



Minnesota Community Co **HAPPEN**

Spring 2005

Sponsor Spotlight

Damascus Way Reentry Center



Damascus Way is a halfway house licensed with the Department of Corrections and located in Golden Valley, MN. Founded in 1974, this 18-bed facility seeks to provide a structured and caring Christian program that will enable ex-offenders to remain crime and chemical free and to assist in their transition from prison to society.

Reverend Dick Harden became the first full time Director of Damascus Way; a private, 501c (3) organization in 1979. He began his career in related work in 1968 at Teen Challenge in Brooklyn, New York and program director at Teen Challenge in Long Branch, New Jersey. He returned to Minneapolis in 1972 to take the position of rehabilitation director of Midwest Challenge before coming to Damascus Way.



Damascus Way was established out of a need to counteract the high recidivism rate among newly released offenders. From 1974 until 1981, Damascus Way worked mainly on a voluntary basis with men who were dealing with drug and alcohol addictions. In 1981, Damascus Way

received a license with the Department of Corrections and began taking offenders directly from the prison system. In 1989, Damascus Way gained a Work Release license; and then a Supervised Release contract in 1990. Damascus Way has adapted with the changing needs of the corrections population.

Because of the difficulty of newly released men finding work in the early 1980's, Damascus Way began a furniture business to provide jobs for its residents. Each man worked a

few weeks at the center when he first entered the program, leaving with a job referral and good work experience. The furniture business was sold in 1988 because the job market in Minnesota had significantly improved. Dick Harden and the staff at Damascus Way have been working for over 25 years with the prison community, finding ways to help offenders through the difficult time of adjustment

Damascus, continued on p. 9



MAY TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Prison Tour: The Minnesota Correctional Facility at Stillwater

The Minnesota Correctional Facility-Stillwater, built in 1914 as an industrial prison, is the state's largest close-security, level four institution for adult male felons. Population is 1,300 (3/1/04).

Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2005

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Location: Minnesota Correctional Facility-Stillwater, 970 Pickett Street, Bayport, Minnesota 55003-1490 phone 651/779-2700, fax 651/351-3600

Important Registration Information:

You must provide your full name including first, middle, and last name, date of birth and drivers license number. Registrations must be e-mailed to Chad Christofferson: Chad.christofferson@state.mn.us Deadline for registration is Friday April 22, 2005. This training is limited to the first 20 individuals to respond.

This training is free to MCCA members. If you are not an MCCA member, you may attend this workshop and pay your annual \$20.00 membership.

Whats' Inside

AMICUS	p. 2
Winter Institute	p. 2, 9
President's Message	p. 3
Women's Conference	p. 4
Teen Challenge	p. 5
Perfect Storm	p. 6
Awards	p. 7

AMICUS - Partners Building New Lives

by Timothy Daniels

AMICUS is a non-profit organization with 38 years of experience in building positive and constructive relationships between offenders and the community. AMICUS partners with inmates, ex-offenders, juvenile offenders and communities to build successful lives and stronger communities. Through programming, policy and partnership, AMICUS:

- Brings offenders into positive human connection so that they may experience a sense of belonging;
- Increases the number of offenders who make a successful transition into community life and become active and contributing community members;
- Educates & encourages communities to be welcoming and supportive;
- Instills hope and transforms lives.

For almost four decades AMICUS has provided direct services to inmates, ex-offenders and their families through a variety of specialized programs (see box on p.8.)

During that time, we have maintained a strong partnership with the Minnesota Department of Corrections; developed countless connections in the community to help returning offenders; studied corrections /criminal justice research; and documented the results from

our own programs and projects. We've learned *a lot* in those years and decided recently to formally implement an Education/ Capacity-Building program that will help us expand our outreach and impact.

The eighties and nineties were an era of "get-tough," "three strikes and you're out," "lock 'em up and throw away the key" thinking. These attitudes are certainly not dead today. Increasingly, however, leaders are challenging the effectiveness of these approaches. Many faith communities, community groups, community agencies, and corporations are open to new ways of thinking about offenders and assisting them to reconcile with their communities and become positive contributors. But they don't quite know how. They may be unfamiliar with the prison system, nervous about getting involved with people whose lives seem foreign to them, or unsure about what offenders' needs really are. That's where AMICUS would like to help by offering education opportunities tailored for each audience, who include:

- Inmates and ex-offenders;
- Families (and other relationships) of offenders;
- Professional: Police, Parole Officers (P.O.) & Department of Corrections (DOC) employees;
- Community / Faith-based organizations;
- General public.

