

JJ JUSTICEWORKS • JOURNAL

A quarterly newsletter published by Justiceworks, Ltd, a non-profit community justice organization dedicated to advancing policies and practices of justice that create right relationships in the communities of Portage County. Volunteer task forces of Justiceworks consider issues of mentoring, victim/offender conferencing, substance-free housing, and access to justice. Justiceworks has received grants from the State Bar of Wisconsin, the Community Foundation, the Department of Justice, St. Bronislava Church, the Polish Legion of American Veterans, and the Wisconsin Humanities Board. Developing community involvement in the justice system requires substantial assistance and commitment. To join the effort please return the registration below with your pledge. All contributions are tax deductible as Justiceworks is a tax exempt organization under Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Justiceworks, 1547 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____ email _____

Donation \$ _____

quote for a quarter:

This is the duty of our generation as we enter the twenty-first century -- solidarity with the weak, the persecuted, the lonely, the sick, and those in despair. It is expressed by the desire to give a noble and humanizing meaning to a community in which all members will define themselves not by their own identity but by that of others.

Elie Wiesel

Fostering forms of justice that strengthen and heal the communities of Portage County!

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1547 STRONGS AVENUE
STEVENS POINT WI 54481

Justiceworks • Journal

Fostering Restorative Justice for Portage County

4/03/08

JUSTICEWORKS ANNUAL MEETING TO KICKOFF LAW WEEK

In recognition of the 50th Anniversary of National Law Day, Justiceworks, Ltd. will kick off the events of the 2008 Law Week with its annual meeting. Please join us on Monday evening, April 28th from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Portage County Annex Building, 1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, in Conference Room 5 on the third floor. Featured Guest Speakers: Riverside House residents and Justiceworks service program recipients. Learn who earns the 2008 Justiceworks Award. Featured guest Jeff Bakken will provide music. Join the festivities for fun, music, refreshments and an update on the progress of Justiceworks and restorative justice in Portage County.

Social time and refreshments 5:00-5:30 pm.

Program 5:30-6:45 pm.

Annual Meeting 6:45-7:00 pm.

(optional for non-voting attendees)

Please come and enjoy refreshments, music, and RESTorative time together.

This is a Free community event, but

a (suggested) Donation of \$20.00 per person will help support restorative justice initiatives in Portage County.

See the pages 3 and 4 to review other Law Week Events!

"We must be the change we wish to see." Mohandas Gandhi

WORK FOR JUSTICE!

Upcoming Activities

April-May: **Mediation and Victim-Offender Conferencing Training** sessions are being held in the months of April and May for volunteers assisting in mediation and victim-offender conferencing services to resolve restitution issues.

Week of April 28th: **Law Week Events and Annual Meeting:** See the programs described on pages 3 and 4.

May 1-2: The **2nd Annual Restorative Justice Conference:** Serving Crime Victims/Survivors and Communities Through Restorative Practices- Kalahari Resort, WI Dells. For registration information call the Justiceworks Office at 344-3677.

August 29th: **Justiceworks Pre-race Community Spaghetti Dinner**

Please join us for a fun-filled evening with the Suzuki Stroll ¼ mile Kid's Run at 5:30 p.m., dinner, music and race packet pick-up. All Friday events will be held at the Pfiffner Building in the Pfiffner Park behind the bandshell. 5:00-8:00 pm. Call Justiceworks Office at 344-3677 for reservations and information.

August 30th: **JustRun08 Half Marathon and 5K .** On-line registration is open at www.justiceworksltd.org or call for more information, and a race brochure, at 344-3677 or by e-mail to Katherine.Munck@Justiceworksltd.org.

Sign up for a JustRun08 Justice Team in Training t-shirt. Send orders in to Katherine.Munck@Justiceworksltd.org or by calling the Justiceworks Office at 344-3677. Send in name, mailing address, e-mail address, t-shirt size and \$12.00.

