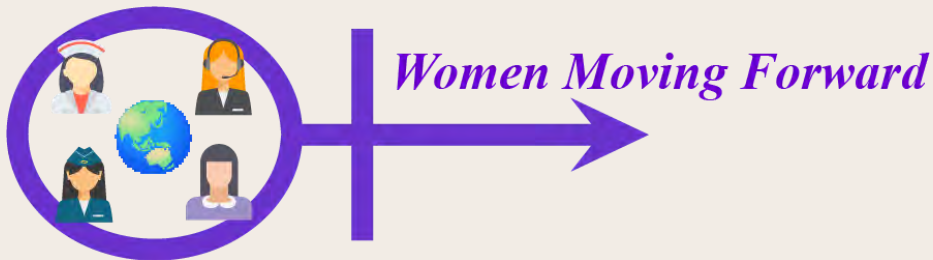




PLAN YOUR BEST HAND

YOUR JOURNEY HAS JUST BEGUN



OCTOBER 21, 2023

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Judge Julia B. Weatherly

GOOD WILL



PREPARE
PREpare for PArrole and REentry



Mary Pat Donelan * The Honorable Brenda P. Murray

Carol Sanders * Margaret Chippendale

Circle of Angels Initiative * Kenwood Garden Club



Conference Date:

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Conference Chairs:

Warden Geneva Holland
Hon. Julia B. Weatherly
Elizabeth Adams, Esq.

Conference Coordinator:

Lisa Pierotte

2023 Steering Committee:

Hon. Monise Brown
Ellen Bredt
Chadon Bradshaw
Rachael Campbell
Richard Chambers
Maryjoel Davis
Vivian Day
Laurie Denham
Mary Pat Donelan
Cadee Eberhardt
Shawn Flower, Ph.D.
Chief Genieve Goodall
Hon. Llamilet Gutierrez
Anne Hilb
Dr. Chimene Liburd
Major Renee Liddell
Richard Mattingly
Rev. Cheryl Mercer, Ph.D.
Virginia Ngugi
A.W. Tikaya Parker
Donna Rojas
Hon. Cathy Hollenberg
Serrette
Denise Smith
Gavata Smith
Kaeshawn Stewart
Roseanna Vogt

Dear Conference Attendees,

The Women Moving Forward Committee, its members, and the National Association of Women Judges are pleased to welcome you to the 2023 conference. Our conference theme is **Plan Your Best Hand – Your Journey Has Just Begun**. The conference's goal is to encourage incarcerated women to anticipate the challenges of returning to the community and to plan. Planning done while still in MCIW in preparation for release will help you anticipate your needs and options. Our Women Moving Forward volunteers want you to know we are rooting for your success. But your efforts, including attending this conference, will make a difference.

We will begin our day with our keynote speaker, Donna Bruce, who founded a business to provide restoration and healing to those impacted by trauma. A high point of the day is our luncheon, provided by Biddle Street Catering. For our luncheon speakers, we have invited panelists who will share their tips for a successful reentry with **Navigating the Road to Redemption: Returning Citizen's Perspective on Reentry**. During the day, conference attendees will attend three workshops offered on various topics. This year, we have added a new workshop for women who have served more than ten years of incarceration. We will gather at the end of the day to hear from role models of their success stories brought to you by Mary Joel Davis with **Walking in My Shoes**.

The Women Moving Forward Conference website, www.wmfmd.org, contains a wealth of guides to resources in the community. After your release, you can go to the website and get information to help you locate services and support.

We wish to thank Virginia Ngugi and the staff at MCIW for their work and assistance with this conference. Ms. Ngugi has worked with us for several years and we could not put this conference on without her.

Sincerely,

Hon. Julia B. Weatherly, Warden Geneva Holland, Elizabeth Adams, Esq.
Conference Co-chairs





Strong

Wisdom

I AM

Unique

Courageous

Lovely

Bold

Wise

Woman

Joyful

Loud

Talented

CONFERENCE GAME PLAN



Preparation

Review your workshops and course descriptions in advance.

Get enough rest the night before.

Prepare your heart to receive instruction.

Workshop Conduct

Participate in workshop discussions.

Respect and listen to other's opinions and thoughts.

Take brief notes of main points.

