



THE COMEBACK

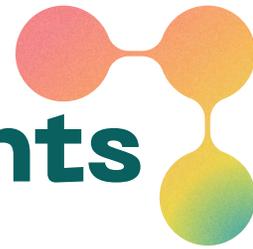
Stronger than Before

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Presented By:



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Conference Date:
Saturday, October 4, 2025

Chairs:
Warden Tikaya Parker
Hon. Julia B. Weatherly
Shawn M. Flower, Ph.D.

Conference Coordinator:
Lisa Pierotte

2025 Steering Committee:

Ellen Bredt
Rachael Campbell
Mary Joel Davis
Laurie Denham
Mary Pat Donelan
Cadee Eberhardt
Lynde Elaine Gleeson
Tyrina Hardiman
Ann Holmes
Leslie Johnson
Lauren Lambert
Richard Mattingly
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Sgt. Virginia Ngugi
Hon. Maria Oesterreicher
Donna Rojas
Decora Ross
Asst. Warden Lorelei Sattler
Hon. Cathy Hollenberg Serrette
Tashaya Turner
Officer Serita Veney
Roseanna Vogt

Dear Conference Attendees,

Welcome to the 2025 Women Moving Forward Conference! The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) and our steering committee volunteers are excited you are here. We know that returning home after incarceration is a challenge. There are numerous issues to anticipate. The fact that you have chosen to attend this conference means that you are already thinking ahead. Good for you!

Our theme this year is ***The Comeback: Stronger Than Before***. This reflects your ability to bring what you have learned to your plans for your future success. Our conference will open with a keynote address by Rodney Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell will inspire you with his own story of careful planning for his education, and his success in pursuing his career goals. He will challenge you to bring your strengths to your own re-entry plan.

Biddle Street Catering, Baltimore's premier tastemaker, will once again cater our delicious lunch with their homemade entrees and desserts. Our I-WISH performance, ***"I Can Fly,"*** will feature talent from MCI-W to give us a lighthearted moment.

Today, we will conduct six workshops on topics to build your re-entry skills: strategies for career success, making sound financial decisions, family reunification, making strategic plans for your re-entry, supporting your mental health, and pursuing growth and healing through journaling. Experienced speakers with expertise in their fields will lead the workshops. Mary Joel Davis will bring us women who will share how they are navigating their release in "Walking in My Shoes" to end the day.

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

We wish to express our gratitude to Virginia Ngugi, the staff at MCI-W, our generous financial donors, the wonderful Women Moving Forward steering committee for their time and efforts in planning the conference, and to our conference volunteers. We cannot pull it off without them!

Sincerely,
Your Co-Chairs
Judge Julia B. Weatherly | Warden Tikaya Parker | Dr. Shawn Flower

