COMMUNITY SPIRIT

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A revival of the human spirit

"They must be given hope that even though they can't see anything good, there is still the possibility of a better life." *Story on page 2*

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Looking to the spiritual side of life

Today two women will enter an ACC Community Correction Center. Each has committed a felony crime and will spend a minimum of nine months in an ACC Center.

Both of these women will leave on the same day and one day in the future one will return, but the other will not.

The question of why one woman returns to prison and the other goes on to lead a law-abiding life is one that has puzzled many since the creation of prisons. It is not a question that is easily answered.

There are known factors that contribute to the propensity for a person to return to prison, and ACC addresses those factors in a holistic approach. In other words, ACC programming is geared to addressing the needs of offenders from the day they enter the center through their time under parole supervision.

Studies have shown that in addition to basic needs such as a place to live, a job and food to eat, offenders also need a spiritual component to their lives in order to succeed.

A 2012 survey of prison chaplains by the PEW Research Group noted, "Overwhelmingly, state prison chaplains consider religious counseling and other religion-based programming an important aspect of rehabilitating prisoners.

"Nearly three-quarters of the chaplains (73%), for example, say they consider access to religion-related programs in prison to be "absolutely critical" to successful rehabilitation of inmates. And 78% say they consider support from religious groups after inmates are released from prison to be absolutely critical to inmates' successful rehabilitation and re-entry into society. Among chaplains working in prisons that have religion-related rehabilitation or re-entry programs, more than half (57%) say the quality of such programs has improved over the last three years and six-in-ten (61%) say participation in such programs has gone up."

"More than seven-in-ten chaplains (73%) consider access to high-quality religion-related programs in prison to be "absolutely critical" for successful rehabilitation and re-entry, and an additional 23% say such programs are very important, though not critical."

Those sentiments are echoed by the six chaplains working at ACC.

Bradley Warbritton at the Southwest Community Correction Center in Texarkana says, "I believe the spiritual life of a resident is important because it gives a resident a sense of hope and direction.

"Many residents look for a higher power to help them in their recovery process. A healthy spiritual life for a resident can help them cope being away from families, in hoping that their higher power is there with them. A healthy spiritual life especially when it comes to church attendance, helps a resident to connect with other residents of similar faith, and it can help create a connection with volunteer who could become a mentor to a resident."

Hope is a key component, notes Terry Schlinker who is the chaplain at the Northwest Arkansas Community Correction Center in Fayetteville.

"I'm convinced that a spiritual life is important to residents who are incarcerated, based on the need for hope," he said.

"At the point of incarceration, a resident feels that they have lost all control of their life; they feel hopeless. Their need immediately is for a sense of hope to be restored in their hearts. This is not the end, but an exchange for a new beginning! When we direct them to a spiritual life, we are actually

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Please send corrections/information to:
Rhonda Sharp, Editor
rhonda.sharp@arkansas.gov
or
Dina Tyler
dina.tyler@arkansas.gov

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directing them toward hope.

"The Christian Bible has many scriptures that refer to hope. 'And now O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.' Psalm 39:7 or 'For in this we were saved, Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?' Romans 8:24 When someone has lost all control of their lives, even what they see doesn't bring them hope. They must be given hope that even though they can't see anything good, there is still the possibility of a better life."

Schlinker continues, "A powerful verse is found in Zechariah 9:12; 'Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope, today I declare that I will restore to you double.'

"The prophet gives five powerful words; return, stronghold, prisoners, hope, restore. A spiritual life will return them to a stronghold, even as a prisoner, and give them hope of being restored. The end result is that through this spiritual life they can end up with double (more) than they had before their incarceration."

"A spiritual life is important, because it brings hope."

David Austen, chaplain at the Central Arkansas Center in Little Rock, links overcoming adversity to a spiritual life, "Faith turns adversity into victory."

- Without adversity and challenges you would have no victory.
- Without loss and failure you would have no redemption.
- Without adversity and resistance you could not grow and develop strength.
- Without adversity and trials you could not refine your character.

