

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 _____

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Donation \$ _____

quote for a quarter:

“If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man’s life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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

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STEVENS POINT WI 54481

Justiceworks • Journal

Fostering Restorative Justice for Portage County

6/20/08

JUSTICEWORKS, LTD, PORTAGE COUNTY FACE CRITICAL JUNCTURES

Recently the Portage County Board discussed plans to place the justice center issue on a referendum in November. The proposal has a significant financial impact for all county residents. The County now spends over one half million dollars per year housing and transporting prisoners across the state. That process will not grow less expensive or less complicated, and thus reducing jail bed usage remains important, whether with old buildings or new ones. The Goldman Report on the a new justice center advised the county to make significant funding to reduce jail bed usage.

Although Justiceworks, Ltd. does not solely respond to that issue, it's purpose often promotes its resolution. Justiceworks is a non-profit corporation established to support restorative justice and to provide a voice for community input into justice system decisions. That mission has led it to promote mentoring services for offenders, an alcohol free residence for recovering abusers, and a new victim/offender conferencing program. A federal earmark grant from the US Department of Justice has supported these programs, but that funding will end in 2009.

Thus, just as the county faces an increased need for the development of such services, the response of this private initiative faces a critical need for support. A strong, community organized, endowment fund drive could support basic operational costs for this growing organization. If you believe that cost-effective, restorative justice programs will reduce jail bed usage, support victims and improve accountability from offenders, then join this effort to respond to the enlarging jail population. Please contribute to this endowment fund drive through your participation as a volunteer, and your donations! A thousand contributions of a thousand dollars will allow it to grow. Call 344-3677.

Law Week – continued

The week continued with a panel discussion concerning how issues of the rule of law played out in Portage County. The panel included the Sheriff, Chief of Police, an Assistant District Attorney, a Judge, private attorney, the County Justice Planner and others. Sponsored by the Stevens Point Area League of Women Voters, UWSP Student Legal Society, Portage County Bar Association and Justiceworks, the panel responded to questions from the public which concerned the jail operations and justice issues.

An awards luncheon honoring volunteers to the Legal Aid Society featured a presentation by George Brown, Executive Director of the State Bar of Wisconsin concerning pro-bono services of lawyers. A Portage County Library Community Brown Bag Luncheon featured “The McDonald’s Coffee Spill Verdict” a presentation by Attorney David Sunby, which described 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. It was sponsored by Portage County Bar Association.

The week ended with an Open House to celebrated the opening of the Family Law Information Center, an effort of Justiceworks and the Portage County Legal Aid Society to provide forms and procedural advice to unrepresented litigants.



Public Forum and Annual Meeting Kickoff Law Week Celebration

Portage County Bar and Legal Aid Society Join Justiceworks to Celebrate the Rule of Law

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.” These organizations conducted various activities across our community during Law Week to promote that discussion.

The week opened with Justiceworks annual meeting. Instead of a keynote speaker, the event featured statements from several individuals who have benefited from services promoted by Justiceworks since its inception. The Riverside House is a residence for individuals in recovery from addiction. Several house members described their personal stories of tragedy and triumph in dealing with and overcoming alcohol and drug addiction. Each had a powerful message for those who question the devastating impact of substance abuse on individuals and their families, and the hope and support provided by a substance free residence.



PROGRAM BRIEFS:

FAMILY LAW INFORMATION CENTER EXPANDS COURTHOUSE HOURS

Currently, community members can call the Justiceworks office to schedule an appointment to receive assistance with forms and procedures for family law matters. Beginning in June, volunteers will also be on hand every month in the courthouse to assist individuals appearing in court on divorce pre-trial/trial dates. The Justiceworks office is also developing a resource library for community members. Pro se litigants may now arrange to view an educational video regarding the legal process of divorce.

VOLUNTEERS IN PROBATION PROGRAM EXCEEDS AVAILABLE MENTOR SUPPLY

By the end of June, it is anticipated that all volunteer mentors will be matched to offenders needing support and assistance during their tenure in the VIP program. VIP cases typically involve misdemeanor and non-violent offenders. Although individuals from any age category are considered eligible for admittance to the program, typically the offenders are young adults, ages 18-25. The program often admits area high school and UWSP students. Please call the office at 344-3677, if you are interested in learning more about the program and/or to sign up as a volunteer mentor.

RIVERSIDE HOUSE AND JUSTICEWORKS PARTNER

Riverside House is an Oxford-House modeled residence for individuals who are seeking to maintain sobriety and form new substance-free social groups. Justiceworks and the Riverside House continue to collaborate on ways to support the residents and alcohol-free residential living. The Riverside House residents are available to speak to your to community group regarding their life stories and how the Riverside House residence helps the residents maintain sobriety—for many, they are able to maintain sobriety for the first-time after a long, entrenched history of alcoholism. For more information, a housing application, or to see how you can support this partnership, please contact Justiceworks at 344-3677.

**JUSTICEWORK'S NEW "JUSTRUN08"
HALF-MARATHON AND 5K RUN/WALK
AUGUST 30 - PRECEDING
THE RIVERFRONT JAZZ FESTIVAL**

Restorative justice is serious business. Running is serious business for Running Legends in Their Own Minds and 2008 Race Commentators: McDill Principal Dennis Raabe and Dr. Paul Munck.

Q&A with Des Moines Marathon competitor 3,817th place finisher Paul Munck and Chicago Marathon 10,354th place finisher Dennis Raabe:

Q: Paul, how did you get involved in the Justiceworks Run?