LEADERSHIP

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Gerry & Kathleen Albanese

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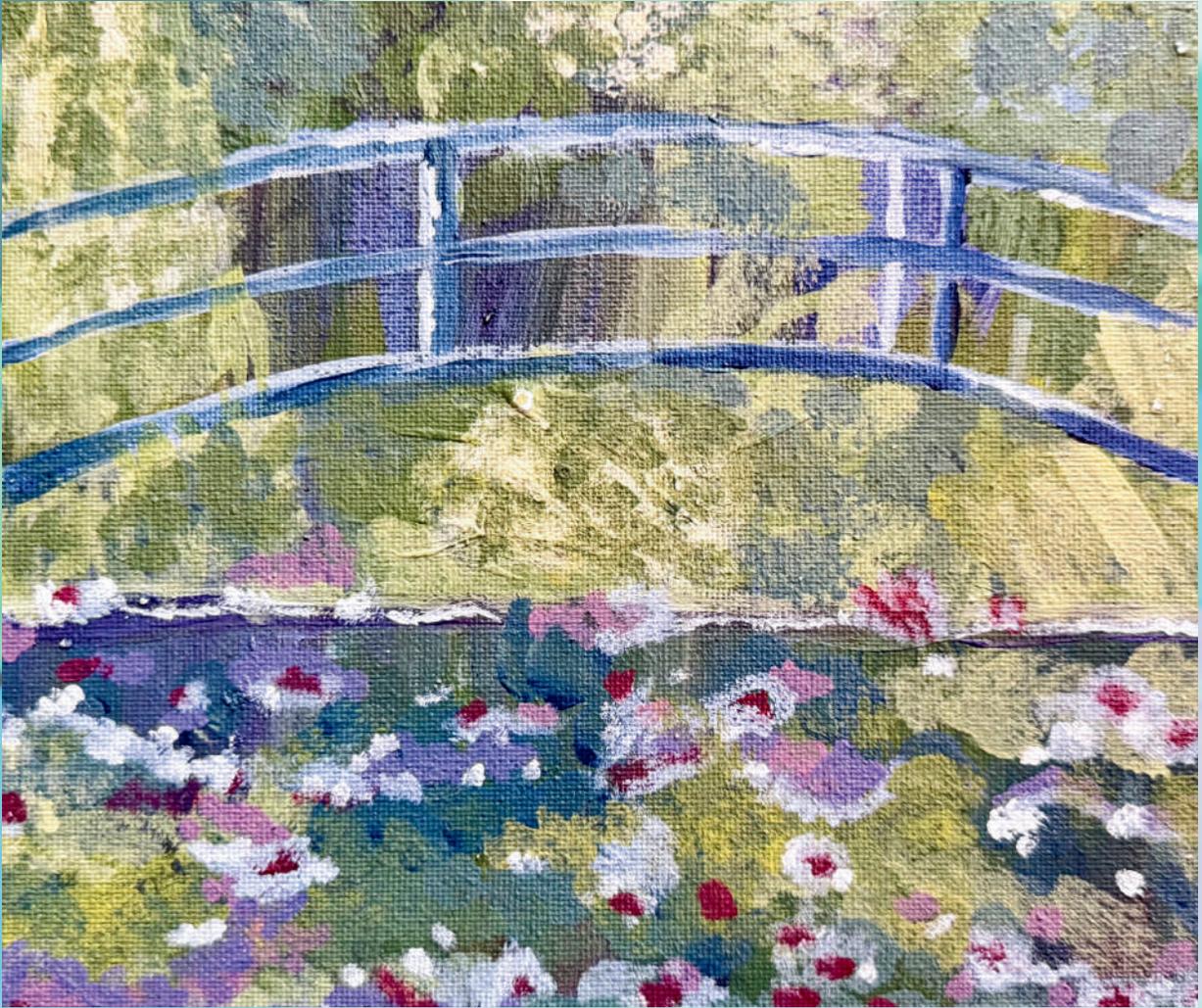
CHOICE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES
What gets measured gets done.



Good Will

Mary Pat Donelan * Marjorie Yasueda
Circle of Angels Initiative * Kenwood Garden Club






STRONG

Conference Comeback Strategies

Preparation

- Review your workshops and course descriptions in advance.
- Get enough rest the night before.
- Prepare your heart to receive instruction.

Workshop Conduct

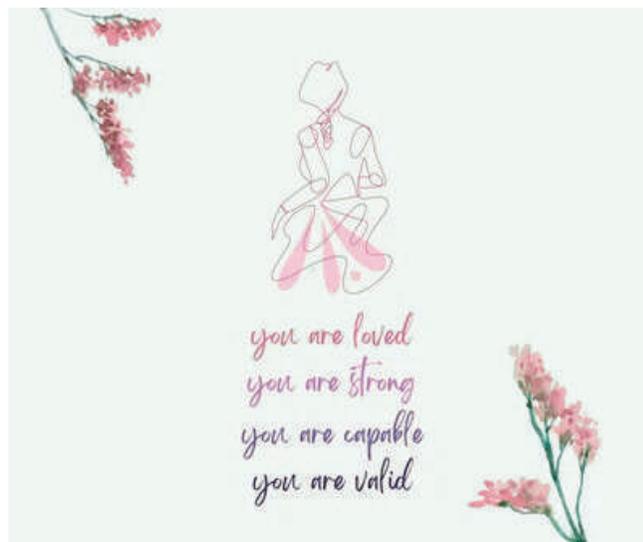
- Participate in workshop discussions.
- Respect and listen to other's opinions and thoughts.
- Take brief notes of main points.