"Adversity," Austen says, "drives us closer to God. If you have faith in God and trust that God

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Looking to the spiritual side of life

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can use your adversity for good-physical, mental or spiritual-then you will know that your trials and sufferings are only temporary.

"Some people lose faith in the face of adversity and turn an opportunity for victory into defeat, others turn adversity into victory," says Austen.

Curtis Wiggins, Omega Center in Malvern for technical violators, finds that "the spiritual applications that residents receive are important to maintaining a holistic approach to rehabilitation.

"If we can compare the lifestyle of most residents as representative of being in darkness, what is it that brings light or hope for new beginnings?"

Wiggins continues, "the scripture records, 'the spirit of man in the candle of the Lord, searching (enlightening) all the belly (actions) of the man,' Proverbs 20:27. Since the spirit of the man is the controlling influence, spiritual guidance plays an important role in the success residents can potentially achieve in life.

"Spirituality can present itself in many forms other than religious connotations, such as the principles of recovery found in the Higher Power Concepts. It's my observation that residents who pursue some level of spirituality, seemingly are capable of dealing with life-issues in a more productive versus self-destructive manner. Perhaps, the most significant effect that a spiritual life has on residents is the release from un-forgiveness, not necessarily towards those victimized, but mostly themselves.

"When the burden of guilt, fear, shame and other negative feelings and emotions are relieved, residents appear to respond attentively to self-esteem and character building activities. The spiritual life is neces-

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Revival held at Northeast Center in Osceola

Revival services were conducted by the Back to Bethel Prison Ministry in August. This team from Sikeston, Missouri was led by Amos and Doris Johnson, Mike and Connie Bolen, and Steve McMillan (shown above). There was a high attendance of 77 men present on Saturday night. The NEC Choir provided special music along with three residents singing and playing guitars. We have witnessed many positive changes as a result of this meeting.

Looking to the spiritual side of life

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sary to complete the "whole" man."

James Jones, East Central Center in West Memphis says, "I believe that there is an since of urgency for spiritual life in a resident.

"We live to regret the decisions that we make in life, the things that we do, as we start to look back over our lives. While looking back we began to take an inventory. And taking inventory is nothing but taking a self examination.

"Just as those who are in the arena of merchants, they conduct inventory because of the information that is disclosed and because of what they gain from the inventory

and they can determine whether or not they want to choose to continue a particular line of product or a particular line of merchandise. They come to learn about these things that should be continued and those things that should be discontinued by taking inventory."

Jones also says, "spiritual life is very important because after we take that inventory, we begin to make changes in our lives. The changes for the better, and thus a spiritual life help, because conviction sets in. When conviction sets in, you change your way of thinking, and those things that didn't bother you, now you look at them differently. You develop a prayer and repentance life, which promote change. Change is yielding, and yielding includes transformation of the mind. The resident's life has been darkened by sin, and they must be brought to a place where they change their way of thinking. This renewing comes through prayer to God in everything and through constant meditation on the Word of God. This transformation is a lifelong process, and there's no better place to start than right now."

Governor speaks at Drug Court

Drug Court participants in Fayetteville graduated in early October and Governor Asa Hutchinson was on hand to present the certificates and congratulate the graduates.

There were 10 graduates, and each has successfully met the strict requirements of frequent drug tests, gaining employment, treatment and counseling and regular court appearances.

Circuit Judge Cristi Beaumont and several ACC staff were there for the ceremony. ACC staffs specialty courts across the state ... providing probation officers, counselors and administrative help.

The Fayetteville ceremony took place at the Old Historic Courthouse on South College. Circuit court was held in this very courtroom for the first time more than a century ago.

Employees in northwest help local students

Area 4 Osceola/Blytheville area offices teamed up with employees of NEACCC to help the community by contributing to the Back To School Drive, which was coordinated by Larry Bowen and Andre Harris and supported by Osceola Parks and Recreation. Free back packs were given to area kids to kick off the school year on the right track. Pictured (from L-R) Larry Bowen, Andre Harris (NEACC), Becky Whitaker (NEACC), Agent Heather Godair (ACC) Agent Trey Johnson (ACC) Officer Robin Haught-Angel (ACC).