AMICUS currently offers a number of direct education

and training to offenders:

- Pre-release classes in personal empowerment, career planning and preparation, and transition planning;
- Pre- and post-release mentoring and planning;
- Restorative justice circles to deal with family and community issues;
- Post-release community support groups;
- Culturally specific groups.

In addition, AMICUS has numerous educational opportunities available to faith, community, and business groups exploring the possibility of working with offenders – ranging from guest speakers to full-blown strategic planning and volunteer training services. Some of the possibilities include:

- Guest speakers (volunteers, former offenders, or both) to educate leaders and the public on the realities of prison and what it takes to make the journey to a new life;
- Strategic planning to help faith communities minister effectively to offenders and their families;
- Consulting to help companies develop sound guidelines for hiring ex-offenders and to inform them about tax breaks and other government safeguards and incentives;
- Guidance for community groups to help them develop charitable, support, or outreach programs to offenders;

Farewell, Winter Institute

By Bridget Letnes

Following this year's Winter Institute on February 17th and 18th at Camp Ripley, the MCCA Board of Directors decided it would be in the best interest of the organization to let go of this long time tradition.

Despite providing relevant topics and outstanding speakers, we've experienced low attendance over the past few years. Moreover, we've found ourselves competing with other conferences scheduled at the same time of year. It just doesn't make sense to compete for participants. Our plan is to focus our efforts on our monthly education and training events. We want to develop new opportunities and partnerships through the creation of a new Board position. Our Special Events Coordinator will represent these new possibilities.

On behalf of MCCA, we would like to thank all of our devoted and supportive members who helped make the MCCA Winter Institute a successful tradition. We hope that you will look forward with us and be patient with us as we try to focus energy on developing new MCCA traditions.

We would also like to thank all of the committee members throughout the years who helped shape and organize the conferences in Hinckley, Wilder Forest, and Camp Ripley, MN. Your tireless efforts were much appreciated and we too hope that you are willing to join new adventures ahead.

AMICUS, continued on p. 8

MCCA Board of Directors

Steve Bisch, President
RS Eden/ReEntry Ashland
651-292-1466
sbisch@rseden.org

Jane Matthews, Past-President
Transistion Place
612-379-8050
jematthe@presenter.com

LuAnn Buck, Treasurer
R.S. Eden/ReEntry West
651-227-6291
lbuck@rseden.org

Vicki Crawford, Secretary
RS Eden/ReEntry Metro
651-644-1951
vcrawford@rseden.org

Bob Hanson, Administration
Ramsey Co. Comm. Corr.
651-266-2301
robert.a.hanson@co.ramsey.mn.us

Mary Dombrovski, Finance
Minnesota Department of Corrections
651-643-3442
mdombrovski@co.doc.state.mn.us

Brian Clifford, Membership
Ramsey Co. Comm. Corr.
651-266-2307
brian.clifford@co.ramsey.mn.us

Bridget Letnes
180 Degrees, Inc.
612-813-5017
bridget@180degrees.org

Harriette Manis, Women's Conference
Wilder Foundation
651-917-6222
hlm2@wilder.org

Nate Knutson, Marketing
MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake
218-485-5000x5672
naknutso@ml.doc.state.mn.us

Colleen Crockford, Education & Training
180 Degrees, Inc.
651-771-1301
colleen@180degrees.org

Mark Groves, Communications & Public Policy
R.S. Eden Alliance Apartments
612-630-3604
mgroves@rseden.org

President's Message

By Steve Bisch

I have a number of topics I would like to touch on to bring you up to date in terms of MCCA board activity. After several years of having our membership year begin and end with the Winter Institute, we are establishing a revolving membership year. This will enable any paying member to take advantage of twelve full months of trainings and newsletters no matter what time of year they sign up. This change became effective in February 2005.

Have you checked out our rejuvenated Website? You may even be reading this *Happenings* on the website. A big thank you goes to Mark Groves and Ryan Walicke. They spent many hours investigating what needed to be done to get the MCCA web site up to date. Our website manager rotated off the Board last year. With that loss went the knowledge (and savvy) needed to access and update noteworthy information. Mark has since "spiffed up" the look of the pages, made some nice modifications, updated training announcements, inserted the latest *Happenings* newsletter, and enhanced the ability to contact Board members and register for workshops. He is continuing to explore ways to improve MCCA's website.

