reentry e-newsletter? Past issues can be found on the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign Web site (<http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/enewsletter.htm>)!*

## REENTRY NEWS

**Right to Vote Legislation Passes Senate Committee.** Important changes are underway in Rhode Island. In April 2005, the Rhode Island Senate Committee on Constitutional and Gaming Issues voted unanimously to send to the Senate floor a proposal to ask voters to amend the state Constitution in order to allow convicted felons to vote, as long as they are not currently serving a jail term for that conviction. With the change, a person's right to vote will be restored upon discharge from incarceration. (Rhode Island Senate Bills 458 & 575).

Currently, convicted felons lose the right to vote until completing their sentence, even if all or part of the sentence is served in the community. According to the legislation, more than 15,500 Rhode Island residents have lost the right to vote because of a felony conviction; 86 percent of those are not currently -- or were never -- in prison. Senate Bill 575 goes on to say that criminal disfranchisement in Rhode Island has a disproportionate impact on minority communities. "The rate of disfranchisement of African American voters is more than six times the statewide rate....One in five black men and one in eleven Hispanic men are barred from voting in Rhode Island. By denying so many the right to vote, criminal disfranchisement laws dilute the political power of entire minority communities. Because these communities are concentrated in cities, the urban vote is also suppressed, with the rate of disfranchisement in urban areas 3.5 times the rate in the rest of the state." The constitutional amendment and a correlating bill also approved by the committee were sponsored by Sen. Harold Metts, D-Providence. On May 11, both 458 and 575 were read and passed by the Senate and referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

For more information and text of the Rhode Island Senate Bills, visit <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/>.

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**Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative.** The Department of Labor seeks to strengthen urban communities characterized by large numbers of returning prisoners through an employment-centered program that incorporates mentoring, job training, and other comprehensive transitional services. This program is designed to reduce recidivism by helping inmates find work when they return to their communities, as part of an effort to build a life in the community for everyone. Eligible applicants include faith- and community-based organizations. The deadline for applications is July 13, 2005. Approximately \$19.84 million is available to fund 30 awards of up to \$660,000. For further information, contact Kevin Brumback at (202) 693-3381; or go to: <http://www.doleta.gov/sga/sga.cfm>.

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**Vermont's Newest Prison Has Active Reentry Initiative.** Southern State Correctional Facility in Springfield, Vermont is a 350-bed, medium-security prison, the newest in the state. The facility has been open only eighteen months; but despite its early development, it boasts a robust reentry initiative. Projects so far have included community education using videos provided by the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign; a Reentry Task Force comprised of representatives from local human service agencies and partners within the Department of Corrections; and work teams to address specific issues faced by reentering offenders, such as housing and employment.

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## REENTRY NEWS, Continued

“The tools provided by the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign, in the form of videos, discussion guides and Web-based support have been invaluable to our progress,” says Rita Corliss, volunteer services coordinator at SSCF. “Without these materials, the challenge of informing and inspiring the community about offender reentry would be even more daunting.” Most recently, the facility hosted a public screening and discussion of *Getting Out*, a film from the perspective of three individuals who are acclimating to life on the outside after being released from incarceration.

One year ago, as part of the reentry initiative, DOC field and facility staff began to meet regularly with representatives from local human service organizations: Vermont Adult Learning, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Employment and Training, Springfield Family Center, Association of Springfield Area Churches, Vermont Department of Health, Just Now (a Restorative Justice program for youth), Parks Place (a community resource center), Department of Children and Families, Health Care and Rehabilitative Services (a mental health provider) and others. The group gathers monthly to address broad issues facing reentering offenders (e.g., prerelease application for Social Security benefits) and also to brainstorm solutions and share resources for individual cases (such as how to find a skilled care placement for an offender with debilitating medical problems).

The latest successes of SSCF’s reentry initiative include a statewide meeting between DOC staff and representatives from the housing community. A few examples of the latter are housing authorities, landlords, the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, legislative staff, and the Department of Housing and Transportation. “In addition to being a great forum to express concerns and ideas, the meeting gave us an opportunity to meet one another and discuss further collaboration,” said Corliss. As part of the larger Reentry Task Force, a subcommittee has also been formed to address obstacles to employment.

“There is a lot of work still to be done, but we’re proud of our accomplishments so far,” Corliss said. “Collaboration with local and statewide partners and the support of the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign will help us achieve continued success in supporting offenders as they transition back to their communities.” For more information on SSCF’s reentry initiative, contact [rcorliss@doc.state.vt.us](mailto:rcorliss@doc.state.vt.us) or call 802.885.9831.

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**Almost Home Program.** In a public-private collaboration with the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office and the Massachusetts Parole Board, Dismas House plans to open a 12-bed facility, *The Almost Home Program*, in an existing farmhouse on the grounds of the Worcester Sheriff’s residence. This 24-hour staffed facility will provide three-month structured treatment programs to Worcester County, Massachusetts inmates eligible for parole or post-incarceration placement. Each resident of *The Almost Home Program* will be required to participate in daily vocational training on the premises; substance abuse treatment groups; individual therapy; and educational, job-readiness, and life skills training.

