Reentering the Workforce

Presented by: Rebecca Baxter
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Reentry is not a specific program but rather a *process* that starts when an individual is initially incarcerated and ends when he or she has been *successfully reintegrated* in the community as a “law-abiding” citizen.
The Ideal Plan for Reentry

- Employment
- Housing
- Family Reunification
- Transportation
- Support System
- Healthcare
- Treatment
- Parole Office
Recidivism in Arkansas

47.49% of the offenders released from prison returned within 3 years.

**Recidivism of Arkansas Inmates – Findings from the 2016 Release Cohort
ADC- April 2021**
Employment is the key to successfully reintegrating offenders and ex-offenders back into society...

Maintaining stable employment is a predictor of post-release success...

Unemployment has a direct correlation to the rate of recidivism...

Employment is the key to successfully reintegrating offenders and ex-offenders back into society...
“THOUGHT PRISON WAS HARD? TRY FINDING A DECENT JOB ONCE YOU GET OUT.”
COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS

- Goodwill
  - Forklift Operation Certification
  - Goodwill CHEST Program – Certified Health Environmental Service Technician
- Office of Child Support Enforcement
- OSHA
- ServSafe
- DWS – NATF, SNAP, Career Pathways, Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition
- Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)
- US Dept of Housing and Urban Development
- Job Corps
- Arkansas Human Development Corporation
- Local Workforce Centers
- American Indian Center of Arkansas
“To fight the vicious circle of crime and recidivism we need to create ways offenders, ex-offenders, those at risk to offend, and those living off crime (but not yet caught) can make money legitimately”

R.L. Pelshaw
Second Chance Hiring

• According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce – Second chance hiring is the practice of hiring individuals with a criminal record.

• There are an estimated 70 million Americans with a record of an arrest or conviction.

• The Second Chance Business Coalition found that 85% of Human Resource representatives and 81% of business leaders polled said that individuals with criminal records perform the same as or better than employees without criminal records.
Benefits to Employers

Federal Bonding Program

• Bonds issued free of charge for “at risk” employees or employees whose past experiences present an obstacle to future employment.

• United States Department of Labor awarded 1.2 million to LR to develop the Rock City Reentry Project
Benefits to Employers

• WOTC - federal tax credit that encourages employers to hire workers from targeted groups. The tax credit is designed to help job seekers gain on-the-job experience, move towards economic self-sufficiency, and help reduce employer’s federal tax liability

• Employers claim about $1 billion in tax credits each year under WOTC

• Qualified Ex-Felon – a person who has been convicted of a felony under any statute of the United States or any State
Benefits of Employment

• Ability to meet financial obligations
• Ability to be self-sufficient
• Increased self-worth
• Ability to socialize and learn from people who live a crime free lifestyle
• Employers can make a difference in transforming a “criminal liability” into a community asset.
• According to VERA institute of Justice, the U.S. spends nearly 40 billion a year to house inmates.
• The average cost per state to house one inmate is $31,286 per year. But if that one felon gets a job instead of returning to prison, he or she now contributes to the economy by more than $10,000 a year, according to a Baylor University study.
Statistics in Arkansas

As of July 4, 2021 – 49,150 Offenders on Active Supervision
17,653 on Inactive Supervision

Education Levels as of September 19, 2021

- Less than 12th Grade No GED - 7,994
- Less than 12th Grade With GED - 5,188
- 12th Grade - 18,267
- College - 5,275
- Unknown - 271

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QUESTIONS
“Moving from survival to stability, from stability to success, from success to significance.”
–Zig Ziglar
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