

Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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NDCS Awards Grant Funds to Eight Organizations

LINCOLN, Neb. – The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) announces, today, eight community organizations have been awarded funding under NAC Title 71 - Vocational and Life Skills Program.

The table below identifies each grant award by organization, amount awarded and the projected number of participants over the 24 month grant period. Funding will begin July 1, 2016, and continues through June 2018. The 2018 -2020 grant cycle application process will be announced at the beginning of 2018.

| Organization | Amount Awarded | Projected # Served |
|--|-----------------|--------------------|
| Associated Builders & Contractors | \$ 754,809.00 | 225 |
| Western Alternative Corrections, Inc. | \$ 1,708,304.00 | 168 |
| Center For People In Need | \$ 1,418,685.00 | 282 |
| Metropolitan Community College | \$ 1,329,062.00 | 700 |
| ReConnect, Inc. | \$ 377,218.00 | 300 |
| Mental Health Association of Nebraska | \$ 982,142.00 | 84 |
| Hope of Glory Ministries, Inc. | \$ 111,184.80 | 72 |
| ResCare Workforce Services | \$ 429,000.00 | 550 |

NDCS will continue partnering with the University of Nebraska – Omaha to continue the evaluation component and to ensure outcomes are tracked and reviewed. *Note: Summary of grant programs attached.*

ATTACHMENT: Summary of Eight Funded Vocational and Life Skills Programs

ReConnect, Inc.,

ReConnect2Success, is a reentry program of ReConnect, Inc., a community based non-profit organizations. ReConnect2Success provides pre- and post-release reentry planning and effective wrap-around services to help individuals overcome barriers resulting from incarceration and limited employment skills necessary to successfully return to their families and community. The program places emphasis on employment preparation and retention skills while also helping clients develop comprehensive problem solving and life skills needed to be successful in the workplace, and in life. ReConnect2 Success services include intense case management to help clients address personal issues that impact reentry success, weekly employment readiness and retention workshops, monthly job club where clients meet with local employers, peer mentoring support, daily access to the employment center where clients work alone or one on one with reentry specialist to search and apply online for jobs, vocational training in the construction industry, family reunification and community engagement support.

Center for People in Need

The TRADE (Tackling Recidivism And Developing Employability) Program will provide vocational and life skills training and case management services to those transitioning out of the criminal justice system: work release participants, those on felony probation, parolees and individuals who have been discharged from state supervision within the last 18 months. Through a combination of vocational and life skills training and wrap-around services, the TRADE Program will seek to address the array of factors that increase recidivism rates by developing strong support networks which increases the likelihood of employment retention and reduces the likelihood of repeat criminal activity for newly released offenders. Vocational training programs will include: Construction/Carpentry, Forklift/Warehouse, Janitorial/Building Maintenance, and Institutional Food Service. Christian Heritage and JOLT Nebraska are partnering with The Center for People in Need to provide the life skills and recovery training necessary for successful reintegration. Courses will cover such topics as family outreach, common-sense parenting, communication skills, teamwork and self-help, financial literacy, resume writing, computer skills and job searching. Victim impact and domestic violence awareness and prevention classes will also be available to all participants.

Western Alternative Corrections, Inc.

Western Alternative Corrections, Inc. (WAC) was founded in 1999 to focus on providing alternatives to incarceration, programming and services for offenders in the Nebraska area. WAC is a Nebraska owned family business. WAC was awarded the grant for the proposed program titled Bristol Station Intensive Vocational and Life Skills Program (IVLSP). Participants must be at least 19 years old. The IVLSP is comprised of services that will be delivered to participants within the Residential Reentry Center setting. The services include but

are not limited to: Residential, Transition Skills, Basic Money Management, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Parenting, Family Reunification, Vocational Assessments, Job Placement Services, Individual Program Planning, Risk/Needs Assessment, Progress Meetings, Case Notes and Release Planning.

Metropolitan Community College

Metropolitan Community College's 180 Re-entry Assistance Program (180 RAP) will provide education and training through college credit courses and noncredit workshops for the currently incarcerated individuals at Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility, Omaha Correctional Center and Community Corrections Center – Omaha. Education will be focused in the areas of business, entrepreneurship, trades, information technology and increasing the employability skills of the populations. Recently released individuals and probationers will have direct support available to them at Fort Omaha Campus and the MCC Express.

Mental Health Association of Nebraska

Mental Health Association of Nebraska will provide programming and services to individuals who have been recently released from the state correctional facilities, or those currently on felony probation/parole. MHA-NE Programs and services to be provided are CARF accredited, and include Employment Support Services (HOPE), a program that provides targeted supported employment services to adults living with severe behavioral health issues. Crisis Respite services, which will offer a new facility, modeled after the highly successful (KEYA) House. The facility will provide crisis respite and transitional housing for up to 90 days; services will also include 24 hour peer support, self-advocacy education and self-help training. Program staff will work directly with participants in wellness, recovery activities and in developing (WRAP), Wellness Recovery Action Plans, and problem solving skills. The Crisis Diversion, Outreach and Referral (REAL) Program provides pro-active support services to individuals that have been identified as being in need of rapid and intensive support services before they make bad decisions that could lead to re-incarceration. Participation in all MHA-NE programs and services is voluntary and require the individual to take a leading role in the type and scope of services they receive, thereby “owning” their recovery and making success the likely outcome.

ResCare Workforce Services

ResCare Workforce Services offers job preparation and job retention services that include employment readiness workshops, supplemental online learning, one-on-one engagement, independent job search and job retention support at the following State Probation Reporting Center (RC) “Hubs”: Omaha (which will serve Papillion RC, via tele services), Grand Island (which will provide services to Kearney RC, Hastings Service Center (SC), Holdrege Probation Office (PO) and Lexington RC, via tele services), Gering (which will serve Sydney PO and

North Platte RC, via tele services), Norfolk (which will provide services to Columbus RC, Beatrice SC, Nebraska City RC and Falls City PO, via tele services).

Hope of Glory Ministries, Inc.

Hope of Glory's Williams Prepared Place program is a transitional 18 bed living facility. We offer re-entry services to participants that include supportive services and substance abuse treatment for men and women during their transition. Our participants come to us from incarceration, parole, or under supervision of State/Federal Probation seeking to reintegrate back into the community. Our Life Skills Training consists of three components: (1) general self-management skills (that include hygiene housekeeping and financial management), (2) social skills, and (3) drug resistance skills. Williams Prepared Place's program attaches a high value on employment. Program personnel remove employment barriers by helping participants secure identification and/or driver's licenses, provide transportation to interviews, and assist in job searches and application/resume preparation, and liaison with employers. Preparation for employment is addressed by Williams Prepared Place not only on behalf of the prospective employee, but also on behalf of the employer. We attend not only to the life skills, career development and job training of individuals but also provide basic needs and support for the entire family.

Associated Builders and Contractors

ABC has valuable programs for reducing recidivism with the ability to provide pre-employment training through our safety programs. In addition, we will begin our program by teaching our Core Curriculum, the foundation course for all National Center for Construction Education Research (NCCER) apprenticeship training programs. The Core class will be followed by a building project that will allow the students to experience work based learning hands on applications in carpentry, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, drywall, roofing, finish carpentry and painting. The main goal of the work based learning project is to allow the students to determine their trade specific area of interest. Once they have established their specific trade interest they will enroll in a trade specific training program and complete the classroom portion of apprenticeship training, which allows individuals who are incarcerated to have a valuable background in the trades. This experience will give them the confidence to step back into the workforce upon release from incarceration.