

July 2013



No.2

Never discourage anyone who continually makes progress, no matter how slow."

-Plato 427BC-347BC

The STAR Project's **Mission** is to provide the guidance and support that will successfully re-integrate ex-offenders into the community as contributing members of society.

Our **Vision** is to increase community safety and reduce recidivism by assisting persons to successfully transition from incarceration to the community.

Current News

In May, STAR received a generous grant from the Donald and Virginia Sherwood Trust. The grant is to span three years and is allocated to projects focused on long sustainability.

Work is under way with the hiring of a non-profit consultant, Jan McGowan, who has begun meeting with STAR's board and staff to develop both internal structures and community outreach programs.

In addition, a grant from the Mary Garner Esary Trust has allowed STAR to purchase new computers, software and networking support. The new systems increased STAR's ability to effectively provide services while tracking and reporting data to state, county and local funding bodies.

Penitentiary Collaboration

STAR was recently contacted by Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) Superintendent Steve Sinclair, regarding a potential collaboration between the WSP Sustainability Lab and STAR. WSP had a wood shop, stacks of pallets and men with time on their hands. What they did not have were the tools or materials to turn the pallets into useable products. A collaboration was forged and a dedicated STAR supporter donated the starter items needed to begin production.



The first show and sale of the WSP/STAR collaboration was at June's *Multicultural Arts Festival* in Pioneer Park. The sale of the hand-crafted items by WSP inmates was a success. The money will be used for much needed bus passes, clothing, etc., for clients, as well as additional materials for WSP inmates.

Left: Clients pitching in to sell furniture on Diversity Day

Made On The Inside, To Help Those Released To The Outside.

STAR clients work alongside individuals completing court ordered community service hours once a month at the **Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) food bank**. This outreach provides the “muscle” needed to get boxes of food from the warehouse and into the cars of senior citizens and those with disabilities.



STAR building community relationships through community service.

Other community service projects include helping senior citizens move, maintaining their lawns, and even shoveling snow when needed.

Also, due to the skills of one community service worker, STAR was able to give back to Pioneer Methodist Church by repainting the downstairs kitchen and bathrooms.

AII-STARs



Scott A. graduated with his AAAS in Automotive Repair Technology from Walla Walla Community College in June with a 3.26 GPA. He secured employment just before graduation.

Left: Scott A. on his graduation day



Mike T. earned his Commercial Driving License in June and has been hired to work by a local farmer.

Glenna and Mike T. with his certificate

Guidance For The Future

STAR has three new board members: Anastasia Christman, Mitch Clearfield, and Rich Jacks.

We asked them, “What is one goal that you would like STAR to accomplish this year?”

Anastasia Christman: “I would like to build on the positive attention STAR’s programs have gotten over the last several months to build broader awareness of how our programs help men and women re-integrate into our community. By building relationships between those seeking a second chance and local businesses, we will find that STAR participants have a wealth of talents and skills that will help local companies grow while providing a stable financial foothold for themselves and their families. Our participants want to work and to get back on their feet, and my goal for STAR is to help more local businesses see how that determination can make Walla Walla even better for everyone.”

Guidance for the Future, *continued*

Mitch Clearfield: “The main goal that I would like to see the STAR board accomplish this year is to re-stabilize and expand the organization's sources of funding. We know that we won't be able to rely on as much money from the county in the future, and the (much appreciated!) one-time help that we got in the wake of the county's cuts have given us the opportunity to map out and implement a long-term strategy to broaden our support from the community. That has to be our highest priority right now.”

Rich Jacks: “I would like to see more housing options available for our clients.”

Get Involved!

There are a number of ways to help The STAR Project:

- STAR has ongoing need for donations of starter packs that include things like: razors, towels, personal hygiene products, shampoo, comb, towels, and toothbrush/toothpaste.
- Our clients could use clothes since they generally only have the clothes on their backs when released.
- Donations for bus passes allow clients to find employment and their appointments.
- STAR is always looking for landlords that are accepting of people that are ex-offenders.
- Our clients benefit greatly from Individuals willing and able to mentor them.

Mentoring

“The success of STAR programs is dependent on the availability of dedicated mentors and other volunteers. A mentor is someone who listens, helps clients set goals, supports the effort of their mentee, and advocates for them. Sometimes the mentees will need help enrolling in school, resume help, creating a budget and how to manage their time effectively.”

-Mike Howell, *Long-Term Mentor*

Staff & Board

- Glenna Awbrey - Executive Director
- April Love-King - Bookkeeper
- Chuck Hindman - Board President
- Daniel Clark – Vice President
- Sally Kearsley - Secretary
- Mitch Clearfield - Treasurer

Board Members

- Austin Archer
- Chuck Akes
- Virginia Harrison
- Marc McClure
- Dr. Gary Crabtree
- Anastasia Christman
- Rich Jacks

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