



The Home Stretch

Just what is the definition for homeless? Is it someone sleeping in a car or someone “couch surfing?” Or an individual or family living in a motel, campground, or a shelter? Someone sleeping on a park bench, in an abandoned building, or curled up on the street?

Many of the women inmates who exit U.S. jails and prisons each week following incarceration face an immediate critical question: *Where will I live?*

While precise numbers are hard to come by, research suggests that, on average, about 10 percent of parolees are homeless immediately following their release.

There is no single definition of what it means to be homeless; criteria vary among federal and state programs. The HEARTH Act (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition Housing) states that individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence are homeless.

Without a safe and stable place to live where they can focus on improving themselves and securing their future, a former prisoner’s energy is focused on the immediate need to survive the streets,” says Faith Lutze, criminal justice professor at Washing-



ton State University. “Being homeless makes it hard to move forward or to find the social support from others necessary to be successful.”

As a result, women inmates trade life in a cell for life on the streets. According to Lutz, with each passing day, the likelihood that these men and women will reoffend or abscond on their pa-

role increases considerably.

In the absence of stable housing, other factors such as education and employment have little hope of succeeding. Lutze and a team of researchers recently completed a comprehensive assessment of a Washington State program that aims to reduce recidivism by providing high-risk offenders with 12 months of housing support when they are released from prison.

The study found significant reduction in new offenses and re-admission to correctional facilities.

At Shiloh Village we’ll provide an apartment for women released from jail and a two year opportunity, through participation in a “village” of support, to become self-sufficient and reenter the community. Our approach is right in line with the most recent studies of “housing first.”

All roads lead to . . .

Shiloh Village!



Graphic: Coalition for the Homeless, Houston Texas. Statistics: National 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress

Imagine for a moment what it would mean in your own life to be without a place to sleep, to shower, to keep your clothing and possessions, to build your life.

Where would you go?

2017 West Virginia Housing Conference

Several members on the Shiloh Village Board of Directors will be attending the West Virginia Housing Conference on September 20-22 at the Embassy Suites in Charleston, WV.

Each year the event attracts more than 250 housing advocates, lenders, developers, administrators and policy makers from the non-profit, public, and private sectors. This year’s theme, “It’s Not Just About Housing Anymore,” will feature over 70 workshops plus opportunities to learn and network with national, state, and local experts, from the nuts and bolts of housing development to funding tools and innovative models.

Last year our executive director, who received a scholarship to attend the conference, said it opened her up to a whole new world of information. She was able to glean facts and figures to keep our plans on track to build a twelve-unit apartment complex to house and educate women offenders transitioning out of the correctional system.

Funding for nonprofit organizations is never easy, but we learned that in the industry, Shiloh Village is considered a non-profit developer of affordable housing. Projects that help alleviate homelessness, usually go to the top of the list when it comes to grants and project assistance.

Because of our status, we’re also eligible for grants, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), and funding from the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).

After attending the conference and workshops last year, we have no doubt we’ll come away this year, energized and with options that can help us advance our goals for Shiloh Village!

For more information:



Jail Churn



One out of every three people who are locked up tonight are sitting in a local jail, not a state or federal prison. There are **3,283 jails** in America, yet jails receive scant attention. The legislative, judicial and executive decisions that have fueled the explosion of our state prison populations are becoming well-known; but the myriad of subtle policy decisions that have sent our jail populations upwards are off the public’s radar.



Every year, 636,000 people walk out of *prison gates*, but people go to *jail* over 11 million times each year. Jail churn is particularly high because most people in jails have *not been convicted*. Some have just been arrested and will make bail in the next few hours or days, and others are too poor to make bail and must remain behind bars until their trial. Only a small number (195,000) have been convicted, generally serving misdemeanors sentences under a year.

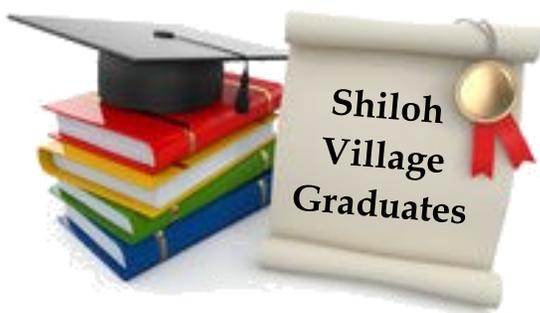
Prison Policy Initiative Sources and data notes: See: <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2016.html>

Second Chances

On April 26, 2017, Governor Jim Justice signed the West Virginia Second Chance for Employment Act, meant to help non-violent felons improve their job opportunities.

It creates a new category of “reduced misdemeanors” that need not be reported on employment applications but will be reflected in background investigations.

This will help women challenge the inmate stereotype and make it easier for them overcome the discrimination and bias that often produces a “second prison” of stigma and restrictions when they’re released.



Women of Conviction

We received a call and an email last week from the Lakin Correctional Center, the only all-female prison in West Virginia. One of the counselors had an inmate who had made parole and needed a home plan. She was non-violent with a history of substance abuse, but was now sober. She worked as a janitor in Lakin’s lobby and the counselor wanted to know if we could help the inmate.

West Virginia Code [§62-12-13](#) states that if an inmate is eligible for parole they must: Prepare and submit to the Parole Board a written parole release plan setting forth proposed plans for his or her

From Cellblock to Classroom

Glenville State College has been named by the U.S. Department of Education as the only college in West Virginia to participate in the new Second Chance Pell pilot program.

The program, which includes 66 other educational institutions across the United States, will allow eligible incarcerated Americans to receive Pell Grants and pursue postsecondary education with the goal of helping them get jobs and support their families when they’re released.

U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. said, “The evidence is clear. Promoting the education and job training for incarcerated individuals makes communities safer by reducing recidivism and saves taxpayer dollars by lowering the direct and collateral costs of incarceration. The knowledge and skills they acquire will promote successful reintegration and enable them to become active and engaged citizens.”

place of residence, employment and, if appropriate, his or her plans regarding education and post-release counseling and treatment.

When I told the caller we were just in the early stages of looking for land or a building to rehab for our apartments, she asked me to please contact her when they were available. It’s an urgent reminder that places like Shiloh Village are not only needed, but sought after, to help forge a new life and bring hope and healing to women whose lives are affected by incarceration.



It's Elementary ...



Photos by: Bob Wojcieszak

Charleston developer Chris Sadd renovated the former Glenwood Elementary School at 810 Grant Street on the West Side, into 31 apartments for older adults. The school, constructed in 1922, remained open until the spring of 2011. In the fall of that year, the building was put up for sale, and Sadd purchased it for \$50,000 with the cooperation of state historic and preservation agencies. Work to convert the building took two and a half years and was opened to tenants in 2014.

Mr. Sadd recently purchased the historic property at 1212 Quarrier Street from The Charleston Urban Renewal Authority. He plans to demolish it and will build apartments. When contacted about Shiloh Village, he offered to evaluate any potential properties and their eligibility for local and state historic funding.

Stay in Touch _____