Conversation Starters

A warm smile and a friendly greeting go a long way.

Prepare your questions before you speak.

Listen attentively

Application

Highlight points you plan to use.

Review conference material regularly.

Discuss points with friends and family.



**ALWAYS
BET ON
YOURSELF**

AGENDA

Time	Activity	Location
9:00-9:20 a.m.	Co-Chairs Welcome Conference Evaluation Process	Gymnasium
9:20-9:50 a.m.	Keynote Address: <i>Restoration and Healing for Those Impacted by Trauma</i>	Gymnasium
10:00-10:55 a.m.	Workshop I	See Schedule
11:05-11:50 a.m.	Lunch	Gymnasium
11:50-12:35 p.m.	Panel Discussion: <i>Navigating the Road to Redemption: Returning Citizen's Perspective on Reentry</i>	Gymnasium
12:45-1:40 p.m.	Workshop II	See Schedule
1:50-2:45 p.m.	Workshop III	See Schedule
2:55-3:10 p.m.	Submit Evaluations / Distribute Gift Bags	Gymnasium
3:15-3:45 p.m.	Walking in My Shoes	Gymnasium
3:45-4:00 p.m.	Closing Comments	Gymnasium

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Donna Bruce, Founder CEO, CPRS, CPRS-F, RPS

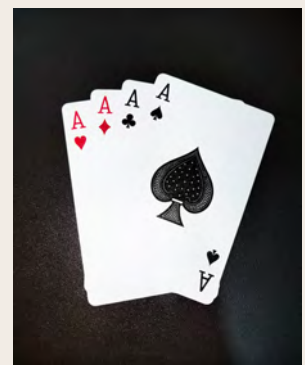
Donna Bruce Unlimited, Inc.

Master Stylist, Social Justice Advocate

Donna Bruce is the founder of Donna Bruce Unlimited, Inc., a 501(c)3 organization that provides restoration and healing to those impacted by trauma through life skills education and the arts. The organization believes that providing the tools to cope and process their experiences to those struggling can help them move forward in life.

The programs offered by Donna Bruce Unlimited, Inc. help individuals gain the skills needed to find success and satisfaction regardless of their past experiences. The organization also provides a safe and supportive environment to encourage individuals to explore their creativity and build self-confidence. With the help of Donna Bruce Unlimited, Inc., those affected by trauma can have hope for a brighter future.

Ms. Bruce has over ten years of experience as a peer support specialist and registered peer supervisor-Family. She has "lived experience" and thorough training and has passed the Maryland State Addiction Behavioral Health Board requirements to support those who struggle with mental health, psychological trauma, or substance use. Her experiences with these challenges have inspired a more vigorous desire to help others.





Trauma Recovery and Reintegration Guide: Empowering Incarcerated Women for a Fresh Start

Congratulations on nearing the end of your time in incarceration. As you prepare to transition back into society and reunite with your family, it's important to address any trauma you may have experienced and equip yourself with tools for healing and reintegration. This guide is designed to help you navigate this journey and build a foundation for a brighter future.

1. Understanding Trauma:

- Learn about the various forms of trauma and how they can affect your mental, emotional, and physical well-being.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in yourself, and understand that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

2. Seeking Support:

- Connect with counselors, therapists, or support groups that specialize in trauma recovery. Professional help can provide you with the guidance you need to heal.
- Share your experiences with trusted individuals who are supportive and understanding.

3. Self-Care Practices:

- Develop a self-care routine that addresses your physical, emotional, and mental needs. This could include exercise, meditation, journaling, and engaging in hobbies.



Establish clear boundaries in your relationships to protect your emotional well-being. Communicate your needs and expectations openly and assertively. Learn to say "no" to situations or people that may trigger negative emotions or stress.

5. Positive Coping Strategies:

Discover healthy ways to cope with stress and negative emotions, such as deep breathing, mindfulness, and engaging in creative activities. Avoid using substances or engaging in risky behaviors as a way to numb pain.

6. Reconnecting with Family:

Approach your family with open communication about your experiences and your intention to heal and grow. Rebuild trust by setting realistic expectations and showing your commitment to positive change.

7. Building a Support Network:

Cultivate relationships with individuals who uplift and encourage you. Surround yourself with people who believe in your potential. Seek out community resources that provide assistance for housing, employment, and education.

