

# Upcoming Events

## Learn to Lead a Political Life - Training Series

- March 14** Caucus Training: Learn to make your voice count in grassroots politics  
**April 11** Campaign Finance: Learn to raise the money that will make the difference  
**May 18** Grassroots Organizing: Learn to build a base and mobilize the grassroots

All trainings are 5:30pm - 7:00pm. The events are free and open to anyone that would like to attend, but please RSVP. Food and beverages are provided. Locations to be finalized but will be in the Denver Metro Area.

To RSVP: Faith Winter, fwinter@thewhitehouseproject.org (303) 871-6779.

Sponsored by the Colorado Women's Agenda, 9-5 Assn of Working Women, Gay & Lesbian Fund, and the White House Project.

## Latina Debate Boot Camp April 22-23

### Cross Community Coalition, 2501 E. 48th Ave, Denver

Learn to confidently and effectively communicate your message to create change. The event is free, but you must pre-register with Faith Winter: fwinter@thewhitehouseproject.org (303) 871-6779.

Sponsored by the Latina Initiative and the White House Project.

## Colorado CURE Parole Board Forum March 30, 6:45-9:30pm

### District 3 Police Station Conference Room, 1625 S. University (one block north of I-25 & University Exit)

Members of the Parole Board will be in attendance. If you have an issue to put on the agenda, contact Dianne Tramutola-Lawson, CO-CURE, (303) 758-3390 dianne@coloradocure.org

## Colorado CURE Meeting with DOC Officials April 28, 1:00-3:30pm

### Denver Women's Correctional Facility, 10900 Smith Road, Denver (I-70 & Havana - just south of Denver County Jail)

If you have an issue to put on the agenda, contact Dianne Tramutola-Lawson by April 1, (303) 758-3390, dianne@coloradocure.org

## BE A FREEDOM FIGHTER

CCJRC is a membership organization. The 'coalition' component is organizations which share a common belief around halting state prison expansion, abolishing Colorado's private prison industry, rallying around the rights of the imprisoned and demanding that, as a society, we remain accountable for our treatment of those who are accused, those who have been found guilty, and those who have paid their debt and look forward to rejoining society as contributing members. These are groups spread across Colorado that have a collective interest in these and other core values.

But are all the members of CCJRC organizations? Certainly not! There are over 2,500 individuals, like you, who are truly the backbone of CCJRC.

- YES!** I want to join CCJRC and help stop perpetual prison expansion in Colorado. Enclosed is my **tax-deductible** annual membership or additional contribution:

#### Annual membership dues:

- Individual: \$35     Low income/student/senior: \$12  
 Household: \$50     Prisoner: \$3 (or equivalent in postage stamps)  
 Sustainer: \$100+

- My check is enclosed (made payable to CCJRC)  
 Please charge my:     Visa     Mastercard     Discover     American Express  
    once     monthly     quarterly

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Home Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ expires \_\_\_\_\_

**I AM A FREEDOM FIGHTER!** Please charge my credit card monthly for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Please return this form to:  
 CCJRC, 1212 Mariposa St., #4, Denver, CO 80204

## Because of You Thank You to All our Members in Prison

Thank you so much for your response to our Outreach letter. This is the kind of activism that will truly make a difference. The response from you all was overwhelming and I want to say thank you very much. We are in the field working to facilitate change every day, whether it's through public speaking, legislative lobbying or direct contact with our members. Your support helps. To date we have added nearly 400 members to our data base since the letter went out on January 11. We continue to get letters every day. Which means that our voice gets louder everyday.

In order for us to be more effective in changing the laws and attitudes of Colorado, we realize that we have to have more involvement from the people who are directly impacted by the system. That means you, your family, and your community. We have to reach more people so that they know what is happening within the state and the Department of Corrections and how, with their involvement, we can have a much larger political voice. We have to have a larger outcry, so we need our community to be aware that they can make a difference.

I believe that with all of us together working towards a common goal of ending mass incarceration we can create change in Colorado. I can't thank you enough for your effort in this matter. I truly can't do this without you. Thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely, Pam Clifton, Outreach Coordinator.