Thank you and good luck to Clay Hildahl. After spending a majority of the last nine years on the MCCA Board, Clay has accepted a probation position and moved to sunny Arizona.

It is with mixed feelings that the MCCA board agreed to dissolve the Winter Institute. Bridget Letnes and the Winter Institute committee produced another wonderful conference again this year. But, declining attendance left us in a position to explore other possibilities and direction. The newly formed Special Events commit-

Photo of Steve?

tee is researching refreshing opportunities to replace the Winter Institute with something that makes more sense. It was with great regret that we cancelled our next Winter Institute, as it was a cornerstone of MCCA.

I am excited about being MCCA's President this year. One of my goals is to expand our membership. I am pleased to announce that our annual Crappie Tournament and Golf Tournament are being planned as I write. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, suggestions or concerns about MCCA (sbisch@rseden.org). Thank you. Steve.

There were two guys named Sven and Ole working for the city. One would dig a hole, and the other would follow behind him and fill the hole in. They worked furiously all day without rest, one guy digging a hole, the other guy filling it in again.

An onlooker was amazed at their hard work, but couldn't understand what they were doing. So he asked the hole-digger, "I appreciate the effort you are putting into your work, but what's the story? You dig a hole and your partner follows behind and fills it up again."

The hole-digger wiped his brow and sighed, "Well, normally we are a three-man team, but the guy who plants the trees is out sick today."

2004 Conference on Women Offenders

by Kelley Heifort and Harriette Manis

The second annual Conference on Women Offenders, "A New Vision: Guiding Principles for a Gender Responsive Criminal Justice system," was held on December 9, 2004, at the University of Minnesota, Continuing Education and Conference Center in St. Paul. It was a very successful event with approximately 180 participants attending the one day conference. Based on the evaluations, most indicated they received useful information and ideas on how to provide gender specific programming and services for women offenders.

During the first portion of the day, presenters Drs. Barbara Bloom and Barbara Owen

presented their research findings which focused on Gender Responsive Policy and the six Guiding Principles discussed in the National Institute of Corrections "Gender Responsive Strategies" Manual. These Guiding Principles present a framework which suggests that addressing the realities of women's lives through gender responsive policy and programs can improve outcomes in all phases of the criminal justice system. The Guiding Principles could provide a pathway for a gender responsive approach within the

community, programs and corrections. The second part of the day featured a "Minnesota Connection", displaying community corrections, jails, prisons and community agencies that are currently practicing these strategies. There were also break out sessions for participants to share ideas on program or strategic implementation.

This conference marked the first Esther Tomljanovich Lifetime Achievement Award given by the Conference Committee to recognize those who have spent a lifetime advocating for women offenders and social justice. The first recipient of this award, for whom the award shares her name, was Supreme Court Justice Esther Tomljanovich. Justice Tomljanovich has an impressive history of service in Minnesota. Through her judicial experience, she came to understand that treating men and women identically did not treat them with equity. She was recognized for her tireless work on behalf of ensuring justice for women offenders. The "ET" Award will be an ongoing tradition for the Conference on Women Offenders.



Principles could provide a pathway for a gender responsive approach within the

Nomination ballots for the award recipients will be included in the next year's conference brochures.

If you are interested in reading and learning more regarding the guiding principles presented at this conference, the Gender Responsive Strategies Manual can be downloaded by going to the NIC website: www.nicic.org.



Minnesota Teen Challenge

By Kimberly Lende

Teen Challenge has only recently begun to be on the “radar screen” of the American consciousness. But since its inception in 1958, God has grown this program with a heart for the hurting addict to almost 350 centers worldwide—all devoted to permanently freeing people chained in addiction. It all began in New York City, where a preacher named David Wilkerson reached out to street gang members that everyone else said were worthless. This stirring story was told in a best-selling book by Pastor Wilkerson & a Billy Graham film of the same name, *The Cross & the Switchblade*. The same Spirit of devotion to those in addiction is what Teen Challenge is all about, and has resulted in tens-of-thousands of lives radically changed throughout the world, thousands in Minnesota alone.

In twelve years, Minnesota Teen Challenge has grown from its start in a condemned former crack house that Pastor Rich Scherber got for \$1, to the largest Teen Challenge center around - housing over 300 residents. Because the need for help from addiction is so great, MnTC not only serves teen girls & boys ages 13-17, but also adult men & women from 18-70.