8. Goal Setting:

Define short-term and long-term goals for yourself. This could include educational pursuits, career aspirations, and personal achievements. Celebrate your accomplishments along the way, no matter how small they may seem.



9. Embracing Growth:

- Remember that your past does not define you. Focus on your journey of healing and growth.
- Practice self-compassion and forgive yourself for any mistakes or choices made in the past.

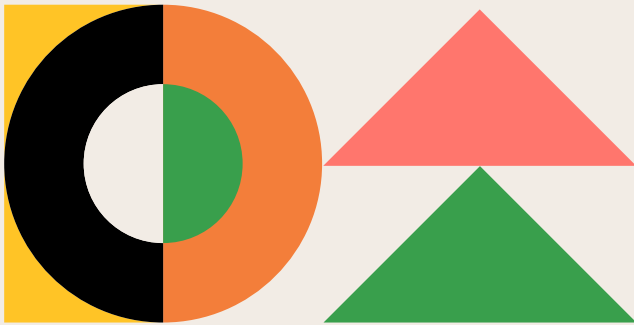
10. Professional Development:

- Explore opportunities for skill development and vocational training to enhance your employability.
- Seek out job placement programs that can support your reintegration into the workforce.

Remember that healing is a gradual process, and you have the strength within you to overcome challenges. By addressing your trauma and taking proactive steps towards recovery, you are creating a foundation for a more positive and fulfilling future. Take each day as an opportunity to grow, learn, and transform your life. You have the power to shape your own story.



Freedom



Anne Bocchini Kirsh

Anne co-founded several lasting programs during her incarceration. She worked with Second Chance for Women and the University of Maryland School of Law to create the still-operating Empowerment and Recovery Support (EaRS) program for domestic violence survivors, converted the Celebrate Recovery program to distance learning to keep it going through the COVID pandemic, and facilitated several existing programs such as AVP, Legal Writing, and several 12-step programs. She volunteered with the D-Wing drug program, tutored GED and Goucher students, and was a mentor in the Peer Recovery program. She started helping women build parole packets in 2017, which led to her collaborating with Maryjoel Davis, Elizabeth Finne, and Jacqueline Ahn in creating PREPARE. After moving her office outside the fence in 2022, she started as PREPARE's Director of Advocacy.

Anne is a proponent of collaborative and restorative justice who believes all people can change and that successful reentry begins at intake, regardless of the charge or sentence. She has faith that the correctional system can provide meaningful rehabilitation and reentry support to everyone through partnerships with other state departments and community partners and that this work will improve outcomes for individuals, communities, and public safety.

NAVIGATING THE ROAD TO REDEMPTION: *RETURNING CITIZENS PERSPECTIVE ON REENTRY*

Lamont Carey is the Executive Director for the Mayor's Office of Returning Citizens Affairs (MORCA) under the dynamic and outstanding leadership of Mayor Muriel Bowser. Executive Director Carey has enhanced collaborations between the community-based, faith-based, and nonprofit organizations and MORCA so essential and much-needed supportive services, for example, clothing and food, could be provided to recently released returning citizens. Executive Director Carey is passionate about closing the gaps for returning citizens, as he is a former returning citizen himself.

Vivian Day is a retiree of the C&O Railway and is a volunteer Peer Recovery Housing Specialist for the Light of Truth, a non-profit organization that houses women in recovery. Her passion is singing in her church choir and serving whoever and whenever possible. Wearing many hats in serving, her motto is "serve and obey." Keep looking up, the view is better.

Gaváta Smith is the published author of the book *Get Yourself Together First*, which she wrote while she served 9 years of a 15-year sentence at MCIW. Gaváta is a licensed Minister at Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church; a Christian Mime (Mym4Christ); and a Public and Motivational Speaker having appeared on several radio and television networks. She is the owner of Maryland Mobile Notary and Consulting Services, LLC; and an IT Professional in the Government Contracting sector.



