

Report for Prison Committee- US Fall 2022-Cancun
Author- Ed G. Trustee Area 10- Committee Chair

Purpose

To provide telephone, email, "snail mail," and an in-person resource (as feasible) to the trustees or their designees for the purpose of assisting when a prisoner or institutional staff member is requesting to start an "inside" meeting, or an intergroup and its committee are outreaching to prisons, jails, etc. Also, to compile in the ISO office an unpublished JIP meeting directory as a much-needed resource for federal, state, and local judges, defense attorneys, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, and clinicians.

From the Chair

Upon request, I assumed the chair for the prison Committee US at the Cherry Hill trustee meeting. Knowing absolutely nothing, I first endeavored to learn the scope and purpose of the committee and to meet virtually with the members of the committee to discuss the direction. Sadly, we were unable to do so. Moving ahead, I wanted to discover what has been left in place by previous committees, verify information, and reach out to folks and institutions with programs in place. Then build on this. This is a report of these items:

What was in place.

1. The "JIP" that was supposed to be in the ISO office does not exist. Needs a complete rebuild.
2. The previous committee has been mostly dormant due to CoVid lockdowns and health issues within.
3. The known jail meeting hosted by GA members of the Thursday Night-Columbus; Ohio meeting was shut down for CoVid. Since then, the key driver of this service passed away and little interest of restarting it.
4. The Michigan meeting in a women's prison was attempted but failed. The prisoner who tried has since been paroled.
5. My request that trustees inform me of prison fellowships within their area produced NO RESPONSES. I can only assume that none exists.

Activities in Progress

1. Michael G. who is a prisoner at Avenal State Prison reached out to ISO with a desire for materials to start a meeting "On the inside." The prison rejected the kit which we discovered much later that the prison has extremely specific requirements for prisoners to receive these materials. Sadly, the letter requesting this kit was sidelined and not forwarded to the committee. This was further exacerbated by the ISO office move. Since then, the letter was forwarded to Harold A. who has

established two-way communication with Michael and got prison procedures to get a kit to him. This issue is nearing resolution.

2. Ohio has an organization (PGNO) of Gambling treatment professionals where City, County, and State professionals train and network with each other. Knowing that GA receives many referrals from professionals for continuing maintenance of gambling treatment, back in March, I attended one of their events with the primary purpose of networking. This in turn, produced an E-mail from the addictions supervisor from Grafton, Ohio State Prison requesting information on how GA can help prisoners within her facility. This opened a dialog where I have completed the necessary paperwork to gain access to the facility and the prisoners within. I will be meeting with her in person after this conference in person to discuss details and desires. A prison starter kit has been sent directly to her and has been received.
3. A former trustee from Area 9 has just recently been hired and completed training and is now on the staff of Toledo State Prison. More to follow when "settled in" to his new position. He IS on the Prison Committee as an advisor.
4. A member of my home group who has been in Recovery for three years, was recently sentenced in Federal Court to 30 months incarceration into a Federal Prison in West Virginia. He hopes to advance the idea of holding meeting inside one settled into the routine.
5. I attended the sentencing hearing of the above individual and used the opportunity following the meeting to have a cursory discussion with the Federal Judge and her staff. The Federal District court now has our contact information and an amiable relationship started.
6. The Email listed on the Trustee Web site was not able to be transferred to me. Therefore, it has been changed so any reach outs will now be directed to me.
7. Ohio has just upgraded Gambling Addiction to the same status as alcohol/drug addiction. The anticipated results are a more active justice system in getting treatment to those who commit crimes due to their addiction.

Looking Ahead

1. Reestablish an unpublished JIP as outlined in the mission statement.
2. Reach out to any Area representatives who are heading prison efforts.
3. Increase Committee participation in guiding this committee.
4. Start establishing contacts in Area parole/ halfway house groups.