

The Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach provides pre and post incarceration support to those individuals and families immersed in the New York State and Monroe County Criminal Justice System.

The Mission of our program is to provide these women and men with group settings in which they can feel comfortable. We encourage them to explore deeply rooted feelings and critical issues that contributed to their incarceration. Staff and volunteer mentors, working together as a team, seek to create a safe, structured environment where positive change is fostered.

Our outreach work often originates with our visitations to and mentorship of women and men within in the New York State Correctional facilities and within Monroe County Jail system. It is through our outreach efforts that we establish trusting, supportive relationships with currently incarcerated women and men. These relationships serve as a foundation for the women who move into Jennifer House and the men who move into Nielsen House.

At the root of both Jennifer House and Nielsen House is the commitment to see women and men leave prison/jail and take control of their lives. These women and men will learn how to become self-sufficient and will overcome the problems that initially led to their incarceration. Many of these women and men will become leaders in our community. Everything about Jennifer and Nielsen House is intended to empower women and men by including them in all aspects of the program. Women and men who have “graduated” from our program often return to help others and participate as volunteers in our program. In this way, we assist in the development of leadership. “Graduates” of our program have gone on to college, successful careers, returned to excel in staff positions at Jennifer and Nielsen House and even sit on our Advisory Board. Our program and both houses have become a model for other such work in the community, evidenced by the 85 percent success rate.

We currently provide mentoring opportunities through **six groups**, three within the state prison system and three within the jail system.

In addition, we are exploring the feasibility of making our program available to inmates of additional New York State correctional facilities.

We continually work to enhance and increase our program and outreach efforts enabling us to reach more incarcerated men and women who can benefit from \groups facilitated by our mentors. The transitional housing alternatives and accompanying programs offered at our Jennifer (women) and Nielsen (men) houses insures continuity of care during the re-entry process. Staff is waiting at the correction facility as individuals are released offering transportation to a safe and structured home environment. We assist each individual in the many transitions through the continuum of care. The trusting, supportive relationship that was first established in the prison or jail is maintained as the individual moves through the continuum of care into permanent care arrangements.

We provide training designed to enhance the mentoring skills of our entire staff and 40+ volunteers all of whom have become a cohesive team of service providers and are the back bone of our program. This dedicate group of individuals enables us to support approximately 400 women and men each year.

Our goal over the next two years is to increase the number of women and men who have access to our programs while continuing to reduce recidivism. We will be accomplishing these goals through more proactive engagement in the inmate re-entry process as well as through building greater collaboration and synergies with other community service providers.

We are forever grateful to all who have thus far journeyed with us through the Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach and for those we are yet to meet as they have enabled us to see the face of God in each of them and in ourselves...