**Receive your copy of this JJ newsletter by email.
Send your address to:
katherine.munck@justiceworksltd.org**

**It will reduce our paper and postage costs and
get you the latest news on Justiceworks earlier.**

Justiceworks Helps Sponsor First Martin Luther King Event



Community members braved winter cold, blowing snow, and freezing ice to attend the first community celebration in the Stevens Point area in recognition of Martin Luther King and his legacy of advancement of equal justice opportunities for all American citizens. The Pinery Room overflowed with individuals who came to hear about the history of the civil rights movement from University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Professor Emeritus Paul Mertz. Judge Frederic Fleishauer addressed the crowd about the current state of affairs in Wisconsin regarding social justice issues and the need for a restorative justice system response. A UWSP student chorus rounded out the enjoyable and informative evening with music from the civil rights movement. Refreshments encouraged long discussions during the community social hour that followed. The evening was sponsored jointly with faith-based organizations interested in forming an interfaith partnership in support of community justice initiatives.



Greetings from the Executive Director

Between 1992 and 2003 Wisconsin's jail admissions increased 88%. The recidivism rate for offenders remains high throughout the state, including Portage County where 91% of those incarcerated are return offenders. 83% of the prisoners have identified substance abuse treatment needs. These staggering figures compel us to find appropriate, more effective alternatives to incarceration programs to reduce recidivism rates.

Justiceworks, Ltd. has been working with Portage County justice departments and community members to promote change in the justice system and to reduce the high recidivism rate through effective, evidence-based community programs. Together with Portage County leaders, we have identified two critical gaps in the system's response to these issues. They include:

- A lack of objective assessment information concerning offenders at critical decision points in the process. Information on offenders' risk to the community and their treatment needs will make more effective use of limited treatment resources reducing the likelihood of recidivism.
- A fragmented support structure for offenders upon release and return to their homes and neighborhoods. Research identifies these structures as key elements in reducing the likelihood of re-incarceration.

Justiceworks is collaborating with county and community leaders to assess and classify offender risk and treatment needs, reduce obstacles to successful reentry, and coordinate a uniform community-wide service delivery system. Community volunteers are an integral part of this process. Without volunteer support, the justice system will not have the capability to expand program options within the sentencing structure. Thank you for supporting our organization with your volunteer service and financial support. Please visit our website for updated information on Justiceworks' program initiatives at www.justiceworksltd.org.

Sincerely, Katherine Munck, Executive Director

The Rule of Law: Foundation for Communities of Opportunity and Equity

THE THEME OF LAW WEEK FOR 2008

The rule of law refers to a system of self-government with a strong and accessible legal process. President John F. Kennedy said “by strengthening the rule of law we strengthen freedom and justice.” We all have a stake in the rule of law. **To strengthen it, take part in the various activities across our community during Law Week and promote the discussion.**

Kick-Off Event - Monday, April 28th, 5:00-7:00 PM Conference Room 5, County Annex Building, 1462 Strongs Avenue. “Community Restorative Response for Opportunity and Equity Under the Law ” Listen to community members from the Riverside House relate personal stories of tragedy and triumph in dealing with and overcoming alcohol and drug addiction. Enjoy refreshments and music. All community members welcome. Sponsored by Justiceworks, Ltd.

Tuesday, April 29th, 7:00-9:00 pm. Dreyfus University Center, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Community Panel Discussion “Portage County Justice and You” Introductory remarks by the Honorable Frederic Fleishauer: “The Rule of Law: Community Justice in Balance”

Panel discussion with members from the justice system to address community questions regarding the legal process and our community response to crime. All community members welcome.

Sponsored by League of Women Voters of the Stevens Point Area, UWSP Student Legal Society, Portage County Bar Association and Justiceworks, Ltd.

Wednesday, April 30th: Noon.-1 pm. Pinery Room, Portage County Library Community Brown Bag Luncheon: “The McDonald’s Coffee Spill Verdict”

Presentation by Attorney David Sunby, Habush, Habush & Rottier SC
Learn what really happened in the infamous personal injury case involving a woman who went through a McDonald’s drive thru and spilled hot coffee in her lap. All community members welcome.

This presentation is also available to area civic organizations during the month of May. Call Brenda K. Sunby at 800-248-0171 for more information.

