

## 2006 Accomplishments

• Succeeded in getting the City of Denver to make a substantial financial investment in providing community-based re-entry services for people leaving jail and prison. This campaign could serve as a model in other communities.

• Succeeded in defeating a proposal which would only allow families to visit loved ones via video at the new jail in Denver. A letter signed by over 300 CCJRC members to the Mayor and members of City Council ensured that families will be able to visit loved ones in person, too.

• CCJRC was one of the plaintiffs in a lawsuit brought by the ACLU to advocate for the voting rights of people on parole. While this lawsuit was unsuccessful, we will continue our efforts to ensure that people, once released from prison, are entitled to full rights of citizenship, including voting.

• We are nearing completion of a Parolee Re-Entry Guide that will provide extensive information to people in prison, people on parole and their families to help them be more successful after their release.

• We collaborated with our members in Ft. Collins to successfully defeat the expansion of the Larimer County Jail and collaborated with our members in Colorado Springs to host a forum entitled, "The Jails are Full - Now What?". Through these efforts we are raising public awareness and political pressure that perpetual jail expansion is not acceptable or necessary.

• We wrote a three-part series in our newsletter that chronicles the experiences of "Bob" after his release from prison. This series was so popular that CCJRC compiled the series into one booklet that our members and the public can order.

• We partnered with the Piton Foundation, Metro Organization for People, the Fatherhood Initiative, Charly's House Ministries and several academic experts to conduct an extensive and comprehensive research project on the needs and barriers people face while on parole. This is the most comprehensive, grassroots analysis ever done in Colorado and our report of findings will be released in early 2007.

• We partnered with Aphelice to produce a photo documentary that highlights what challenges people face while on parole. This photo display will be showcased on our website by the end of the year.

• Our public education programs reach allowed us to reach out to a wide and diverse audience through speaking engagements, community events, and our newsletters.

• We added nearly 2600 people to our mailing list this year.

## A special thanks to our donors!

CCJRC wishes to give our deep heartfelt thanks to all the people who have made a financial contribution directly and through Community Shares in 2006. We have also been blessed to have received support from the following foundations: Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bamboo Fund, Brett Family Fund, Colorado Compassion Initiative (CVA), Daniels Foundation, Denver Foundation, Drug Policy Alliance, Fund for Nonviolence, and Piton Foundation. The support from our individual members and foundation partners makes our work possible. Together, we will continue to do the work that truly makes a difference.

## ID Lawsuit

The Colorado Lawyer's Committee recently filed a lawsuit against the Colorado Department of Revenue for violating the Administrative Procedures Act by changing the list of documents it would accept in order to issue a Colorado State ID card or driver's license. The lawsuit challenges the Department of Revenue for making changes without holding any public hearings as required under the Administrative Procedures Act. As many parolees know, getting an ID can be a big hurdle. One of the plaintiffs in this lawsuit is a former prisoner. The first hearing is scheduled for December 14th in Denver District Court. If successful, this lawsuit will require the Department of Revenue to hold public hearings which will give advocates the opportunity to try and expand the list of accepted documents thereby making it less difficult for former prisoners to get IDs.

## Got Bob?

In 2006, we published a three-part series in our newsletter about "Bob", the story of a man and his first 72 hours after he is released from prison. There have been so many requests for the complete story, that CCJRC has compiled the series into a booklet. The booklet is available for purchase for \$3.00. Please contact CCJRC to order. Bulk pricing is available.



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

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., #6, Denver, CO 80204

# COLORADO JUSTICE REPORT

December 2006

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM COALITION

1212 Mariposa St., #6, 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.

## How to Work Your Way to Prison in Colorado

It's easier than you think...

*There are often legislators who say that it isn't easy to get to prison in Colorado. They say that you have to actually, "work your way to prison." We wanted to share the story of a CCJRC member who went to prison, no matter how hard she worked to stay out. This is the first installment of a three-part series.*

When I woke up 9 years ago today, it was to bury my husband. I was not expecting Greg to die of a heart attack two weeks after his 40th birthday, and I don't think that he was either. That certainly didn't stop it from happening.

I didn't handle it well.

He had a lot of history with the criminal justice system, but he had been out of trouble for years and this isn't really an elegy to him as it is an explanation of the aftermath of a personal disaster. The police came in with a search warrant two weeks after his death and found the drugs he had been using for pain management. Greg had fallen off of a roof a year prior and we didn't have medical insurance. That doesn't make what he was doing right, but it was the reason for his release. He simply went back to what he knew.