A: My wife, Justiceworks' Executive Director, Katherine Munck, sentenced me to hard labor.

Q: Dennis, why do you train for this long-distance event?

A: One day I got on my talking scale and it said: "Come back when you're alone." I knew then that I had to get in shape.

Q: With your exceptional running talent, did you both qualify for the 2008 Olympics?

A: We're thinking we have a shot at it. We were told, "Don't call us, we'll call you" We're expecting the call any day now.

Q: Why should individuals participate in this event?

A: To have fun with family and friends, get some exercise, eat some good food, and most important, support restorative justice programs



***Fleishauer
Named
2007
Judge of
the Year!***

***Community
support cited as
significant
factor for the
award.***

In his comments at the State Bar of Wisconsin Awards Luncheon in Madison, Judge Fleishauer acknowledged the importance of support from the community for the justice system.:

"The award bestows a unique honor, a distinction that a judge can achieve in no other way, and yet, one which a judge cannot achieve alone. Judges rely on family, a competent, dedicated staff of assistants, court reporters, clerks and bailiffs, a collegial bench to share problems, supportive county officials, law enforcement agencies committed to professionalism, lawyers and bar associations dedicated to excellence and cooperation, and a broad community of supporters and volunteers. I've benefited from each of these attributes, and every person involved in that community effort rightfully shares in this honor. Some of them are here with me today.

I thank them all for the help, support and encouragement they've given, without which I wouldn't be here today."



Monona Terrace Convention Center, Madison, WI May 8, 2008

Greetings from the Executive Director

Justiceworks is pleased to offer a new restorative justice service that benefits victims, offenders and the community: victim-offender conferencing. This practice has received increasing attention in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

What is victim-offender conferencing? In victim-offender conferencing, the victim and offender meet face to face with a trained mediator to discuss the incident, its emotional impact and address questions. The conference may also involve victim participation in negotiating an appropriate restitution agreement.

What benefits does it provide to the victim, the offender and the community?

Victim-offender conferencing provides the following benefits:

- **Victims:** Victims describe the opportunity to express the full emotional impact of the offense to the offender as the most valuable benefit of victim-offender conferencing. Fear, anger and feelings of vulnerability, can be addressed through the conference, often permitting closure for the victim.
- **Offender:** through the conference, the offender usually gains a new perspective and appreciation of the direct impact of their behavior. Offenders have the opportunity to take direct responsibility for their actions.
- **For both Victim and Offender:** the judicial sentencing process becomes more understandable, humane, and responsive as it focuses on restoring the material and emotional loss from the offense.
- **Community:** the victim-offender conferencing process often involves community representatives in support of the victim and in addressing the community impact of the crime. The process benefits the whole community as it involves making amends to the victim, holding the offender accountable, and creating a stronger and safer community.

What crime does this process address?

On a local level, victim-offender conferencing most frequently addresses property crimes, minor assaults and juvenile offenses. However, in recent years, a growing number of victims of severe violence have asked to meet and speak to the offender. In these cases, a specially trained mediator for violent offenses may spend months preparing the victim and offender, with the objective of facilitating constructive, potentially healing dialog in a safe and secure setting. Victim-offender conferencing has been endorsed by the American Bar Association as an evidence-based practice and also by the United Nations in addressing international and cultural conflicts and crime.

What does research indicate? The largest multi-site victim-offender conferencing study to date indicates:

- Victims are far more likely to be satisfied (79%) with the justice system response than similar victims who did not participate in a victim offender conferencing session.(58%)
- After meeting the offender, victims were significantly less fearful of being re victimized.
- Offenders who met their victim were far more likely to successfully complete their restitution obligation to the victim (81%), than similar offenders who did not participate in a victim offender conferencing session (58%)
- Considerably fewer and less serious crimes were committed by offenders who participated in victim offender conferencing (18%) when compared to similar offenders who did not meet with their victim (27%)

After multiple training and organizational meetings with community volunteers, representatives from Justiceworks, the prosecution and defense bar, judiciary and law enforcement, Justiceworks will proceed with this initiative. Look for more information regarding this process in the next edition of the Justiceworks Journal. Thank you for your interest and support.

Sincerely,
Katherine Munck, Executive Director

CHRISTINE JACOBS RECEIVES 2008 JOHN KLISMET JUSTICE AWARD



Christine Jacobs recently was presented with the Justiceworks' 2008 John Klismet Justice Award for her work for MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving). "This week marks the 30th anniversary of the death of my infant son from a car accident caused by a drunk driver. You never get over it," remarked Jacobs. Ever since her son's death, Christine has worked tirelessly to make others aware of the dangers of drinking and driving. "I'm involved with MADD because I want to make sure that OWI (operating while intoxicated) offenders understand first-hand the impact of their actions and the devastation it can cause," Jacobs said. With Christine's support and participation, victim-impact panels are presented on a quarterly basis each year in Portage County to give victims the opportunity to relay their stories of personal tragedies directly to OWI offenders.

New developments to the event include:

- Expanded race route to include a half-marathon and 5K distance for runners and walkers
- Pre-race community spaghetti dinner and kid's run on Friday, August 29th
- Professionally-designed race shirt
- Medals for all half-marathon finishers
- Goodie bags for all participants
- Emy J's refreshments before and after the race
- Live music on the course

Entry forms are available on-line at www.justiceworksltd.org, Emy J's downtown and new Plover location on Hwy B, Adventure 212 and the YMCA. Spaghetti dinner tickets are available for purchase at the Emy J locations.