Volunteers, activists and donors - you are, WE are, the driving force behind CCJRC. It is our combined work and support alongside a small but dedicated staff that moves us forward and helps us to achieve our mission and all our goals.

As CCJRC members, we look to each other to write the next letter to elected officials, to attend the next community meeting, to help organize the next action to bring about a realization of our mission ... and to make another donation of personal significance. All of these measures are vital to the continued success of CCJRC but your donation is very important. To achieve all of the activities listed above and more, to effectively coordinate the many dozens of groups and individuals, to plan, purchase and distribute the flyers, newsletters and posters, to do the work big and small that will assure that we are heard and listened to requires all of our financial support.

Your gift of any amount, joined with those donations of all the rest of us, will further the efforts and outcomes of CCJRC.

Recently CCJRC has started our "FREEDOM FIGHTERS" program. Instead of giving larger donations once or twice a year members are making very small monthly donations of \$10, \$15 or \$20 by check, credit or debit card. This allows CCJRC a real opportunity to budget and it helps our members plan their non-profit charitable giving. It also cuts down on our fundraising costs and puts your money to work where it's needed most. To help balance the inequities we fight, a gift of whatever you can afford to share of your financial resource - everything you can do adds to everything the rest of us can do.

There is a donation form and envelope in this newsletter, waiting for you to help support the work and our collective obligation to pursue justice. Please join us with your contribution. **You can and do make a difference!**

**CCJRC is a member of Community Shares!  
Ask your employer about work-place giving!**

# COLORADO JUSTICE REPORT

March 2006

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM COALITION

1212 Mariposa St., #4, Denver, CO 80204  
 303-825-0122 phone, 303-825-0304 fax  
 www.CCJRC.org info@ccjrc.org

Founded in 1999, CCJRC is a network of organizations, faith communities and individuals working to reverse the trend of mass incarceration in Colorado.

## Perpetual Prison Expansion The Crisis Continues

In January 2006, the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) submitted a \$644 million budget request to the state Legislature, a \$53 million increase over the current budget. The DOC also stated that it will run out of prison bed space both for men and women this year. The total prison population is projected to grow from 21,000 to over 29,000 by 2011, a 41% increase. The women's prison population is projected to grow 71% during that same time. Similarly, the DOC parole population is also projected to increase dramatically to over 8,000 by 2011.

In its briefing before the Joint Budget Committee, the DOC outlined possible state and private prison expansion plans to increase capacity by 8,000 new prison beds including:

- requesting proposals from private prison companies for 3,000 more private prison beds (2,250 more prison beds for men and 750 more prison beds for women)
- increasing double bunking to add 540 more beds statewide
- adding 263 more prison beds for women by switching facilities at the Pueblo Minimum Center with the Youth Offender System
- expanding the recently opened Cheyenne Mountain private prison in Colorado Springs
- converting Camp George West to a women's facility
- completing construction of a new private prison in Pueblo

• possible expansions at the state run facilities including Trinidad Correctional Facility, San Carlos Correctional Facility, Arkansas Valley Correctional Facility, Colorado Women's Correctional Facility, Centennial Correctional Facility, Colorado State Penitentiary and the Denver Reception and Diagnostic Center.