Up until his death, I was working two jobs and trying to finish my degree at a local university. My children were ages 4 and 7. The police decided to arrest me at the time of their search and seizure, although they did eventually charge me with possession, and they wanted to know who "Mr. Big" was. They took my son from his bed where he was taking his afternoon nap and they walked into the local elementary school and removed my daughter from her second grade class in the middle of the day and placed them both in foster care.

Please see [Way to Prison](#) on Page 2.

## Become A Member of CCJRC

Join today...Get one of our new CCJRC bumper stickers!!



It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of 2006 already. It has been a very successful year for CCJRC as we continue the fight to stop the insanity and injustice in Colorado of thoughtlessly incarcerating more and more people.

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition  
1212 Mariposa St., #6  
Denver, CO 80204

New Postal City:  
U.S. Postage  
71222  
Denver, CO  
Permit No. 5818

Recycle for our Earth's sake.

Change Services Requested

## CCJRC Member Survey Results

As part of our strategic planning for 2007, CCJRC surveyed our members this fall. We are very grateful to the hundreds of members who completed the survey. Your input has been very valuable in helping CCJRC set both short-term and long-term priorities.

There was wide diversity in respondents in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and region of the state. Over 82% of respondents had been involved in the criminal justice system or had family or close friends that had been involved in the criminal justice system. Over 65% of respondents were currently involved in the criminal justice system or had family currently involved in the criminal justice system.

We were very honored to hear from respondents that 99% felt that being involved in CCJRC was worthwhile and that 78% of respondents would like to be more involved in CCJRC. We are in the process of expanding opportunities for people to volunteer both at the state level and their own local community to accommodate this interest. Because there are so many areas within the criminal justice system that need reform, so many new prisons under construction, and so many needs that people in prison and their families have, CCJRC has had a hard time over the years deciding how to prioritize where to focus our efforts and identifying the best way that we can be a resource for people in prison and their families. Please see [Survey Results](#) on Page 3.

## Put SB 318 on Your Radar Screen!!!

In 2003, the Colorado Legislature overwhelmingly passed Senate Bill 318 by a vote of 29-6 in the Senate and 62-3 in the House of Representatives. SB 318 was sponsored by Senator Ken Gordon (D-Denver) and Representative Lynn Hefley (R-Colorado Springs). SB 318 had several components, which fall into two different categories: felony/sentence reductions and increasing funding for [Please see SB 318](#) on Page 2.

*We know that the drug war is a failure.*

*We know the current parole system is broken.*

*People leaving prison need more help in order to succeed.*

CCJRC is a membership organization. There are over 4,700 individuals and organizations statewide, like you, who are truly the backbone of CCJRC. 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 forward and helps to achieve our mission and all of our goals. We share a common belief around rallying for the rights the imprisoned, halting state prison expansion, abolishing Colorado's private prison industry 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. CCJRC has members spread across Colorado that have a collective interest in these and other core values.

As members, we write letters to newspapers and elected officials, attend meetings, organize communities and groups to bring about the realization of our mission...and make a donation of personal significance. All of these measures are vital to our success, but your donation is very important. To achieve our goals, to coordinate activities and groups, to plan purchase and distribute flyers, posters and newsletters, 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. 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 now with your tax-deductible contribution.**

#### Way To Prison Continued From Page 1

I remember trying to deal with Social Services and they said because drugs were found in my home that I needed to go to treatment if I wanted to get my kids back. I wasn't completely adverse to the idea, simply because I knew that I needed some kind of therapy. I was in Ft. Collins at the time so I started to make phone calls to find a treatment center. I had no money, I had taken out a loan to bury Greg and then I lost my job. I was slowly becoming unable to continue to function on a daily basis because of the grief of losing my family. I signed up for the ONLY low-income day treatment program in Ft. Collins.

It was a daily battle for me to try and get up every day and figure out the world. Pay rent, keep the heat and lights on, and try to come up with the correct strategy to get my kids home. Take care of my dogs and try to find another job. I needed to find two different attorneys. I had a criminal case and a family law case, and no money. I remember not being able to be in my home alone at night, the ghosts from my family were there, and I would spend hours in the car, parked out in front of the house, crying myself to sleep. I finally had to stop driving, because for some reason I would fall asleep when I was on the road.

There were weekly visits with my children that were supervised by a Social Services case worker at the Department of Human Services. We spent Christmas in a small room at the Social Services office, huddled around a desk, while a caseworker watched us through a glass partition as we tried to make believe that none of this was happening. I watched my children open their gifts.