LAMONT CAREY



VIVIAN DAY

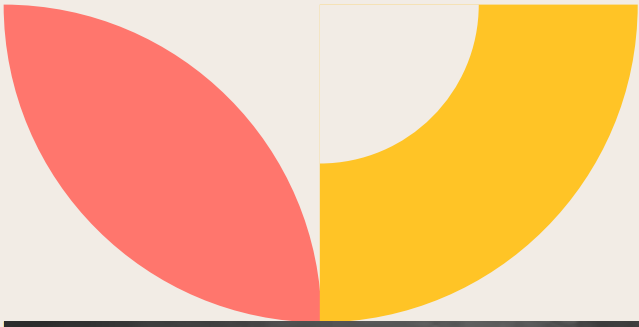


GAVÁTA SMITH

**are you
ready?**



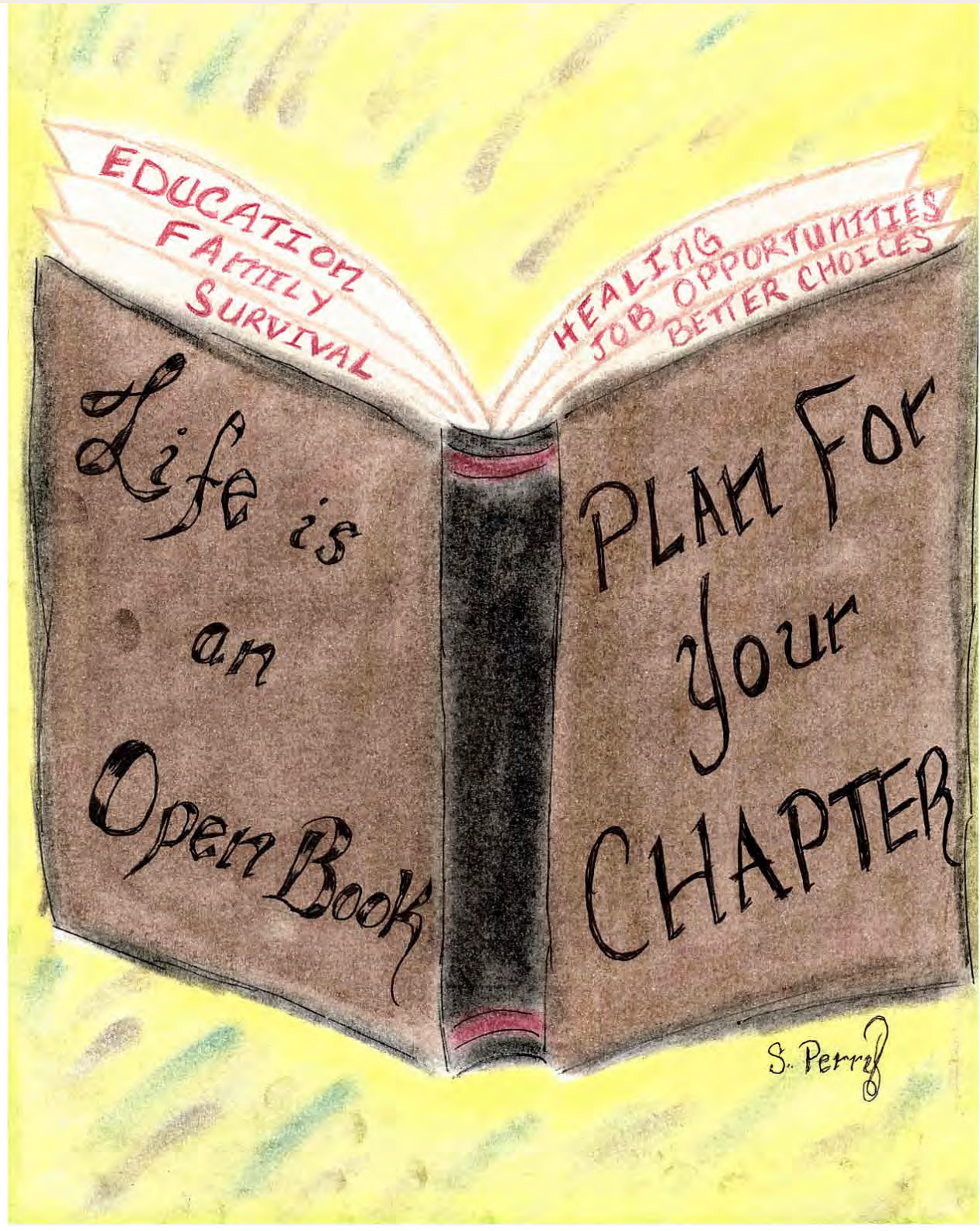
By: Marlaine Rose



Cheryl Sterette

In 1986, I was convicted of multiple crimes, one being a violent crime. After the court hearings, I was given 35 years. I accepted my role in all that had been done but was determined to remain positive. In 1999, a little lady came to see me. Her name was Maryjoel Davis. Her mission was to prove that violent offenders deserve a chance to prove that they could rehabilitate. I laughed at first and said this State does not allow us to leave prison because they think we are monsters. Thanks to the help from the Turn Around Program (TAP), chance and change became a reality. I left state prison in November 2001.

I went to school and obtained a full-time job. In 2005, I earned a second degree in Business Management. I am now certified in Social Science, Human Service, and Business Management. I have worked in addiction programs, retail, and food service. I obtained my CDL license, and I currently manage a youth facility. Despite many obstacles, I did not give up on myself. And 22 years later, that little lady “Maryjoel Davis” still supports me. I am a living testimony that you can control your fate with determination. To those who read this, know that you can be next!