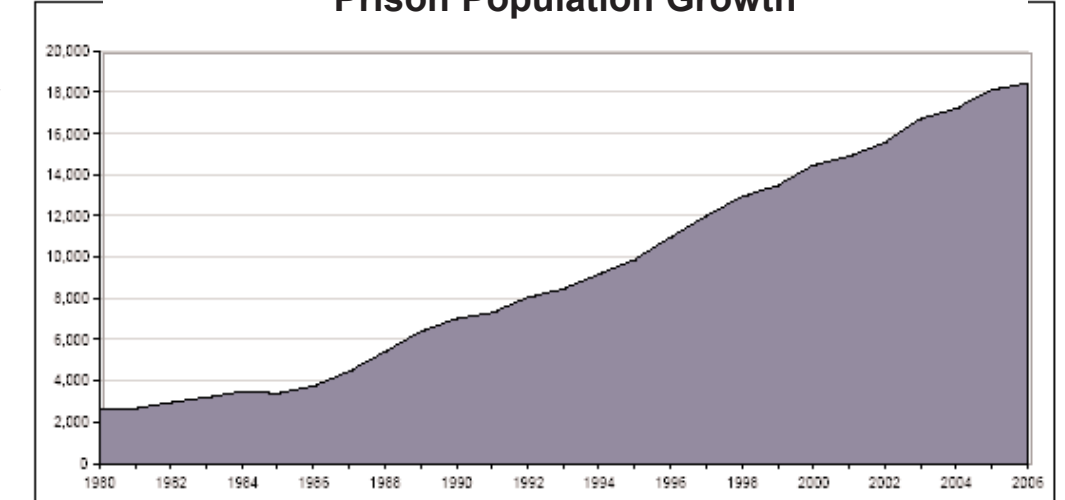
The DOC has estimated that it will need over \$387 million in capital construction funding in the next five years, which does not include the construction costs borne by the private prison providers. Although there are no immediate plans, the DOC mentioned that another possibility was to send prisoners to facilities out of state.

Even if all of these prison expansion projects were completed, in 2011, the State will be in the same position as it is today because the con-

struction expansion plans will only pace prison population growth, not exceed it. Between 1992-2004, Colorado's average annual prison population growth rate of 7% far exceeds the national average of 4.3%. Between this time period, Colorado also has the highest annual growth rate in our immediate region, including Kansas (3.4%), Oklahoma (3.8%), Wyoming (5.3%), New Mexico (5.7%), Arizona (5.8%), and Utah (6.9%).

Despite this crisis, legislators have buried their heads in the sand and refused to address runaway prison growth by adopting sensible criminal sentencing and parole reform. For our updated 2006 Fact Sheets, visit our website.

## Prison Population Growth



## My Name Is Bob, And It's My First Day Out of Prison

I am on the DOC prison bus right now and I am going to be dropped off in Denver. I have been waiting for this day for six years.

The bus pulls onto Smith road. It's a dirty, little, two-lane road made of cracked asphalt and it has a railroad track that runs along the side. It's my drop-off point. The air brakes screech, the bus comes to a lurching stop, the guard calls my name and I pull my jacket around my state-issued sweats. I look down at my two-dollar Wal-mart-special tennis shoes and take a deep breath. The guard unlocks the cage that separates the prisoners from the guards. I move to the front of the bus and the guard shakes his head slightly and grimaces, "Good Luck".

I glance through the dirty window and notice the dirty snow swirling around on the pavement. It's cold and it's windy. But I am free. I get off of the bus and move to the side where the guard opens the baggage compartment and pulls out two boxes that have my name and number carved in their sides in black magic-marker. He sets the boxes down, closes the baggage compartment and looks at me. A quick smirk crosses his face and he says, "See ya soon" and then he hurries to get back inside the warm bus. The door shuts and I am utterly alone. A knot forms in my stomach. I don't know for sure where I am or how to get where I am going. The feeling is foreign after being told what to do, how to do it and when to do it for the last six years.

The bus roars off, belching black smoke and I could feel the words rise in panic in my throat, "Wait!! I don't know where...." The sentence and the words die in my throat, as I almost gave up the last shreds of my manhood for the fear of freedom. I look down at the boxes at my feet. My entire world, all my possessions. A coffee pot, legal papers, some hygiene items, and the backwash of six years of classes that I graduated from while I was in "canoncitycolorado". Not one of those classes I took had this part in them.

Please see **Bob** on Page 2

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition  
 1212 Mariposa St., #4  
 Denver, CO 80204

Non-Profit Org.  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Denver, CO  
 Permit No. 808

Recycle for our Earth's sake.

Change Services Requested

I look down the road and I see the sign about a mile down, "HOUSE OF SPIRITS". I was pretty certain that this wasn't a church but it is the only sign alive. Funny that a liquor store would be my first stop. I have my \$100 dollar check that is given to a parolee on his way out the door. I know that I have to see my parole officer within 24 hours after my release and I have to find the place where I am supposed to be staying. I don't know my way around Denver too well. I'd only lived here about 3 weeks when I got arrested after a bad drugthing/barfight/hit-a-cop kinda night.