I asked my daughter if she was okay.

She came around the table and said in my ear, "Mommy, the lady hit me."

Something snapped. The story came out that the foster parent had hit my daughter because she was scared and crying in the night, and I lost my mind. I had never felt so helpless in my entire life. I could not protect my children. The abyss opened up and I fell in. The human spirit is only so tough, and we as humans fall. In a perfect world, there is someone there to catch you when that happens, but in my world that person didn't exist, and I just kept on falling.

The day program that I had signed up included a clause in their contract that insisted if I missed three hours of treatment, I would be discharged from their program. I didn't pay close enough attention and I thought it was three days that I could miss. I got sick and had a flat tire on the car, and called in a few days in a row to let them know I wouldn't be in.

They discharged me from the program. I went in a couple of times and begged them to let me back in, but rules are rules. I have never felt so completely alone in my entire life. I had been a model tax-paying citizen for years, dotting all the I's and crossing all the t's, and when I reached out for help there was NOTHING there.

All I needed was someone to just take charge of my life for a short time and help me to get on the right track. Point me in the right direction. That person didn't exist. I had wrapped myself in a cocoon for years with just my family around me, and when my family was gone there simply wasn't anything or anyone else. The social stigma around what had happened was a shock to the sensible person that I called my friends, and they stopped calling.

Social Services said to go and drop U.A.s. External control was their version of sympathy.

Six weeks later when we went to court, the judge said that if I could maintain sobriety and comply with certain terms and conditions that I could probably get my children back after a month or so, but only if I admitted that I had neglected them. The caseworker came to me after court and told me she would do her best to make sure I never got them back again. I was allowed to call my children every day and I did so, to try to let them know that everything was going to be okay. Those calls were monitored by the foster parent, and I didn't know that the case worker was going to go in and undermine everything by telling my daughter that she would probably not go home for years. My son didn't really understand what was going on. My daughter did.

My seven-year old daughter had a fit, a temper tantrum to rival all temper tantrums. They responded by taking her to the lockdown unit at Ft. Logan in Denver for a 30 day evaluation. They called me the next day and told me what they had done.

I didn't handle that well either.

I woke the next morning and my brother took me to Denver to see her and the doctors at a 9:00 appointment at the hospital. Neither of us knew the city (this was way before Mapquest), we were nearly 45 minutes late to the hospital and I had to be in court at 11:00 back in Ft. Collins for the drug charge. I called the attorney and told him where I was, he said, "Sorry, if you aren't in court in a time a warrant will be issued for your arrest."

I did not care, all I cared about was my daughter and the fact that she was alone in a hospital, hours from home, and my son was suddenly without his sister as well. I remember feeling that I had somewhere, somehow turned into an outlaw, the world was spinning out of control and that the system in all of its facets had suddenly grown teeth and claws and had become some sort of horrible monster that was trying to destroy me, and my children. They probably should have kept me in Ft. Logan and let my daughter go home because by now I was teetering on the brink of a complete breakdown.

That is when the release happened.

I grew up in the 70s when drug use was considered rebellious, but not necessarily criminal. Extreme punitive measures happened 10 years later. I used socially and occasionally off and on for years and when it was obvious that it had become a problem during my late twenties, I went to a wonderful 30 day treatment program, I stopped using and quit drinking and started to raise a family.

The dope never went away, but I did. Although, it certainly was not hard to find again when I needed to escape the horror my life had become. Street or ner citizens are easy to find and they will prescribe the medication you need without asking for your insurance card. Street drugs were cheap, accessible, and effective. I was consumed with guilt, shame and fear, so I started to get high in the hope that it would destroy that monster in the mirror.

It only took two weeks before I was arrested on that warrant for missing my court date. My friend and I were driving down the highway and we were pulled over. They asked for my ID, searched their database and found an active warrant for my arrest. Then they pulled me and found the gram and a half of methamphetamine that was in my jacket pocket. I didn't even try to hide it. I was emotionally, mentally and physically exhausted and I simply could not handle any more. That's when the real train wreck started.

I was in jail for ten days. The bond was set at 3,500 dollars and I didn't have the money to post it. They do not let you have your address book when you are in jail, and the only phone calls that can be made from the jail have to be to collect. There was no one to help me and I didn't own any property, which is necessary in order to make bail. I was sick, my dogs were home alone, and I missed an appointment with the social worker and my daughter's birthday. I had to ask someone that was being released if they could go to my house and feed my dogs for me. Finally, a bondswoman whose husband I had worked for in the past, took pity on me and got me out of jail as long as I could pay her in the next few months.

