

REENTRY NEWSLETTER

Mission Statement

To enhance public safety by bringing together the private & public resources of Douglas County to help ex-offenders successfully re-enter their neighborhoods as accountable, self-sufficient & law-abiding citizens



April 2015

Program Spotlight on Program Director, Mike Caron

Article written by Brian Daldorph, University of Kansas

Since I took over the writing class at Douglas County Jail in 2001 from my KU colleagues Kirk Branch and Anna Neill, Mike Caron and I have sat together through hundreds and hundreds of classes, involving thousands of inmates, and we have enjoyed every class. I have heard so many times from inmates that the class—giving them the opportunity to express themselves and to hear others—has helped to keep their heads above water during the tough challenge of incarceration. For me it's been the best experience of my long and diverse teaching career.

Everyone in the class over so many years has appreciated Mike's respect for their writing. He sees writing as an important means to organize, shape and ultimately to understand life's experiences, and obviously this process is of great significance to inmates who are often trying to take charge of their lives and make better decisions. In a similar way, Mike established anger management, parenting, employment and behavior change classes at the jail, classes of enormous help to many inmates over the years.

Thanks to the man from Lewiston, Maine, for making so many good things happen at DC Jail, thanks from all of us who benefitted.

When you look at Mike's bio you wonder how many lives he has lived. Those of us who are lucky enough to have known Mike over the years have heard Mike's stories from a range of his experiences: as Green Beret combat medic in Vietnam, 1968-69, as commercial fisherman (Forrest Gump!), as fishmonger and hitchhiker: ask Mike about hitching rides on airplanes! If there's a mountain around then Mike will have a go at climbing it.

Mike has been a graduate student, college lecturer, rock-turner as the keenest member of the Kansas Herpetological Society, and he likes to take in a game or two of baseball, so long as his Red Sox are winning!

We probably all know him best as Programs Director at Douglas County Jail over the last 15 years. We all know that Mike goes an extra mile for everything he participates in, and gets great things done with his tenacious commitment. Mike has recruited and trained any number of jail volunteers, who, like me, have stuck it out over the long haul because we've always known Mike would back us up. How many inmates have I heard thank Mike for helping them out? Not only in jail but "on the outs" too, with Mike a key participant in a re-entry program that has received national attention for its merits.

Somehow he has done all this **and** participated in projects vital to all of us, most notably as the Executive Director of *Save the Wakarusa Wetlands*. Mike has also drawn on his own "re-entry" (from war) experience to mentor veterans in the Wounded Warrior program.

Gently used: couch, chairs, bicycles

Magazines: Fishing & Hunting, Cars & Trucks, Racing, trains, dogs, war history, construction, restaurants, cooking, anything large print

We do not need the following magazines: old National Geographic, old Sports Illustrated, old Time Magazines, Gardening, home decoration or women's magazines (already donated).

Needs

SUCCESS STORIES

The Last Snake Hunt By Mike Caron

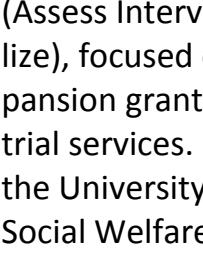
Last weekend I headed out to Russell County to join about 100 other herpetology enthusiast for the spring field trips. This was very special to me because I have been getting together with these folks for half a dozen years, two or there or four times a year to share our love of snakes, turtles, lizards, salamanders, frogs and toads

We have permission to explore 7000 acres of prime snake habitat with lots big flat rocks to flip.

It could be the best and last snake trip I have before leaving Kansas. I 'll bring back pictures and hopefully a few good "war stories".



DIRECTOR'S CORNER



In an effort to continue to improve services for individuals with mental illness, veterans and women involved in the criminal justice system Douglas County Sheriff's Office and Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center have applied to expand the Justice Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC). In 2010 our first JMHCPC grant, AIMS (Assess Intervene Mobilize Stabilize), focused on Reentry. The expansion grant will focus on pre-trial services. With the support of the University of Kansas; School of Social Welfare the expansion to pre-trial services will be known as AID (Assess Identify Divert). AID will not only focus on individuals with serious mental illness but also all women and veterans booked into the Douglas County Correc-

tions Facility (DCCF). In addition to assessment, the proposed grant will also seek opportunities to develop services to divert individuals from the DCCF back into the community.

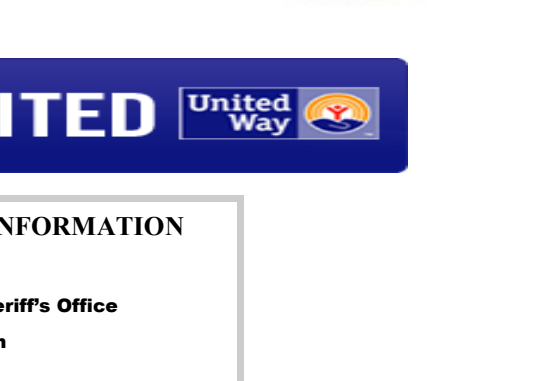
The grant application was submitted on April 14, 2015 to the Bureau of Justice Assistance. There is a twenty percent in-kind match to Federal funds. We propose the in-kind match will be made by staff providing support from the Sheriff's Office, Bert Nash and KU. Approved applicants will be notified by October 1st, 2015 of their award and the grant will run for 24 months. If awarded, the Sheriff's Office will contract with Bert Nash for two mental health clinicians to conduct the assessments and work with other Douglas County agencies in the DCCF.

Save the Date

Retirement Reception for Mike Caron
& Volunteer Recognition

May 21st 4-7 pm

Douglas County Fairgrounds,
Building 21



The Transition from Jail to Community Initiative



LIVE UNITED



CONTACT INFORMATION

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