Richardson named Assistant Director for parole/probation

Cindy Richardson has been promoted to Assistant Director of Parole/Probation Services.

Richardson has served ACC with excellence as a Parole and Probation Area Manager in Area 4, which includes Clay, Greene, Craighead, Poinsett and Mississippi counties, since 2008.

She was an Assistant Area Manager under the guidance of Area Supervisor Roy Thomas for seven years and as a Parole/Probation Officer for five years prior to that.

Her knowledge of community corrections is exceptional, says Deputy Director Parole/Probation Services Jerry Bradshaw. “She will make a great addition to the team,” he said.

Offenders in Area 6 receive help with school supplies

The Conway Drug Court partnered with the Faulkner County Library to distribute school supplies to the children of drug court participants and other probationers/parolees.

The Faulkner County Library collected school supplies in lieu of paying overdue book fees.

The result was a van load of school supplies that they generously donated to help the children of our offender population in Faulkner County.

In the picture at right is Drug Court Advisor Katy Stark and PO Terrez Grider with the van of supplies. Pictured below are Drug Court participants picking up supplies for their children.

Do you know someone who is supposed to report to a Parole or Probation Office and is not doing so? You can check on that person's status on the Internet at the ACC Absconder search. Individuals shown here have "absconded" and are not reporting as required by conditions of their parole or probation.

If you find someone you know on the list that person has absconded. To provide information about their known whereabouts please contact the Department of Community Correction at 501-618-8010 between 8 am and 5 pm. After Hours call 501-686-9800, or call '911.'

Banks named as Deputy Director of Residential Services

James Banks, shown at right, wants you to know that he is excited to be part of an organization committed to changing lives - Arkansas Community Correction.

Banks, a long-time corrections professional, was named Deputy Director of Residential Services for ACC in July.

Banks comes to ACC following a career that began at the Arkansas Department of Correction in 1985 as a correctional officer. From that entry-level position, he rose through the ranks to warden and when he retired from ADC in December 2015, he was the superintendent of the Newport complex with oversight of both the Grimes and McPherson units.

Banks earned his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and completed the requirements of the Arkansas Certified Public Manager program at UALR to become an Arkansas Governmental Manager.

He also is a certified law enforcement officer, a member of Southern States Correctional Association and the Executive Director of the United States Deputy Warden's Association and has served as a board member and past president for the group.

Banks enjoys hunting, fishing and playing golf.

Banks sees continued improvement in programs and treatment for residential services through evidence-based practices.

Kisselburg is named assistant for Residential Services staff

Hallie Kisselburg is the new Administrative Assistant for Residential Services. And she pronounces it *hal-ee*, not *hay-lee*. Kisselburg is the first person you call if you have questions about ACC's Residential Services and her number is 501-682-9577. Kisselburg was in school before joining ACC and has worked for the state in the past.

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ACC staff attend conference focused on vet issues

In September at the Clinton Presidential Center, ArVets held a HR Conference on employment strategies for hiring and retaining veterans. Governor Asa Hutchinson was one of several speakers. Greg Murray, Agency HR Manager; Donna Creasy, Omega HR Coordinator; and Perry Robinson, CAC HR Coordinator were in attendance.

Jodi Howard named assistant director for ACC's Residential Treatment Services

Jodi Howard was recently promoted to Assistant Director of Residential Treatment and Programs for Arkansas Community Correction.

She has 14 years of experience in the criminal justice system and nine years of experience as a substance abuse treatment professional.

She began her career with the Department of Community Correction in January of 2002 as a Probation/Parole Officer in Area 7.

Howard left ACC and served as the Internal Affairs investigator for the Division of Youth Services for a period of two years and returned to the agency nine years ago as a counselor for the 20th Judicial District Drug Court.