I went home. The first thing I noticed on that cold February morning was that the front door was open. Local vandals had broken in and stolen nearly everything of value including one of my dogs, and then just randomly broke things that didn't seem to catch their fancy. Our family pictures had been smashed and they were lying on the floor of the hallway, which truly captured how I felt right at that moment. Unfortunately, the worst was still to come.....

To be continued in our march issue.

#### SB 318 Continued from Page 1

drug treatment. However, the legislation also set a "sunset" date of 2007 if the Legislature did not actually increase funding for substance abuse treatment. Since its enactment in 2003, the Legislature has not increased the funding for treatment and therefore, if it doesn't do so in the 2007 session, the sentencing reform will be automatically repealed and go back to the law that was in effect prior to the passage of SB 318. This is something that we do not want to see happen and CCJRC will work very hard during the next session to make sure that SB 318 isn't repealed.

#### The following is a summary of SB 318:

- A. Felony Reclassification (amending CRS 18-18-404, 18-18-405 and 42-4-127.3)
  - Lowers felony classification for use of a Schedule I or II substance to Class 6 felony
  - Lowers felony classification for possession of 1 gram or less of scheduled substances to Class 6 felony (does not include possession with the intent to distribute offenses—even if quantity involved is 1 gram or less)
  - Lowers to a class 4 felony a second or subsequent possession of Schedule I through IV controlled substance offenses if quantity is 1 gram or less
  - Requires that at least \$2.2 million in cost savings (resulting from reduced incarceration costs) be allocated to the drug offender treatment fund for community based treatment.
  - Allows for probation for drug use or possession of 1 gram or less even with prior felony convictions upon recommendation by the district attorney.
  - Exempts conviction for drug use/possession from mandatory driver's license suspension for juveniles.
- SUNSET CONDITION: All provisions of this bill will be nullified and revert back to the former statute if \$2.2 million is not appropriated to the drug offender treatment fund in FY 2007 or thereafter.

SB 318 Continued on Page 3

#### SB 318 From Page 2

B. Creates Drug Offender Treatment Fund (amending 18-19-103)

- Establishes the "Drug Offender Treatment Fund" within the state treasury. All moneys not appropriated by the general assembly shall not be transferred (or revert) to the general fund at the end of any fiscal year. Moneys in the fund shall be subject to annual appropriation to the judicial department for allocation to the "Intragency Task Force on Treatment" or community-based substance abuse treatment.

C. Creates Interagency Task Force on Treatment (amending 16-11.5-102)

- The Interagency Task Force shall consist of the following members: (1) Director or designee of the division of adult parole, community corrections and VOS within the Department of Corrections; (2) Director or designee of the division of criminal justice in the Department of Public Safety; (3) Director or designee of the alcohol and drug abuse division in the Department of Human Services; (4) Director or designee of youth corrections within the Department of Human Services; (5) Director or designee of the division of mental health services in the Department of Human Services; and (6) Director or designee of the division of probation services in the judicial department.

- 3 elected district attorneys or designee chosen by the President of the District Attorney's Council—one from the southern region of the state (representing the 3rd, 6th, 10th, 12th, 15th, 19th & 22nd judicial districts); one from the western region of the state (representing the 5th, 7th, 9th, 14th and 21st judicial districts) and one from the metro area & eastern plains (representing the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 8th, 11th, 13th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th judicial districts).
- The state public defender or designee
- The Intragency Task Force on Offender Treatment shall distribute 80% of the moneys allocated to the Drug Offender Treatment Fund to the local treatment boards based on a formula determined by the population within the judicial district and the number of criminal cases filed for use/possession of drugs.
- The ITF may allocate up to 20% of the year-long offender treatment funds to programs that serve more than 1 judicial district.
- The ITF through the judicial department shall include an accounting of these moneys in its annual budget request.
- On 1/31/05 and 1/31/07, the ITF shall submit a report to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees regarding the anticipated cost-savings generated by SB 318.

D. Creates local drug offender treatment boards in each judicial district.

- Each judicial district will set up a Drug Offender Treatment Board composed of a district attorney (selected by District Attorney), public defender (chosen by Public Defender), and a probation officer. The Purpose of these Treatment Boards is to allocate money it receives from the Drug Offender Treatment Fund (via the Intragency Task Force) to community-based substance abuse programs that serves offenders in the judicial district.
- Requires the local treatment boards to submit a plan to the Intragency Task Force but the ITF does not have the authority to reject the plan. Requires majority vote of board to fund any program. The local boards are to give priority to drug court funding if the jurisdiction operates a drug court.
- Requires that the local boards submit an annual accounting of funds allocated by 1/31 to the ITF of each year beginning the first year after the local boards receive funding.

