



CI ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2021 9AM – 11AM

Location: Virtual TEAMS

PRESENT

Committee Members: Jim Huffman, Terri Fortner, Suzanne Cook, Danny Carrao, Marilyn Kennedy, Rep. Tarra Simmons

Guest: Danyielle Slothaug – Cement Mason Workers Local 528

CI/DOC Staff: Secretary Strange, Sarah Sytsma, Danielle Armbruster, Jamie Dolan, Emily Hetland, Todd Cunnington, Scott Edwards, Adrea Stephens, Calvin Thorpe, Steve Petermann, Jeremy Barclay, CI CMT Members

Meeting called to order at 9:03AM

WELCOME

CI Director Sarah Sytsma welcomed everyone to the meeting, conducted an official roll call.

Steve Petermann introduced our guest speaker Danyielle Slothaug who was a former resident at Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCC) and participated in the TRAC program. Danyielle is now a working member of the Cement Masons Union Local 528.

Danyielle shared her story with the group stating that she has been in and out of prison six times, has over 30 felonies, and has traveled a very long road to be where she is now. She decided to join TRAC during COVID and was introduced to Marilyn Kennedy who has served as an encourager and mentor since she has released. Marilyn has shown Danyielle how important it is for a woman to be in the trades as they are predominately run by males. Danyielle also shared how instrumental Steve Petermann has been to her success, pushing her to power through on days that were hard and by providing forms of support in building self-confidence; he is able to adjust a person's personal learning style so that he can ensure that they will become successful.

Danyielle shared that she is appreciative to one specific CI staff who totally dedicated herself to the students in the program and it made her feel like she was seen as more than just a number within the DOC system. TRAC taught her the meaning of hard work, she was able to push herself to overcome obstacles and fears that have held her back for years.

Danyielle applied for a cement mason job and within an hour she had the job. She said that she loves every aspect of being a cement mason. Connecting with Marilyn Kennedy and Wendy Martindale was instrumental to her success while in work release, each of them held her hand and was there for her to lean on for support. The Urban League also helped with necessities such as clothing, payment scheduling and some of the basics needed upon release. When Danyielle connected with the ANEW program they paid for her tools, at each step there was support so that it almost made it impossible for



her to fail. Following the pathway that was created for her to succeed was everything she needed and all she had to do was follow it.

Danyielle now has her own apartment, driver's license, and will be getting her three year old daughter back on October 22nd. No one did it for her, but somewhere along the line she was told she was worth it and had people believe in her even at times when she didn't believe in herself. She now has a family community within the local cement masons union and it is what keeps her going and accountable. Her old community consisted of people who made bad choices and drug use. Her new community is one that pushes her to do her best and it is now who she is, someone who is full of potential and has a bright future ahead of her.

Sarah thanked Danyielle for sharing her awe-inspiring story and opened the floor up for questions. Secretary Strange asked if there is any advice on how the department of corrections can create more opportunities to help support the success of the incarcerated individuals within DOC's care. Danyielle responded to the question by saying that giving them a choice goes a long way because it feels like they have control of their own lives and it gives them something to believe in.

Marilyn stated how wonderful it is to work with Wendy Martindale (Workforce Development Specialist), who gives her a heads up when we have individuals releasing and would like to start their career with the trades union. She said that she takes great pride in working with the TRAC program.

Sarah and Danielle thanked Danyielle again for sharing her inspirational success story.

Open Forum: 9:50 AM

Suzanne Cook had a couple of comments.

1. She thanked Danyielle for her presentation and stated that people do age out of the system and said that it needs to be a critical point that should be acknowledged and discussed.
2. Suzanne would like information regarding the ethnic breakdown. Danielle said the demographics regarding the report is one that compares to all of the incarcerated population.
3. Password on the agenda has a typo which is incorrect, and it prevented people from logging on as she has received several calls from people trying to get on.

Open forum concluded at 9:55AM

BUSINESS MEETING

Approval of 3/17/21 Meeting Minutes:

Motion was made for approval and seconded. Minutes were approved as submitted. Suzanne Cook stated that there were committee members listed that she believes were not on the call during the meeting. Sarah said that we will look back at our notes and make any necessary corrections.

AJAC Presentation

Steve Petermann provided an update on the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) and Trades Related Apprenticeship Coaching (TRAC) partnership. TRAC and AJAC have worked together over the last couple of years and have held one manufacturing academy, and there is also one scheduled to start next week. Out of 7 graduates one has released and is working on the outside.

Through the AJAC program we can run pre- apprenticeship manufacturing academy which they provide the tools and equipment for the students. We have now added a CNC controller job to the program which has a coding simulator. Participants can join with or without college credits and the training takes place right onsite in the shop area. We are currently running the manufacturing academy at WCCW which is a 10-week course, offered in several cities around the state where students learn both soft and technical skills. We have applied for a grant to expand our business but are still waiting for an approval. Steve said that he would like to see some form of documentation that captures the work records of the incarcerated population in a format that potential jobs can view and understand.

The apprenticeship workgroup meets every other month, and they discuss ways that they can create pathways, community relationships, solve problems to make sure that everyone stays connected for the students who are graduating into the community.

Secretary Strange spoke to partnering and possibly expanding our work with the Department of Social and Health Services and the similar programs that they offer. She stated that it would be wonderful to be able to connect them as another avenue to partner with. We are currently working on grant to expand the AJAC program to the men's facilities.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Sarah stated that we are ending another year and there will be three open spots on the committee that we will open up for recruitment; an announcement will be sent out after notifications have been made.

Action Items:

- Adrea will double check the participant names on the meeting minutes from 6/24/21.
- Danielle will work with the work release supervisors to facilitate a conversation with Marilyn and department to ensure that we cut down any barriers currently in place.
- Suzanne would like a summary of ethnic breakdown attached so that we can get a full picture of the data. Danielle stated that we will work on getting a summary together by our next meeting as requested.
- Adrea will send out the vacant committee positions once they are identified.
- Sarah will provide a written update from on the work that is being done by the commissary workgroup along with the names of the individuals who participate in the workgroup.
- Will provide an update on the role of the workforce development staff and the reentry navigators at the next meeting.

Conclusion of meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50AM.