She has worked as the Assistant Treatment Program Manager for the Central and Southeast areas of field services for the past four years.

She was awarded the ACC Gold Key Treatment Supervisor of the Year in 2015.

Howard is a certified Clinical Supervisor, Co-Occurring Disorder Professional, Alcohol and Drug Counselor as well as Tobacco Treatment Specialist.

"She brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to the job," says Chief Deputy Director Kevin Murphy in announcing the promotion.

Area 5 Drug Court honored by charity

The Sebastian County Drug Court Program has developed a program called Project Giving Back in which the Drug Court participants volunteer their time to programs within the community. They were recognized by the charity along with others who have volunteered for the River Valley Regional Food Bank this past year.

Shown at left is Bobby Morgan, Drug Court Participant; Matthew Goldsmith, Drug Court Participant; Tracy Engel, Food Bank; Bert Johnston, ACC Advisor Area 5; Lydia Humphrey, ACC PPO Area 5; and Bryan Bushkuhl, Drug Court Participant. These are only three of the many who have volunteered.

Mentor training being held throughout state

In late August, ACC's Mentor Coordinator Ardella Bearden began meeting with the chaplains and volunteer coordinators from ACC's centers to discuss mentor programs in the facilities..

This training will provide training to the chaplains so they can conduct mentor training in the future at their centers.

"It is my hope that this is one of many steps to the ACC Reentry Mentor Program," says Bearden.

The picture above is from the class for the Central Arkansas Center in Little Rock and below is from the class at the Northwest Arkansas Center in Fayetteville.

Area 3 volunteer worked hard at Hardy Office

At the end of August, Volunteer Sylvia Ross from the Hardy office, Area 3, was recognized for her commitment and service while assisting at the Hardy office for more than two years.

Ross is a participant of the Experience Works program and had been assigned to the Hardy office.

She was an excellent help to PPA James Irvin and PPO Eric Pickle during her time with ACC.

The Hardy office was sad to see her have to transfer to another worksite.

She was honored with cake, a framed certificate of appreciation, and plant. Several Area 3 employees were in attendance to show their thanks and appreciation for her time with ACC. Ross will definitely be missed, and Area 3 wishes her the best at her new worksite. PPA James Irvin, Ross and PPO Eric Pickle are shown in the photo at left.

Boroughs named Area Manager in Area 13

Bryce Boroughs was named in early September as Area Manager for Area 13. "He will continue to be an asset to the area and the agency in his new position," said Assistant Director for Parole/Probation Cindy Richardson in announcing the promotion.

Boroughs, a long-time ACC employee notes that he is a graduate of Bearden High School where he was a two sport athlete (baseball and football). He attended college at the University of Arkansas at Monticello (UAM) where he had received a full academic scholarship. He graduated from UAM in 2007 with a double major in Criminal Justice and Psychology.

"I served as a Drug Court PPO in Union County until May of 2012. It was at that time the SWIFT Court pilot programs that were based on the HOPE Court model were starting up and Judge Hamilton Singleton wanted us to have one in Union County. I saw an opportunity to be involved in the creation of a program, which in my mind, could change how we view and handle probation across the state. I requested that I be transferred from Drug Court to this new SWIFT Court program, and that request was granted. I had no idea what I was about to get into. Shortly thereafter, Judge Singleton approached me and essentially said, "I want a program similar to this (HOPE Court). Make it happen." So I did. I took the principles and ideals of the HOPE Court and meshed them with the local practices of our Circuit Court and I developed a program that would become the Union County SWIFT Court. Judge Singleton approved of my work, and we began taking offenders into the program."

In the spring of 2013 Boroughs was promoted to Assistant Area Manager in Area 13 for the Camden office.

Outside of work he likes to watch and participate in outdoor sports and activities and volunteers as a 3rd and 4th grade youth football coach.

"I have always enjoyed being a part of a team and working together with others in order to achieve a common goal. My hope is that I can bring that love and desire of teamwork and togetherness to my area and agency through my position as Area Manager," said Boroughs.