Our 12-15 month Christ-centered residential program teaches individuals their true value as created beings. The program is divided into 4 parts, all focusing on spiritual and emotional wellness. A pastoral counselor is assigned to each resident to help assess & meet their spiritual needs. And because our goal is to mend not only the resident, but their family relationships as well, residents attend family & individual counseling with the Christian psychologist on staff.



Here’s the story of one young life transformed while in the program:

“Hi, I’m Missy. Pregnancy is not something that most fourteen-year-olds hope for, but I wanted a baby so bad. I wanted to have something that would love me, but I never got my wish. So out of despair, I attempted suicide ten times, and when that failed, I began cutting myself every day. But I still felt emptiness inside. My church urged me to go to Teen Challenge. During my time in this program there’s been a radical change in my heart because I finally found what I was missing. I discovered God’s love—not a tiny little bit—but a flood of His love washed over me. It has changed me from the inside out. I don’t have a desire to cut myself anymore, and I don’t think a baby is the answer to my life. I know now that it was God I was looking for the whole time.”

Teens enrolled in the program also attend mandatory classes at the on-site Minneapolis Public alternative school and flourish under individualized learning. Adults in need of a GED (high-school diploma equivalent) also

have the opportunity to study & test as part of their program.

MnTC residents are also required to participate in chapel, daily devotions, group study, and choir. Each week residents split into four or five choir groups and visit churches throughout Minnesota. They share with congregations their very personal testimonies & songs overflowing with the joy of being delivered from shackles of addiction.

Minnesota Teen Challenge’s highly-structured, loving atmosphere is a truly remarkable place, where addicts permanently recover from drug and alcohol abuse and the life-controlling problems associated with it. Rebellion and self-destructive behaviors are taken apart bit by bit—replaced with a healing that only God can give. The beautiful result is a respect for authority and a deep love & gratitude to the God Who freed them.

For more information about Minnesota Teen Challenge, please visit our web site at www.mntc.org or call 612-FREEDOM.

The Perfect Storm

By Dan Cain

Between the 1980 census and the 2000 census, the population of Minnesota rose just under 21 percent. During that same time frame, the Minnesota prison population rose more than 300 percent. In 1980, Minnesota had just under 1800 citizens incarcerated in State facilities. Today we have more than 7,000. Nationwide, we have tripled the population of State and Federal prison systems to more than 2 million people.

According to the latest Justice Department statistics:

- One out of every 150 Americans is behind bars;
- On any given day, 1.96 million U.S. children have a parent in jail or prison; five million more have parents who have been incarcerated;
- One out of three young African-American males is under some form of criminal justice supervision;
- For every black male enrolled in college, five are behind bars; for every Latino attending a four-year college, three are incarcerated.

According to FBI, Uniform Crime Statistics, in 1995, when there were a mere 1.1 million people incarcerated, there were 5,373 index crimes (those most likely to result in a prison sentence) reported per 100,000 population. In 2002, the number was 4,119 per 100,000.

Regardless of whether you draw the conclusion that we are locking up too many people, for too long, or whether you draw the conclusion that tripling our prison population is working, one fact is indisputable; today we are releasing more ex-offenders into society than ever before. Annual entries to parole or supervised release under 200,000 nationwide in 1980 will approach 700,000 in 2005.

Another indisputable fact is that today there are fewer options available for returning offenders to successfully reintegrate into society than there were in 1980. Technology has now advanced to the point where any minimum wage employer or landlord of affordable

housing can do a background check on any individual with the same thoroughness which used to be reserved for National Security jobs. Despite the existence of laws, such as the Criminal Offenders Rehabilitation Act (M.S. Chap. 364) which prohibits discrimination based upon criminal history except in rare cases, employers and landlords willing to take a chance on a known ex-offender are rare.

Bureaucratically, we have additional limited access to jobs and housing through legislation that prohibits felons from working in select industries. One such effort, attached to sex offender

“after enough small paper cuts, you can still find yourself bleeding to death”

legislation which would exclude most felons from working in human service jobs for at least 10 years is currently being debated in the Minnesota House. We have also established prohibition on certain felons from having access to public housing and from receiving such things as student loans.