*The Almost Home Program* will act as a needed first-step and a “feeder” program to other transitional programs. Graduates of *The Almost Home Program* will be better prepared for the challenges of successful reintegration. The Department of Corrections estimates that it costs \$43,000 per person per year to house an inmate. The cost per bed for the *Almost Home Program* will be \$14,080. However, with 45-50 former inmates being served by these beds, the actual cost per person served will be \$4,224 - 4,693.

By providing cost-effective, bundled services to those inmates most likely to re-offend, *The Almost Home Program* will alleviate institutional roadblocks to reentry, reduce recidivism, and ultimately, stem jail overcrowding in Worcester County. For more information on this program, please contact David McMahon at [mcmahon\\_dismas@hotmail.com](mailto:mcmahon_dismas@hotmail.com).

## CONFERENCES

**National TASC.** The 12th National TASC Conference on Drugs and Crime will be held in Cleveland, Ohio on September 11-14, 2005. Acclaimed speakers, workshops, pre-conference training, networking opportunities and exhibits feature adult, juvenile and community partnerships to restore individuals in the justice system. The conference is an important vehicle for blending the needs and goals of treatment and criminal justice systems to improve system outcomes and protect public safety. National TASC anticipates 400 people to attend from the criminal justice, treatment, social services, legislative, judicial and research fields. In the past, the National TASC conference has provided the foremost national training event for those professionals whose work involves criminal justice, corrections, drug treatment, and public safety.

National TASC is a membership association representing over 200 programs across the United States that are dedicated to the professional delivery of assessment and case management services to substance involved criminal justice and court populations. TASC is represented heavily in some states such as Florida, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Arizona, and Colorado. In addition to being an effective program model, TASC has also distilled a methodology of critical elements that are fundamental to integrating the criminal justice and substance abuse treatment systems, holding offenders and both systems accountable through the implementation of client-specific case management. As such, TASC methods can be utilized by programs or systems attempting to manage drug-involved offenders and other people involved with the courts as they occupy places in both justice and treatment programming. Find out more at the National TASC conference at: [www.nationaltasc.org](http://www.nationaltasc.org).

The Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign's project director, Denise Blake, will present a media workshop at the annual conference, and will introduce a premiere screening of the Reentry Campaign documentary, OMAR & PETE. Mr. William "Pete" Duncan, profiled in the film, will also be in attendance and will share his personal testimony.

**Film Synopsis:** Omar and Pete are determined to change their lives. Both had been in and out of prison for over thirty years — never out longer than six months. This intimate and penetrating film follows these two long-time friends for several years after what they hope will be their final prison release. In that time, their lives take divergent paths as one wrestles with addiction and fear while the other finds success and freedom through helping others.

To apply for a community screening version of OMAR & PETE, please download the application form on the Reentry Web site. **A usage report MUST be submitted following your outreach activities.** OMAR & PETE



**William "Pete" Duncan**

is accompanied by a 34-page discussion guide featuring remarks from filmmaker Tod Lending; a first-person interview with William "Pete" Duncan; background information on key support organizations, The Maryland Re-Entry Partnership and Tuerk House; and discussion questions. The application for the film and the discussion guide may be downloaded at <http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/r.htm>.

## CONFERENCES, Continued

**Transition of Prisoners.** Detroit's Transition of Prisoners, along with its partner, Christian Home Ministries, is hosting its *4th Annual National Prisoner Reentry Conference*. This year's event will be held in Nashville, TN, at the Sheraton Nashville Downtown Hotel, October 28-30, 2005. Transition of Prisoners CEO, Joseph Williams, remarks that, "Hardly a week goes by that I am not contacted by several churches, ministries, or government agencies seeking information on the subject of prisoner reentry. More and more people are realizing that in order to have whole and healthy communities, men and women returning from prison must be provided with services vital to their successful reintegration back into the community." The conference will address these issues through a series of plenaries and workshop sessions for prison ministry and aftercare workers, faith-based ministry leaders, community organizations, corrections officials, former prisoners and their families, case workers and counselors, and chaplains.

The Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign has been invited to present a workshop at the conference on using media in faith-based settings. For more information on the conference or to register, please visit [www.topinc.net](http://www.topinc.net).



The Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) is supporting the **Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign** as part of the Making Connections Media Outreach Initiative (MCMOI), which is designed and managed by Outreach Extensions. This vital effort links media broadcasters to local stakeholders and their diverse constituencies, providing outreach strategies and media resources that support their efforts to strengthen youth and families and build effective communities.

The Making Connections Media Outreach Initiative offers media support to local coalitions that are part of AECF's *Making Connections*, a multi-faceted, long-term effort to improve the life chances of vulnerable children by helping to strengthen their families and neighborhoods. The Foundation's intent is to stimulate and support a local movement that engages residents, civic groups, political leaders, grassroots groups, public and private sector leadership, and faith-based organizations in an effort to help transform tough neighborhoods into family-supportive environments.



The Annie E. Casey Foundation

This E-Newsletter is an electronic publication intended to keep you informed about news and events relating to the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign. **Please let us know how we're doing through the feedback form on the Reentry Web site (<http://www.reentrymediaoutreach.org/contactus.htm>).**

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We welcome the names/e-mail addresses of your colleagues so that we can send copies of this E-Newsletter to them as well.