Radios donated to Area 3 office for use by officers

Third Judicial District Prosecuting Attorney Henry Boyce purchased and donated two hand-held AWIN radios along with batteries, antennas and chargers for use by Arkansas. Community Correction officers in Area 3.

Boyce said, "Probation and parole officers are often overlooked as an integral part of our judicial system. These men and women are placed in danger on a regular basis and these communication devices will help provide them with a safer working environment. The funds used to acquire these high-tech radios were actually acquired form the forfeiture of illegal drug money confiscated from drug dealers in Jackson County."

Pictured above with the radios is ACC Officer Mark Harmon, Third Judicial District Prosecuting Attorney Henry Boyce and ACC Officer Mike Jones.

Are you looking for a job?

Arkansas Community Correction hires professional staff throughout the state for positions ranging from Correctional Officer to Counselor to Probation Officer.
For information about applying for a job at ACC, go to:
www.arstatejobs.com

Workshops help offenders in searching for jobs

The Area 11 Probation/Parole Office in the Pine Bluff held a Job Search Workshop with Gregory Bodiford from Arkansas Workforce Services (shown above). The workshop was to assist offenders with resume building, mock interviews and filling out applications. A total of 152 offenders were present for the workshop.

Officer attends graduation for employment program

ACC offenders continue to participate in the Transitional Employment Opportunity Program sponsored by Goodwill. As each group completes the program, there is a graduation ceremony. Officer Natasha Barkins attended one of those ceremonies and here is what she had to say:

"Today I had the pleasure of attending my first TEO Graduation Ceremony at Goodwill. I have observed several parolees who are participants in the program at various community/public functions as well as local businesses. I will say, it was a very happy occasion but emotional as well! Some of these people have stories that you would not believe. The programs sponsors also gave me recognition for my work and efforts of going above and beyond to help those on supervision that I try to assist as well as those who are in the Day Reporting Center."

NEC Residents complete local nutrition class

Saundra Harms with the Mississippi County Extension service, a division of the U of A Agricultural Department, is shown at left with 12 residents from the Northeast Center in Osceola. The residents were recognized for completing the Food & Nutrition class sponsored by her agency.

Probationers and parolees are shown above getting ready to attend a job fair in the Little Rock area. Employment is a often a condition of supervision.

ACC staff help offenders find employment

The Pocahontas ACC office required 12 probationer/parolees to report to the ACC office at 10 a.m. in late June, and Probation & Parole Officers Brooke Junkersfeld and Tanya Curry transported those 12 offenders to the Black River Technical College for the Peco Job Fair.

Offenders were instructed to report to the office on time and to be dressed appropriately and prepared for a job interview.

Of the 12 offenders who applied for employment while at the Job Fair, nine were hired instantly and began their employment with Peco the following day.

It was a successful day for the offenders, who said they were excited and felt as if they had accomplished something. The pictures tell the story, though, just by looking at the expressions on their faces. Several of these individuals had never been to a job interview, did not know how to fill out a job application, and did not know how to dress for a job interview.

PPO's Junkersfeld and Curry assisted them as needed with their applications and gave them words of encouragement before and after their interviews.

The Pocahontas and Walnut Ridge ACC offices continue to require unemployed offenders to attend the Job Fairs with the hope that this will greatly reduce the unemployment status of offenders in Area 3.

Reentry program working in Northwest area

Offender Kenneth Howell is shown above receiving his re-entry certificate of completion at the Fayetteville office from Re-Entry Officer Kris Eglin and Area Manager Ricky Hogg.

When an offender receives that certificate, it means he has completed six months of treatment, drug testing, employment skills classes, learned how to fill out a job application and possibly taken classes on relationship building and other classes that will help the offender re-enter the community. The Parole Board does stipulate its own conditions for parolees that may be different, but the overall certificate notes that the offender has completed programs.

www.arstatejobs.com

Workforce Services brings resources to Center

Shortly after the first residents moved into ACC's new East Central Center in West Memphis, the Mobile Workforce Center paid a visit to the campus.