Human service resources that address things like addiction and mental illness which often contribute to crime are also becoming less available. Between 1987 and 1997, U.S. spending on substance abuse treatment declined by more than 11 percent. It has been decreasing nearly every year since then. During the same time frame, the percentage of inmates serving sentences for drug offenses increased by more than 300 percent. Resources for community corrections, including half-way houses, probation and parole supervision and work release have remained relatively static, despite the increased numbers.

Politically speaking, the emphasis toward getting “tough on crime” shows no signs of abating. The collective psyche of our elected officials seems to



reject the argument that “tough on crime,” does not necessarily mean “smart on crime.” It seems as though every year, a heinous crime

occurs that causes a feeding frenzy to ratchet up sentences for a particular category in the name of public safety. And “beware” any politician who questions the wisdom of such action. They can count on being painted “soft on crime” in the next election cycle.

The response to an egregious crime by raising sentences is a natural reaction. Doing so multiple times over a 20-year period invokes the paper cut analogy: after enough small paper cuts, each of which is not severe, you can still find yourself bleeding to death. Not only are we bleeding to death on prison spending, we are on the verge of a public safety crisis, the likes of which we have never seen, because rarely has there been any attention, much less appropriate attention, being paid to what will be available once people get out of prison and reenter society.

Tripling the size of our prison population and (by extension those being released from prison) at the same time reducing resources to address the things that help produce criminal behavior, and systematically limiting access to those things people need to sustain themselves on the outside such as housing and jobs, could just be the public safety version of the “perfect storm.” And we aren’t likely to avoid the upcoming train wreck by simply doing more of the same.

Dan Cain is the President of RS Eden, a multi-disciplinary community service agency providing substance abuse treatment, community corrections and affordable housing. In addition he is a past chair of the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

Robbie Robinson Excellence Award

Photo of Harriette?

For more than 20 years the Robbie Robinson Staff Excellence Award has been presented to a staff person who has demonstrated outstanding achievement and dedication to community corrections. Robbie Robinson spent over 20 years of his adult life in prison for a series of offenses, and upon release, developed a safe and sober living environment in 1973 for men returning to the community. This program is called 180 Degrees. The Robbie Robinson Award requires that the recipient be nominated by a peer or a number of peers.

This year, Harriette Manis has been recognized for her dedication, community involvement and excellence in the field of corrections. Harriette has worked for the A. H. Wilder Foundation for nearly 8 years. She has impacted participants, one at a time, assisting them with their transition from the Women's Correctional Facility in Shakopee to the community, implementing best practices in all areas of corrections and contributing

to Restorative Justice/Peace Making activities both within the prison system and the community. In addition, Harriette represents Wilder on several community boards, was instrumental in presenting the yearly Women's Offender Conference and contributes to both Cognitive Skills groups and daily Job Club. Harriette puts the "energizer bunny" to shame as she works tirelessly to make a difference in the offenders' lives, giving them opportunity for change and success. Congratulations to Harriette and thanks for her dedication and commitment.

Past Recipients

"Going above and beyond the call of duty" is the recurring statement used in describing the work habits of our past award recipients. Here they are:

1983 Dale Fisher
 1984 Mike McGrane
 1985 Liz Tellers
 1986 Joan Cichosz
 1987 Lennis Carpentier
 1988 Jim Bransford
 1989 Helen Trickey
 1990 Joseph Adderley
 1991 David Mathews
 1992 Steve Rancour & Tom Kane
 1993 Ken Pugh
 1994 Nina Swanson
 1995 Wayne Eggleston
 1996 Raul Sanchez
 1997 Jan Wagener & Roy Adams
 1998 Kris McGregor
 1999 David Heacock
 2000 Dona Woltering
 2001 Michelle Moran
 2002 Kathy Tarver-King
 2003 Paul Stasica
 2004 Doreen Robinson
 2005 Harriette Manis

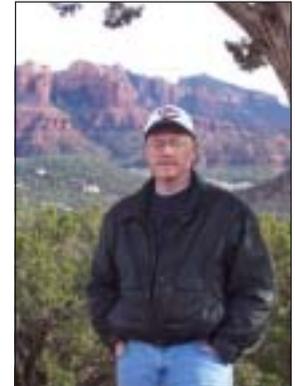
Board of Directors Service Award

A heartfelt "Thank You" & "Best Wishes" to Clay Hildahl. During the month of December 2004, as his term as Past President came to a close, the MCCA Board of Directors made a unanimous decision to present him with the Board of Directors Award for "Outstanding Service and Continuing Support to the Minnesota Community Corrections Association."