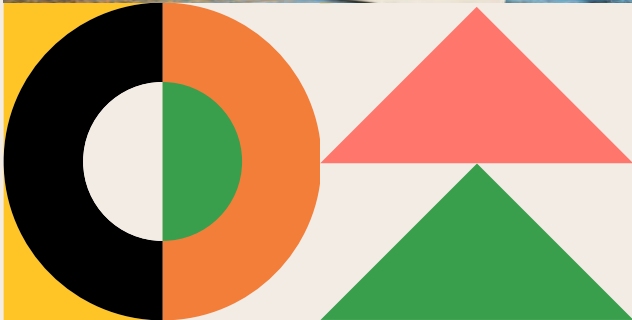
EDUCATION
FAMILY
SURVIVAL

HEALING
JOB OPPORTUNITIES
BETTER CHOICES

Life is
an
Open Book

PLAN FOR
your
CHAPTER

S. Perry

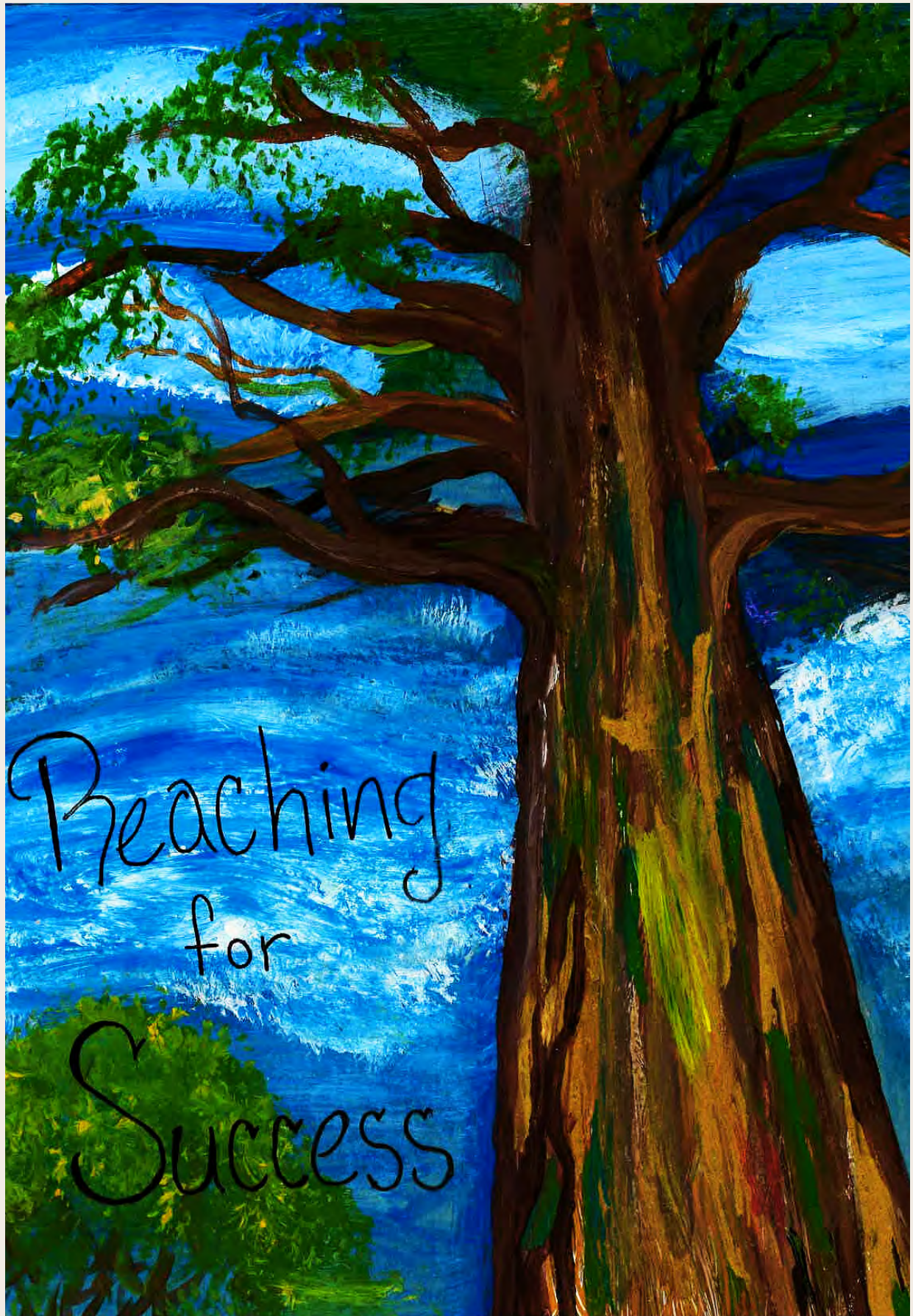


Kristi Ziemski

I was incarcerated since I was a teenager for over 23 years. I had to completely rebuild my life. I came home to nothing and had never even had a driver's license. I had to complete court-ordered drug treatment for three months. I took my driver's classes, and did my outpatient treatment at a recovery house, saving as much money as I could. Through connections, I got a job right away. Not necessarily the job that I wanted, but getting that job led to many other opportunities. Soon, I was able to get my driver's license, a car, and an apartment. I also obtained a job at a treatment center which was more in line with my career path and recovery plan.

Three pieces of advice I want to give to you are first, use your time wisely. Attending years of college courses while I was in prison made it much easier for me to be on the path to earning a degree. Second, have a plan and follow it to the best of your ability. Things won't go exactly how you plan but if you keep striving for your goals you will meet them. Third, take advantage of any resources you can.

My main message is hope. Even though I had a life sentence, I never gave up. I maintained strong bonds with my family and friends. I never forget where I came from by keeping in touch with those who are still incarcerated. It reminds me every day that I never want to return to that way of life. Now I am living my dreams. I can only hope and wish the same for everyone who is still behind those walls.



Reaching
for
Success

WALKING IN MY SHOES