The Mobile Workforce Centers are a project of the Business Retention & Workforce Transition Team of the Department of Workforce Services. Each Mobile Workforce Center (MWC) has full internet connectivity and is equipped with the computer technology needed when looking at entering today's job market.

Residents going into one of the units can be provided with assistance on drafting resumes and letters of application, effective interviewing skills, productive job search techniques, Arkansas JobLink registration, Occupational Skill Assessments, and the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) Assessments.

Residents are:

1. assisted in identifying workplace skill strengths.
2. alerted to areas where working skills can be improved
3. provided with training needed to qualify for employment.

Residents assisted are those who are 30 days or less from release from the center and in need of employment when they leave the center.

Newport Drug Court celebrates 10 years

The Newport Drug Court celebrated its 10th year during August with members from the first graduating class all the way through the last. The office was filled with old and new faces as they enjoyed a reception sponsored by the Newport First Assembly of God Church. Drug Court Admin Cathy Jeffery, Judge Harold Erwin and Deputy Prosecutor Rob Ratton are the only ones who have been with the program since its beginning.

Shown above, front row from left to right, is Drug Court Counselor Ashley Hanan, graduate Laticia Melton, Drug Court Admin Cathy Jeffery and graduates TJ Burnside and Kyle Carter. On the back row, from the left are graduates Josh Reed and Chris Austin, Third Judicial District Judge Harold Erwin, graduate Tyler Barker and Agent Mike Jones.

Josh Reed and Hailey Ozier, shown at left, were two of the first Drug Court graduates. Graduates and Drug Court staff are shown above enjoying refreshments.

Newport Drug Court continues to see graduates

Newport Drug Court is celebrating another graduation! The two-year program has completely changed the lives of five participants, all shown above, and each of them was able to shred their criminal record as they completed and graduated from the Drug Court program.

Above Admin Spec Melissa Lore and Drug Court graduate Kristin Seibert celebrated a life change. Kristin severely struggled with alcohol addiction, many times coming to jail where Lore once worked and had to care for her in a severely intoxicated state. The two were high school classmates. "I was so scared the officers would find her dead," Lore said. "Now we get to celebrate life without the control of drugs." At left, graduate Colby Brinkley left the office for the last time while Drug Court Intake Officer Cathy Jeffery and his family look on.

Offenders learning history while on parole ...

Offenders in ACC's Pulaski County Day Reporting Center took a trip to the Mosaic Templars to learn history.DRC coordinator Natasha Barkins says that after hearing multiple people in her program use the "N"word, she felt it was time to visit the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.

"They are frequently told that word is not appropriate or acceptable while they are in my presence. The ones that used it frequently managed to not be present this day. They were all given an assignment. They were to tour the museum, locate information that they previously had no knowledge of, and explain to me why they chose it/what was interesting about it.

"Three of the guys that were present have never been there nor did they know the center existed. For me the best thing about that outing was I didn't hear the "N" word any more after that.

One offender, who I have known since he was in the Pulaski County Juvenile Detention Center as a kid, thanked me for taking him. This is someone that has always expressed so much anger and hardly ever smiles.

He said, 'I learn something new from you everyday, Ms. Barkins!'

Residents are help with obtaining driver's license

Residents at ACC's Community Correction Centers often lose their driver's license while incarcerated. ACC has a program that helps them regain their license, if lost, or to obtain a license if they have never had one. Residents at the Central Arkansas Center in Little Rock are shown above after getting their driver's license.

Garimalla honored for her work on ACC project

Nisha Garimalla, 26, product manager for Protech Solutions Inc. in Little Rock, went to India while seeking her master's degree in computer science from Stanford University. She was there to put technology in schools but found problems outside the classroom. Garimalla said she learned that people in need often don't know which resources are available to help them.

Since then, the Little Rock Central High School graduate has launched a website for Arkansas Community Correction that connects those released from prison to resources they need to succeed and become productive.