The year that led up to that "incident" included a bad divorce, followed by losing my job and my family and my swan dive into a bottle. Now walking down the road I know that I don't have any I.D. except my prison number and picture on a badly laminated 6 year old card. I pick up my boxes and move towards the liquor store. It's starting to get a little dark. We had a late start because of the weather. After a couple of blocks these boxes get pretty heavy. I didn't realize how much my career in the pen was going to weigh when I packed them. Four years of bad food, little work and low-impact exercise catch up with you pretty quick at my age.

I walk up to the liquor store, swallow my lack of confidence, and push my way through the door. The man at the counter looks up from his newspaper, takes me in just one glance and says, "I can cash it for a 10% fee." I'm guessing that he's done this before. "So you wanna bottle?" I look at him and realize that my hundred dollars had already gotten some serious tread with that \$10 coming off the top. "Nah, but I'd love a pack of cigarettes." I need something to calm my nerves. "Sure," he said, "That's \$3.75." I shake my head and hand over the check; he gives me the pack of Camels that I had pointed at and a book of matches. "You got a phone I can use?" He points over to the payphone on the wall out-front.

I jealously gather my change and count it carefully. I haven't done this for a long time and the money looks funny—like Monopoly. At this point, I just feel embarrassed. "Man, I just need to get downtown to the 11th Ave Hotel." He said, "Go back down to Smith Road and about halfway down the street there is an RTD bus sign. You just missed the 6:00 bus, but there will be another one in an hour, just tell the bus driver that you need to go downtown".

I walked out with my boxes and felt the wind whip around my hands and neck. I found the bus stop. Man, it was cold. That DOC jacket doesn't really work to keep out the cold. My fingers were cold, no gloves. I lit the first cigarette I had had in six years. I looked at my cheap D.O.C watch and did something I do know how to do. I wait.

At 7:08, the bus arrived. I get in and notice the fare is \$1.50. I haven't even got off of Smith Road and I only have \$84.75 left. The bus driver directed me to get off at 17th and California and catch a number #10 on Stout Street, to 12th and Broadway using the small paper transfer that I got in exchange for my \$1.50. I get off the bus, and suddenly realize how fast the world is moving. The world I had been in for the last six years moves at about ½ mile an hour, all the time. Any faster and you might get shot.

Personal space is the only thing you have to yourself in the Pen, and it is guarded jealously. Not out here. I find myself holding my breath and frozen in fear to the ground (when did the buildings get so tall, and cars move so fast?). Passer-bys rush to get to their designated places. I am invisible to them and I am gripped with indecision. I clutch my bus transfer and look around frantically for the right place to go. The street signs are illuminated street names and I see "Stout Street" ahead. The fear is growing inside and I start to feel panicky. I don't want to go anywhere else. I am afraid that I will get lost. I wait with my

boxes for the number 10 and pray I am going in the right direction. I tell the bus driver where I need to get off and he helps me out, a block late after my stop.

I get off the bus and a chill wind blows down my neck like a bad premonition. I have to walk back two blocks and then I see the sign "11th AVE HOTEL". I latch on to my boxes, go through the front door and pay \$25 for a room without a private bath (its \$5.00 extra for your own bathroom). I move up the stairs, unlock the door that has the same number as the key, switch on the light, move inside quietly and then I put the boxes down inside the room after quietly closing the door. I take a look around at my surroundings, sit on the edge of the bed and start to cry.

After awhile, a memory stirs and I realize I had seen an Arby's across the street and suddenly I am ravenous. Real food. I go out the door, careful to lock it, and work my way through a group of people who are gathered around the stairs and in the common room. They eye me suspiciously, so I return it in kind and head for the door.

I wait for the light to change green and head across the street. The kid behind the counter asks me what I want. How the heck do I know? After I read the menu over and over, I realize I haven't even made this decision in six years. I order two sandwiches, some potato cakes and a coke. It was \$6.95 (\$6.95?) and I eat slowly. I am king of the world for this one moment and I am going to savor it. Then I finish my meal and the real world settles in. I have \$53.00, no job, no home, no clothes and no idea where the hell I am. It is 9:00 at night and I don't have anyone to tell me when to go to bed.