Sara Citroni joined the PREPARE team in September 2022. Since then she has taken on the role of Project Manager for reentry services. Sara is a returning member of society after serving nearly three decades in the correctional system. She was released in June 2022 by the Juvenile Restoration Act. Sara believes that preparation is fundamental to parole success, strengthened with a solid reentry plan which is the foundation for lifetime success and beyond. Sara firmly believes in paying those efforts forward to others still in the system.

Sara translates her natural coaching skills to empower those around her. She operates on a personal mantra that “Everybody needs a mentor,” and believes in the power of looking out for one another. It is through the idea that the key to success is through a network that Sara connects the individuals with the community members and organizations that will arm them with the tools for successful reentry into society.

On April 6, 2020, the Commissioner asked **Renee Matthews**, “How soon can you pack?” She started to cry as she was going home after 25 years in prison. While incarcerated, Renee read, wrote poetry, drew, painted a mural, taught youth Bible study, tutored pre-GED classes, and graduated from a four-year Bible Institute. Every day, she tried to do something different from the day before.

Renee currently works at Johns Hopkins University. Renee spends as much time as she can teaching others about the injustice of how women are treated and sentenced. She also shares her experiences of childhood trauma and domestic violence. Before her incarceration, she graduated from Wilberforce University with honors. Renee worked as a bank teller and at Walt Disney World. In 2021, Ms. Magazine reported on her story, and she has given presentations to Cornell and the University of Maryland legal clinics, community organizations, and nonprofits. She has a daughter, now 32, who is her heartbeat.