Sponsored by Portage County Bar Association

JUSTICEWORKS BEGINS VOLUNTEER TRAINING FOR VICTIM-OFFENDER MEDIATION SERVICES

Justiceworks is poised to begin a new service initiative to benefit crime victims through mediation of restitution issues. Training sessions are being held in April and May for volunteers interested in serving in this area of conflict-resolution. Victim-offender conferencing is endorsed by the American Bar Association as an effective-based practice in resolving conflict between victims and offenders.

What is Victim Offender Conferencing?

The purpose of Victim Offender Conferencing and Dialogue is to:

1. Provide a restorative conflict resolution process which actively involves victim and offender in repairing the emotional and material harm caused by a crime;
2. Provide an opportunity for victim and offender to discuss the offense, get answers to their questions, express their feelings, and gain a greater sense of closure;
3. Provide an opportunity for victim and offender to develop a mutually acceptable plan that addresses the harm caused by the crime.

Many talented volunteers from the community have stepped forward to participate in victim/offender conferencing. They include some retirees and some who are still working. All have an interest in improving the response of the criminal justice system to the human issues involved. Many have had some experience or training in mediation projects but that isn't required. If you're interested in this work call the Justiceworks office at 344-3677. Training begins this month. **Work for Justice!**

**Vis (Very Important Stories) a vis
VIP (Volunteers in Probation)**

Erin and Stacy both involved themselves in a crime involving property damage. They each had drifted following high school graduation with poor peer group associations and lack of career direction. Life inventory assessments identified both individuals as probable repeat offenders. Both were offered the opportunity to participate in the VIP program. Erin chose to enter the VIP program. Stacy declined and was sentenced through the traditional sentencing structure.

Today, Erin is a student at UWSP and is making great strides in attainment of her self- defined personal goals. In reward for her commitment and accomplishments, the crime conviction was expunged from her record. She attributes her college student status to the support and assistance she received from her VIP community mentor. In contrast, Stacey has been charged with additional offenses and has spent time in jail on probation violations.

They were both heading towards serious trouble and wanted something better. VIP can increase the likelihood that will occur.

***JUSTICEWORKS BOARD EXPANDS:
POSITIONS OPEN***

The number of board positions on the Justiceworks Board of Directors has increased. If you or someone you know may be interested in serving, call the office at 344-3677. Board membership involves a monthly board meeting, and involvement in other ongoing work of the organization. We need your support!

April 28-May 2 Stevens Point Area Schools 'Attorneys in the Classroom: Dialogue on the Rule of Law' Attorneys and judges from the county will go into our local schools to lead junior high and high school students in dialogues on the Rule of Law. Call Donna Ginzl at 344-0890 or Jenifer Binder at 341-7855 for more information.

Sponsored by Portage County Bar Association and Justiceworks, Ltd.

Thursday, May 1, Noon-1 pm. "Portage County Legal Aid Society Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon"

Thank you luncheon for PCLAS volunteers and PCLAS/Justiceworks Family Law Information Center volunteers.

Sponsored by Portage County Legal Aid Society

Friday, May 2, Noon-2 pm. "Family Law Information Center Grand Opening." Justiceworks, Ltd. Office, 1547 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point.

The FLIC is now open and serving all members of the community as a resource center for legal process information. All community members welcome. Sponsored by Portage County Legal Aid Society and Justiceworks, Ltd.

**SIGN OUR PETITION TO SUPPORT A CORRECTIONS
POLICY FOR PORTAGE COUNTY**

PRISM and Justiceworks' board members worked together to formulate a petition in support of a corrections policy for Portage County based on a best-practice approach. The petition stresses the importance of community commitment to the provision of necessary resources to aggressively reduce the recidivism rate in Portage County. Currently, 91% of offenders in Portage County are repeat offenders. The petition will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors and used in community outreach efforts to educate community members and county leaders on the importance of utilizing effective justice strategies to reduce the rate of recidivism and underlying mental health and substance abuse issues. Please review the petition on-line at www.Justiceworksltd.org and sign the petition by sending your response to petition@Justiceworksltd.org.