I better figure out how to do it myself.

It's morning. I take a shower and try to wash off six years of prison. I work my way downstairs and after talking to some of the residents, I figure out there were some things I needed to do. They told me where the Parole office was, which luckily is only about a mile away from the hotel. I pay for the next night at the Hotel (I have \$28.00 left, and haven't eaten yet today) and head out. When I walk through the door there is a receptionist behind some glass who takes my name, directs me to a clip board and says "Fill that out" referring to a form that is stuck in a file on the wall. There are several 4 inch pencils on the table in the waiting area and about 4 people sitting around filling out their forms. I just follow along. Every ten minutes or so one of the doors opens and someone would bark out a name. One of my esteemed colleagues would get up and head quietly for the door with their paper in their hand. And the door shuts and locks tightly behind them. I shivered.

"BOB"! I heard the name and looked up to see a young man with a badge on a chain around his neck. He looked at me impatiently and I hurried to get to the door. That meeting took about an hour. He defines my responsibilities. Colorado ID card and Social Security Card, job, one UA a week (\$15 dollars and I need to go to BI and set that up.) Therapy. 3 NA meetings a week. Restitution. Permanent address. Drug classes, Anger Management, no association with known felons. Keep your nose clean. Here's my card. Don't call after hours unless it's an emergency. I'll be by your residence to check on you.

See ya Bob.

He leads me back out to the lobby area and the door slams shut behind me. I tried to appear confident and thoughtful. My thoughts are racing a million miles an hour and I can actually feel my heart beating in my chest. How? How am I going to get all these things done?

I go back to the Hotel and try to get some information from the people who live there. These folks are generally street people who know how to get to

**CCJRC Parole Revocation Survey**  
TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO DOC ON A PAROLE REVOCATION FROM DENVER:  
CCJRC is conducting a survey to find out why people are not successful on parole in Denver. If you have been revoked from parole from Denver, or know someone who has, it would help us tremendously if you will assist us in collecting this information. You should receive the survey by the end of March. **Thank you for your help.**

resources. I just want to find a job. Minimum wage is \$5.75 an hour. Times that by 40 hours and you get \$189.00 after taxes. That means that I have 69 dollars a week to buy clothes, get transportation, and eat. That will allow me to keep my little hotel room at a flat rate of \$130.00 a week. How am I going to pay for UA's and therapy? And that's assuming I can get 40 hours of work a week. I start to realize, I am not going to have a place to live in 36 hours.

I pick up some quarters from the coffee shop downstairs, go over to the Arby's and buy a kids meal. I sit at a table and start to go through the Help Wanted section of the paper. Nothing in there for a man with no tools, over 40, with no recent work history, resume or driver's license or (email?). I have to get an I.D. and I don't know how. It's already noon. The day is half over and I am not anywhere near close to being free. I call the number on the card that the young man at the Parole office had given me. An answering machine picks up and says to leave a message with a number I can be reached at. I DON'T HAVE A NUMBER!!! I want to scream into the phone.

I go to the Hotel and ask one of the denizens how I get an ID. Someone says if you have your DOC ID you can trade it in at DMV for an ID card. I go to the phone book to find a number and call. It takes awhile but I finally get directions to the DMV where I can take care of the ID situation. I don't want to spend money on a bus if I don't have to, especially since the transfer is only good for an hour. So, I start to walk. It's so confusing, all the streets and lights and noise and commotion. The buildings look so tall, and I am continually getting my directions confused. 27th and Welton is where the closest office is. I make my way down there. When I arrive there is a line out the door. I wait for nearly 45 minutes. Big day for ID's I guess. My turn. I present my DOC ID. The girl at the counter looks at it likes it's the terrorist plot-du-jour and says, "Just wait here." She turns and goes to talk with another Authorized DMV official, and he looks at the I.D. and looks at me and looks at the I.D. whispers something to the girl and walks over.

"I'm sorry sir. We can't accept these any longer. You will have to have a birth certificate, a marriage license or a divorce decree." I'm stunned. Now what? I don't have it in me to argue with a badge quite yet. So I just move towards the door.