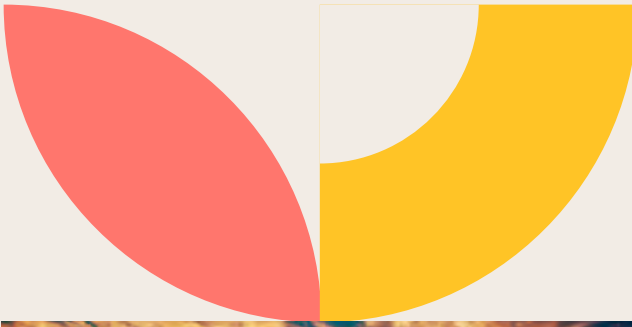


SARA CITRONI



RENEE MATTHEWS



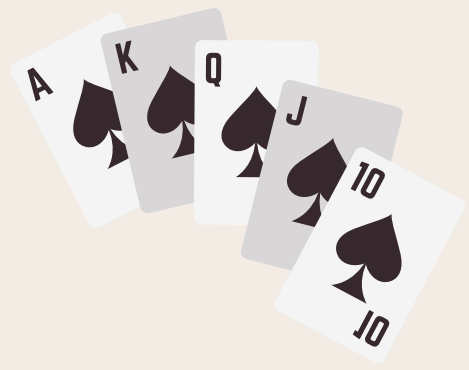


Kelli Loos

Kelli is a graduate of Virginia Tech with a BS in Hospitality and Tourism Management. She is also a returning citizen who has now worked with both Anne and Sara on the inside and outside. Originally from Virginia, she relocated to Maryland for work with Benchmark Hospitality at Lockheed Martin. After tragic circumstances led to her incarceration, she met Maryjoel through Second Chance for Women, and then ultimately worked with Elizabeth, co-founder of PREPARE. Kelli was one of the first clients to receive assistance through the PREPARE program. Elizabeth led the advocacy call with Kelli's family and was impressed by the high level of support and collaboration.

Kelli believes strongly in the human capacity for forgiveness, accountability, growth, and change. Equally important is her certainty that parole preparation must include a well-thought-out, individualized reentry plan or order to be successful when you return to your community. She has faith that PREPARE's groundbreaking work in Maryland will reverberate throughout the correctional system, leading to more opportunities for decarceration, which is more than just getting people out of prison.

WORKSHOPS



Stacking the Deck on My Healthcare: This workshop will open the conversation to understanding healthcare options as you transition. Knowing what is available and what is best suited for each individual will optimize success and long-term healthcare management.

- Discussion of primary care
- How to promote self-wellness
- Chronic condition management

Presenter: *Dr. Chimene Liburd, MD, MBA, FACP is a physician executive and healthcare consultant, Vice President of Clinical Operations, and Chief Medical Officer of Medicare Advantage for Anthem, Inc. Her mission is equitable access to healthcare for all.*



Embracing Self Doubt: This workshop explores confidence building and self-empowerment.

- Explore your relationship with your inner critic
- Notice patterns that occur when doubting yourself
- Practice shifting from inner critic to realistic thinking
- Learn and practice somatic tools for self-compassion and deeper awareness

Presenter: *Ann Hilb, MSOD, CDP, IDC-ACC is an organization development consultant who partners with leadership, management, and front-line employees on topics of building confidence and accountability. As a certified ICF coach, she loves to empower women in business to connect with their inner wisdom.*

WORKSHOPS



Me and My P.O.: This workshop will give an overview of the importance of establishing necessary and successful connections with your probation officer on the road to reentry. Through discussions and role-play, you will gain insight on:

- The role of your probation officer
- Positive connections with your probation officer
- Importance of transparency and accountability
- Available resources through Parole & Probation

Presenter: *Kaeshawn Stewart (Young), MS, VASII, Agent Senior with the Maryland Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services. She has presented workshops to enable returning citizens to further enhance the probationary experience and demonstrates a lively and factual approach to optimizing the connection with your P.O.*