Clay first served on the Board from October of 1995 until February of 2001, including a term as President of Minnesota Community Corrections Association. In January of 2002, he was asked to return as Past President because of an unforeseen vacancy. In March of 2002, we had the misfortune of losing both our President & President-Elect. In an emergency action, the Board of Directors appointed Clay to fill the vacancy of President of the Board. In 2003, the membership of MCCA re-elected Clay to serve another term as President. He then served as Past President through December of 2004, at which time he announced that he would be doing what most of us have considered doing at least once at that time of year when the wind chill is at its finest and spring seems a long way off: he took a job as a probation officer in Arizona.

Clay began his career in corrections after he left the work of police officer in Los Angeles in 1994 & moved back to Minnesota. He started at 180 Degrees in 1994 as a Senior Case Manager; after about 2 years became the Program Supervisor of the Residential Division of 180 Degrees. After becoming an invaluable member of the 180 Degrees management team, he was given supervision of OnSite Monitoring

& the Non-Residential programs. In 2000, he became the Program Director of the Non-Residential



Clay, Cathedral Rock, Sedona, AZ

Division & held that position until he fled the snow & cold this past December. Since 2000, Clay was also a part-time Probation Officer with Anoka County Community Corrections, Lino Lakes, where he worked in a secure facility with juvenile offenders. Clay began & ended his Minnesota Corrections career at 180 Degrees on the same day: December 27, 1994 and 2004. He will continue this synchronicstic way of life living with his wife near Sedona, AZ, close to the famous vortexes of the Southwest.

Over the course of the past 9 plus years, Clay served on the Board for a total of eight years and four months, serving as Finance Manager, Treasurer, & 5 1/2 years in a "Presidential" capacity. He was a steadying force during some unsettling times for the organization. In his first year as President, he got the MCCA website on-line & in his last year as President he created & ran the first annual MCCA golf tournament. MCCA benefited greatly from his time, talent, & contributions during his tenure. He will be missed. We wish Clay all the luck in the world!

AMICUS, continued from p. 2

- Customized, in-depth training and support to help your organization’s volunteers and/or professional staff work effectively with offenders;
- Co-sponsorship of forums, seminars, and conferences to shed light on criminal justice topics and advocate for effective rehabilitation efforts;
- Education and training to help communities learn about and implement restorative justice practices.

Like many non-profits, AMICUS is feeling the impact of a “perfect storm” of events. While we have been seeing the largest inmate exodus ever, there have also been large cutbacks in programming and funding for offender transitions. In addition, there has been a significant amount of negative media and political attention directed at criminal justice and the corrections system, making it more difficult to assist inmates and offenders attempting to rebuild their lives.

In this time of economic and political uncertainty, we are committed to using all of our experience, connections and knowledge to not only provide support to inmates and ex-offenders but to educate and strengthen community involvement.

About AMICUS

Through innovative programming, AMICUS helps offenders reshape their lives, reach their goals, and make successful transitions from prison into the community. Public education initiatives and partnerships with community groups help shape public opinion and create a climate where offenders are empowered to change and grow.

Mission

AMICUS partners with inmates, ex-offenders, juvenile offenders, and communities to build successful lives and stronger communities.

Programs

ONE-TO-ONE matches trained volunteers with motivated adult offenders for friendship and mentoring.

MEN OF RAFIKI and SISTERS HELPING SISTERS offer support to African-American adult offenders, including case management and support groups both before and after release.

Restorative justice programs for female juvenile offenders assist girls, their victims, and their families through circles and trauma counseling.

RECONNECT provides re-entry referral services that help offenders plan for their release.

Education/Capacity-Building offerings provide inmates, ex-offenders, their families, corrections professionals, and the community with quality education/training that contributes to the support and success of offenders in transitioning back into community.

To learn more about AMICUS, call (612) 348-8570, or visit the website at www.amicususa.org.



Prison versus Work Just in case you ever got the two mixed up, this should make things a bit clearer for you.

IN PRISON . . . you spend the majority of your time in an 8 X 10 cell.

AT WORK . . . you spend the majority of your time in a 6 X 8 cubicle.

IN PRISON . . . you get three meals a day.

AT WORK . . . you only get a break for one meal and you pay for it.

IN PRISON . . . you get time off for good behavior.

AT WORK . . . you get more work for good behavior.