Too bad my mom passed away while I was in prison. I don't have any other family and the friends I had when I went in were never really friends to begin with, and they were on the other side of the state. I have about 20 hours to get a life with \$24.00 to my name. I push through the big glass door and overhear a conversation,

"Yep, we are supposed to have 6" of the white stuff on the ground by morning."

And suddenly, I get a glimpse of what the point of no return looks like. The wind picks up and howls through the open door.

## Details on Denver's Crime Control & Prevention Commission

Denver's Crime Control & Prevention Commission (CCPC) was created by city ordinance passed in 2005 and is responsible for helping to:

- 1) reduce crime and recidivism;
- 2) facilitate coordination among justice system agencies;
- 3) support the development of data-driven criminal justice policies;
- 4) develop information technology systems necessary for effective policy development and jail management;
- 5) facilitate the efficient use of jail space; and
- 6) recommend expenditures from the Crime Control & Prevention Fund (\$1.2 million in 2006).

It consists of 32 members representing various government agencies, criminal justice agencies, elected officials, and community members. The CCPC meets as a full committee and also has several subcommittees, as listed below. The CCPC meetings are open to the public and CCJRC strongly encourages our members to attend. Regina Huerter is the Executive Director of the CCPC, regina.huerter@ci.denver.co.us or 720-913-6606.

**Full Commission Meetings** 3rd Wednesday of every month, 3-5pm, Denver Police Auditorium, 1331 Cherokee

**Subcommittee Meetings** All subcommittee meetings (unless otherwise noted) are held at the Manager of Safety's Office, Conference Room, 1331 Cherokee St.

- 1) Systems Performance Subcommittee Meetings - 1st Monday of every month, 3-5pm,
- 2) Prevention, Education & Re-entry Subcommittee Meetings- 1st Monday of every month, 9am-12pm, location varies (Contact Ms. Huerter to be on the distribution list)
- 3) Jail Services Subcommittee Meeting- 2nd Wednesday of every month, 3-5 pm
- 4) Mental Health Subcommittee Meetings- 2nd Monday of every month, 9-11am
- 5) Drug Court Subcommittee Meetings- Dates vary. (Contact Ms. Huerter).



On January 24th, members from CCJRC, the Denver Reintegration Coalition and Denver's Crime Control & Prevention Commission met to discuss drug court, alternatives to incarceration and creating a re-entry program for people leaving the Denver County Jail. Facilitators pictured are: CCJRC's Pam Cliton and Cheyenne Hughes from the Colorado Progressive Coalition.

## New Private Prison Company Making Waves

A new private prison company is scoping out Canon City. Management Training Corporation, an innocuous sounding private prison company headquartered in Utah, is proposing to build another private prison with space for up to 4,250 beds. They had to make a request at a special public works meeting of the Canon City Council to get the water needed for this massive prison. A memo from MTC said the prison is expected to require a million-gallon tank on site and 125 gallons of water per person per day. Construction could begin in 2007 if the Colorado Department of Corrections approves and if the water is available.

CCJRC openly opposes the building of any new prisons in Colorado, especially ones by private for-profit companies. We will keep you posted.

## Care Packages Now Available

A new twist on an old concept has quietly emerged from the Department of Corrections. You can now order a care package for friends and family members who are in prison.

Coloradocarepackage.com allows you to order up to \$100 worth of canteen products to be sent to your loved ones four times a year. This service will depend on which facility they are currently housed in. According to the website this service is NOT available at CSP, Crowley Correctional Facility, Kit Carson or Centennial. If your loved one is moved, the package will follow them unless they go to one facilities listed as not participating. If they are out to court or on a medical trip, their packages will be sent back.

D.O.C. has teamed with a for-profit company, the Access Catalog Company, to provide care packages of up to \$100 to be sent inside. ACCESS has a website which provides you with a list of items that you can purchase. This list includes both food and hygiene items.

The program began Feb 8th and the next ordering deadline has not been posted yet for the "Summer Package", so please check their website.

You can purchase up to \$100 - if you go over that amount your order will be denied. You can order by phone, internet, through the mail, or by fax. There is a \$4.00 shipping and handling fee on all orders unless you go through the website and then it's free. Also, more than one person can order for someone who is inside but the total must not exceed the \$100 limit. Contact the facility where your loved one is at and find out if this program is available and the number where Access can be reached at is 1-800-546-6283.