Playing My Best Hand on Social Media: This workshop introduces and explores the vast world of social media. Participants will learn:

- How to get established on a platform
- Do's & Don'ts
- What's legal/what's not
- How to safeguard your image
- Importance of connections

Presenter: *Elizabeth Adams, Attorney at Law for more than 20 years, has focused her practice on issues of disputes and lawsuits. She highlights the need for informed social media interactions that promote proper, ethical, and positive social media behavior.*

WORKSHOPS



Are My Finances and Credit a Stacked Deck? This workshop will help you understand how to build financial success and the impact of good credit. Participants will:

- Learn terms related to personal finances
- Gain an understanding of how to establish a budget
- Learn the importance of a credit score
- Learn how to open a bank account and apply for credit

Presenter: Ellen Shiery, CFP, CDFA, Wealth Management Advisor, Global Institutional Consulting; Merrill Lynch Wealth Management has more than 15 years of experience in financial services. She works to assist people to become financially aware/astute, and forward-thinking about their financial future.

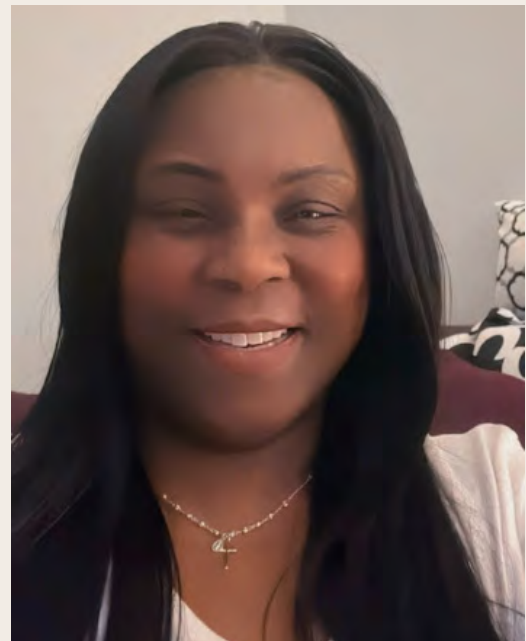


Finding My Career Sweet Spot: This workshop is designed for MCIW Residents who have been incarcerated for 10 or more years and will explore the journey to a winning career designed just for you by:

- Surveying possible occupations
- Targeting the best option for you
- Learning of the resources available as you transition to the community
- Building steps that target your career

Presenter: Ellen Bredt, Reentry Navigator, Administrator I, Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning, Maryland Department of Labor works to connect you with employment opportunities, skills, and credentials as well as other resources you might need to become independent and successful. Ellen is the co-author of *Equipment Essential for Excellence: Step Into Your New Career*.





Rhonda Hall

I spent 26 years at MCIW. I was released on July 31, 2021, and that was the happiest day of my life. I was 22 when I was incarcerated and 48 when I was released. I thanked God and was determined to live the life I always wanted. Today, I am a Grandmother, a Board Member, an Admission Coordinator, an Entrepreneur, and a College Student. I spent six months at Marian House. It was a miracle to move into my place within six months. God blessed me with custody of my grandchildren from my daughter Crystal, who passed in 2018, and we are so happy. I am a member of the Board for PREPARE, work as a Facilities Admission Coordinator for the University of Maryland Medical System, and am an Entrepreneur. I returned to school to get my bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Human Resource Management. Yes, I am living life.

While incarcerated, I created a release book to inspire my dreams and goals. I have been checking off so many things in my book that I never thought I could do. No, my incarceration has not stopped me from being the best I could be.

I have a great support system that has been there for me since day one, and some of those are women just like me who reach back to help those who came behind them. Network and get to know people who visit the facility. Those programs you take for granted will help you, so please use them. Take classes they offer because they will help build your foundation to be the best you can be. You may feel like you will not make it, or you will be on your own. Please use the resources that are there for you. They are there for a reason. God Bless you all...

NOTES

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NOTES

Lined writing area with horizontal lines for notes.



NOTES

Lined writing area for notes, featuring horizontal lines on a white background with a brown border.



NOTES

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A special “thank you” to the many volunteers assisting the conference presenters and facilitators.

Women Moving Forward

🌐 www.wmfmd.org

✉ coordinator@wmfmd.org