#### Survey Results Continued from Page 1

To help guide our decision-making, the survey asked: "What issue areas do you think CCJRC should prioritize in 2007? For each, indicate what level of priority you think the issue area should be." The following are the results:

Issue Area	Not a priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
Drug policy reform	1%	18%	36%	44%
Increased funding for substance abuse/mental health treatment	4%	9%	39%	48%
Reform parole laws	2%	12%	20%	66%
Community-based re-entry services for people coming home from jail/prison	5%	9%	22%	70%
Opposing jail/prison expansion plans	4%	19%	21%	56%
Coalition building/in ombership expansion	4%	18%	46%	33%
Serving as a resource for prisoners	5%	10%	34%	51%

As a result of the survey and long discussions by the CCJRC Board of Directors and staff, CCJRC has decided to focus on the following goals in 2007:

- Launch a new statewide education and organizing campaign to demand greater funding for mental health and substance abuse treatment funding.
- Publish the results of our year-long research project on the barriers faced by people on parole to help advocate for better pre-release planning, more effective parole policies, and the need to increase funding for support services for people leaving prison.
- Distributing 20,000 copies of CCJRC's new publication, Parolee ReEntry Guide which will be completed in early 2007.
- Ensure that Senate Bill 318, the drug sentencing reform bill passed in 2003, is reautho-

rized and doesn't get repealed in the 2007 legislative session. (see article entitled "Put SB 318 on Your Radar Screen" for more details).

- Help provide coordination among CCJRC member organizations that are working on criminal justice reform legislation so that we better unite efforts and strengthen the greater movement for criminal justice reform. Part of this movement building will also be providing training for the members of these organizations (including CCJRC members) on effective grassroots lobbying.
- Expand our membership by another 5,000 people statewide.

This is an ambitious agenda and we look forward to working with our members and allies to accomplish these goals.

## Sara's Story

by Sara Inani

I am a former prisoner who was released from Denver Women's Correctional Facility this year, after I had served a five-year sentence. I made one very important decision while incarcerated. I wanted to make the most of my downtime and pursue my dreams, so I chose to go through the Colorado Youth Offender Post-Secondary Program (CYOPP) grant program.

This program allows people to take college courses while they are incarcerated. Credits you earn that will transfer to other colleges to meet the basic core requirements in order to obtain a degree. This opportunity was the best thing that had ever happened to me. Now, my life as a free woman is much easier due to the critical lessons and self-respect that I learned by being a student and obtaining a degree.

I was the first female offender to graduate from this program and they invited me to go back into the prison after my release for the graduation ceremony. I made the decision to attend my graduation at the facility instead of at Adams State College because I wanted to inspire my fellow women and show my appreciation to all of the officials and advocates who have fought so hard for all of us.

I encourage everyone who is eligible to take advantage of this program. You can contact the Program Manager in your prison, the program is currently available in 16 facilities to people who are 25 years or younger and have 5 years or less to their P.E.D. As long as you meet these requirements and there is space in the classroom then these courses are

available to you. Currently, these courses are being offered at an amazingly discounted rate and are well worth your time and money.

The more people who enroll, the more success stories will be born, which in turn could open up the door for more funding for people who are incarcerated. Getting an education will most likely result in reducing the likelihood of recidivism for people, and eventually with the our testimonies and votes, state legislators may start to realize that building more prisons is not the answer to our economic and criminal issues.

I have a college degree now, which overrides my criminal record in employers' opinions. I am able to say that I have persistence and that I made the best out of an ugly situation. Society affords me respect and admiration and I have greatly increased my earning power because of this program.

I have a new attitude towards my life because of the educational lessons I learned. I understand the hardship and the pain that comes with incarceration and I want to get the message to everyone who is currently inside that whatever you can do to better yourself while behind bars will not only help make your time go by faster, despite your circumstance you will be free inside yourself.

No one can take your ability to learn or your knowledge away, no one can lock up your true inner self. The one person who truly cares about your future and has your best interests at heart is you.

I want to acknowledge and give special thanks to: Dr. Tony Romero, Captain Lutz, Gil Gardner and Jim Bulington.