## DOC Launches FORGES A Parolee Resource Database

Recently, the DOC launched its Former Offender Resource Guide and Educational Services (FORGES) database which lists hundreds of community-based resources for people leaving prison. You can access this database from the Department of Corrections website at www.doc.state.co.us. Click on "programs", click on "FORGES". You are able to search this database by address, county, or zip code. On the website, the DOC has the following "Notice to Parolees":

### NOTICE TO PAROLEES

*Parolees may find the FORGES information and resources quite useful during re-entry. However, each parolee must meet the full requirements of their approved parole plan and adhere to the direction and guidance of the assigned Community Parole Officer.*

*Each parolee is challenged to be as responsible as possible. While the direction and guidance offered through FORGES will help with this endeavor, there are some areas of re-entry that require parolees to check with their CPO before proceeding. These areas are: housing and shelters, sex offender programs, treatment, banking and computer access. CPOs may restrict other program involvement on a case-by-case basis. Ask the assigned CPO for guidance and direction and adhere to their instructions. When searching the FORGES information and resources, please watch for the following disclaimer.*

*"CPO referral required for parolees".*

## SAFER Colorado Launches Marijuana Ballot Measure

SAFER Colorado has launched a statewide ballot initiative to legalize personal possession of one ounce or less of marijuana by adults over the age of 21. On February 24th, the campaign started to collect signatures necessary to get the initiative on the 2006 ballot. SAFER has about five months to collect the 68,000 signatures needed to qualify for the November ballot. **If you are interested in helping to collect signatures or want more information on SAFER, go to <http://www.safercolorado.org>.**

The goal of SAFER is to educate the public that marijuana is a less harmful substance than alcohol. SAFER believes that, for too long, American attitudes about marijuana have been based on myths and preconceptions.

The language of the ballot question approved by the state for circulation to registered voters is as follows: *Shall there be an amendment to section 18-18-406 (1) of the Colorado revised statutes making legal the possession of one ounce or less of marihuana for any person twenty-one years of age or older?*

## ALLIES IN ACTION Advocates for Recovery

Advocates for Recovery (AFR) is a Colorado non-profit that works to focus public attention on the benefits of recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs. Many benefit from recovery- individuals, families and communities. Recovery is a process of gaining sobriety, hope, and well being, and contributing to the community as a healthy, productive, person. Communities will benefit from offering choices and chances to those committed to changing their lives -outside of the criminal justice system - and providing reasons and resources to reduce recidivism. **Jails and prisons are becoming our new national monuments. Shame on us.**

AFR is made up of individuals who have a stake in their own recovery - and/or as advocates for the recovery of others - from addiction to alcohol and other drugs. They spread the word through the power of their story of continuing recovery. AFR supports the grassroots movement, Faces and Voices of Recovery. Noted author William White says it best. Many of us have carried a message of hope on a one-to-one basis; our recovery movement calls upon us to carry that message of hope to whole communities and the whole culture. We will shape the future of recovery in America with a detached silence or a passionate voice. It is time we stepped forward to shape this history with our stories, our time, and our talents. **Take note: by our silence we let others define us."**

Faces and Voices for Recovery participated in a massive national campaign to repeal the federal Higher Education Act that bans people with drug convictions from getting federal, financial aid to go to school. Due to their efforts and many others, this law was partially REPEALED. The new law goes into effect on July 1, 2006. People will now be able to receive financial aid unless they are convicted of a drug felony or misdemeanor while attending school. The US Department of Education, which oversees the new law, will be deciding how this will be implemented over the next few months.

If you have a prior drug conviction and want to know if you are eligible for financial aid, talk with a financial aid counselor at the school. There are some restrictions that still apply. AFR and Faces and Voices for Recovery will continue to work towards a full repeal. Please go their website at [www.advocatesforrecovery.org](http://www.advocatesforrecovery.org) and [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org) Advocates for Recovery, P.O. Box 460176 Denver, CO. 80246, 303-639-9320