IN PRISON . . . the guard locks and unlocks all the doors for you.

AT WORK . . . you must carry around a security card and open all the doors for yourself.

IN PRISON . . . you can watch TV and play games.

AT WORK . . . you get fired for watching TV and playing games.

IN PRISON . . . they allow your family and friends to visit.

AT WORK . . . you can't even speak to your family.

IN PRISON . . . the taxpayers pay all expenses with no work required.

AT WORK . . . you get to pay all the expenses to go to work and then they deduct taxes from your salary to pay for prisoners.

IN PRISON . . . you spend most of your life inside bars wanting to get out.

AT WORK . . . you spend most of your time wanting to get out and go inside bars.

IN PRISON . . . you must deal with sadistic wardens.

AT WORK . . . they are called managers.

Have a Great Day at WORK!!

Damascus, continued from cover

after release.

In 2004, Damascus Way served 65 clients. Over half of these clients successfully graduated and continue to live productive, chemically free lives. To be considered for graduation, a client must:

- Have served his mandated time;
- Be consistent in his employment;
- Be active in his support network;
- Make adequate progress on personal goals;
- Be chemically free;
- Have a positive & realistic release plan.

Damascus Way desires to see all their clients succeed in reaching their personal goals, remaining crime and chemically free, and furthering their employment and educational careers. The ultimate goal of Damascus Way is to assure their clients a successful integration back into society as productive citizens who will serve God and their communities. Damascus Way does this by:

- Maintaining a high level of accountability and supervision for each client, including 24 hour supervision;
- Weekly accountability groups;
- One-on-one counseling;
- Individual case management;
- Employment & housing referrals;
- Daily devotionals;
- Chapel;
- Helping clients develop a positive social network through church and AA groups.

Damascus Way is also conveniently located in a non-residential area of Golden Valley, close to the major bus lines. This allows clients to remain clear from the noise and temptations that can come with the inner-city environment.

Damascus Way welcomes all men who are being released from prison who are willing to follow the structure

and policies of the program. The programming is based on Biblical principles such as:

- Accepting personal responsibility for making changes;
- Displaying openness to receive correction and guidance;
- Displaying accountability;
- Displaying personal discipline.

Referrals to the program are made through prison caseworkers or parole officers. Acceptance into the program is determined after reviewing institutional files and a personal interview.

Since 1974, Damascus Way has believed in the power of Jesus Christ to change lives. The dedicated staff at Damascus Way is well educated and experienced. As time goes on, Damascus Way continues to adapt to the changing needs of corrections. However, the core values remain the same:

- Provide a structured program where offenders are taught according to Biblical truth;
- Assist the offender in becoming a responsible, contributing member of society;
- Provide the community with a safe, low risk, well-monitored facility;
- Provide the state and county correctional system with a well-structured, cost effective, high quality reentry program.

It is with these goals in mind that Damascus Way will continue to operate and serve each client with respect, the community with promise and the state with hope for the future. For more information on Damascus Way, go to www.damascusway.com.

One Last Hurrah! Winter Institute 2005.

By Bridget Letnes

This year's Winter Institute was held on February 17th and 18th at Camp Ripley. This was our second year with this venue, and despite a few bumps in the road (what was Thursday's lunch???) the conference was excellent.

Dane Peterson, fresh from MCF-Red Wing, was an outstanding keynote speaker, preaching "Responsivity." He was funny, to the point, and an all-around positive element to the conference and MCCA. Our workshops featured wonderful speakers and pleasing topics including: *Cognitive Skills, Emotional Mastery, Civil Commitment, Family Group Conferencing, Effective Case Management, and Native American Sensitivity*. The Conference participant evaluations were very positive. Unfortunately one of our hot topics, *Treatment and Supervision of Female Sex Offenders* had to cancel due to a presenter's sick family member.

We were a small bunch; attendance was very low, despite last year's climb from 2003. But, we enjoyed an evening at Camp Ripley playing indoor volleyball and some of us wandered off base to the local saloon for food, darts, and billiards. The single rooms surprised many conference participants by being comfortable, quiet, and spacey for a bargain price of \$23 per night. I told you guys you wouldn't be sleeping on a cot!

I want to thank all of the attendees and presenters at this year's conference. I hope it was as much a pleasure for you as it was for the committee who organized it!

Minnesota Community Corrections Association
357 Oneida Street
St. Paul, MN 55102