"I get to meet these returning citizens that are actually changing their lives," Garimalla said. "But then I also get to see things on a large scale," like profiles on the site for all 55,000 on active parole and probation.

Ten years from now, Garimalla wants to be working on the expanded version of this project. She is a Healing Waters/L.O.V.E. mentor, a member of two local re-entry coalitions, an Arkansas Homeless Coalition member and ProTech was awarded ACC's Corporate Humanitarian Award.

Community Correction New Briefs From Around the State

A job fair was held at the Jonesboro Office in conjunction with Department Of Workforce Services. Approximately 20 offenders attended the workshop to learn how to fill out applications and set up resumes.

Following its adoption of the justice reinvestment recommendations made by of the Council of State Governments, the Task Force on Criminal Justice is preparing a report for Governor Hutchinson and the Arkansas General Assembly that will cover the recommendations and how they could benefit the state by reducing both recidivism and the growth in the state's prison population. After months of study and analysis, CSG made eight recommendations. Focus supervision resources on people who are most likely to reoffend. This recommendation includes a recommendation for more parole probation officers to lower caseloads.

- Increase the availability of effective community-based substance abuse treatment and services.
- Reconfigure aspect of ACC's center's to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of services intended to reduce recidivism.
- Limit the time supervision violators spend in prison so that beds are reserved for those who commit serious and violent offenses.
- Improve the parole decision-making process, preparation for release and information sharing among correctional agencies as it relates to parole.
- Revise the sentencing standards to ensure sentences to prison are reserved for people convicted of the most serious offenses or who have extensive criminal histories.
- Improve the collection of information related to restitution and access to compensation for victims of crime.
- Develop and fund strategies to reduce pressure on county jails, including specialized law enforcement training, screening and assessment, and diversion for people with mental illnesses.

Central Arkansas Community Correction Center resident Aaron Washington earned his GED.

Since two of the recommendations are related to behavioral health, the Task Force of Behavioral Health voted on and approved those recommendations. The chairmen of both task forces and CSG's researchers presented the recommendations to county officials during the Arkansas Association of County's Summit on Mental health and Criminal Justice Reinvestment. The summit was well-attended and included more than a dozen legislators and several agency representatives.

ACC has released the Request for Qualifications for the first Pay for Success project in Arkansas. The RFQ was released on September 13 and will be open for eight weeks. The RFQ will solicit responses from services providers, intermediaries, and project managers for all partners on one pay for success project in Arkansas. The RFQ specifically requests programming that would target individuals during either pre-adjudication or post-release from incarceration.

Treatment staff across the state are rolling out a pilot project to address the growing need for domestic violence classes. The Domestic Violence Education group is an eight-week, evidenced-based class that will be taught by SAPL counselors for parolees, probationers and drug court offenders who have been ordered by the court to attend such a class and for those who have a charge related to domestic violence. The classes are only for the perpetrators of domestic violence. If a need is seen, it is possible that classes for victims of domestic violence could be added in the future.

The Fayetteville Office has had a Yoga instructor, Joy Fox, come to the office and conduct classes for the officers and support staff twice a week. These sessions have been very good for the officers and staff. As a result, Officer Younee Faulkner and Agent Jessica Schermacher have worked with Joy Fox to set up a free Yoga class for offenders on Tuesdays in Fayetteville. The classes will be held at a studio in Fayetteville that is donating use of the facility to help with the cause.

Three graduate from Pine Bluff's Drug Court program

The Pine Bluff Drug Court held its graduation at the Jefferson County Courthouse, and three offenders graduated. A reception followed in honor of the graduates and their families.

Workshops help offenders prepare for working while in the community

Twenty offenders attended an Arkansas Workforce workshop at the Monticello office.

The purpose of the workshop is to help offenders prepare for job searching whether that be showing them how to fill out a job application or put together a resume or how to respond during an actual job interview.

Workshops like this are held throughout the state.

Studies have shown that offenders who are gainfully employed are more successful under community supervision.