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.



AGENDA

Time	Room Location	Event
9:00 a.m. to 9:20 a.m.	Gymnasium	Welcome
9:20 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.	Gymnasium	Keynote Address: Rodney C. Mitchell
10:00 a.m. to 10:55 a.m.	See Workshop Schedule	Morning Workshop I
11:05 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.	Gymnasium	Lunch
11:50 a.m. to 12:35 p.m.	Gymnasium	I-WISH Production: <i>I Can Fly</i>
12:45 p.m. to 1:40 p.m.	See Workshop Schedule	Afternoon Workshop I
1:50 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	See Workshop Schedule	Afternoon Workshop II
2:55 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.	Gymnasium	Hand in Evaluations Gift Bag Distribution
3:15 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	Gymnasium	Walking in My Shoes
3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Gymnasium	Closing Ceremonies



make your
comebacks
STRONGER
than your
SETBACKS

**KEYNOTE
SPEAKER**



Rodney C. Mitchell

Rodney is a native of SE Washington, D.C., and a proud product of D.C. Public Schools. As a young adult, Rodney personally experienced the devastation of the crack cocaine epidemic of the 80s and 90s, incarceration, street gangs and violence on the streets of Washington, D.C., and South-Central Los Angeles, California. After many hard lessons, Rodney became an anti-gang violence advocate, and joined local efforts to end gang violence in Los Angeles.

Rodney went back to school and studied African American Studies and Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley. He later studied law at The George Washington University Law School in Washington, DC. Rodney was barred in his beloved hometown— DC. As a grateful survivor, Rodney has spent most of his career in the District of Columbia practicing public interest law and serving as a prisoner reentry advocate.



I Can Fly

Directed by Judy Templeton-Prerantozzi

Written and Performed by Members of I-WISH

Reflections from this group of women with life or long sentences on:

- where they came from,
- how they have made meaningful changes,
- what they would like to do when they get out, and
- wisdom, advice, and best wishes to the Women Moving Forward in the audience.

The program will end with exuberant 'I Can Fly' music, and dance steps for all to learn and have fun with.



I-WISH

(Incarcerated Women Inside Seeking to Help)

Reclaiming Dreams, Reigniting Purpose

My name is Cheryl Sterrette. I was incarcerated for 14 1/2 years at MCI-W. I was released in 2001 and completed the T.A.P. Program's two-year program. I have also obtained two degrees. I am now a Child Care Specialist. I love my career working with youth and helping them to strive positively.



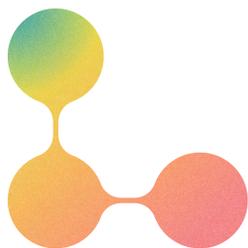
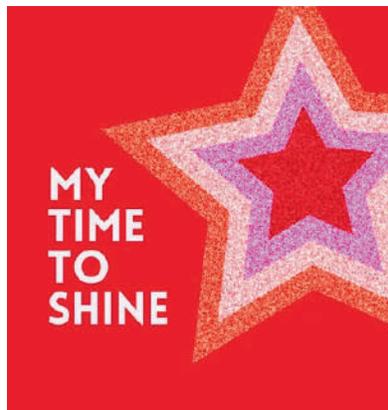


Seek-a-Word Puzzle — The Great Comeback

Find the following words in the puzzle. Words may appear horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards, or backwards.

Word List (25): HOPE, FREEDOM, RESILIENCE, FAMILY, COMMUNITY, SUPPORT, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, GROWTH, HEALING, COURAGE, OPPORTUNITY, JUSTICE, DREAMS, COMEBACK, MENTOR, REHABILITATION, PAROLE, VOCATIONAL, ADVOCACY, MENTALHEALTH, STABILITY, TRANSITION, RESTORATION, ACCOUNTABILITY

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E	M	P	L	O	Y	M	E	N	T	O	R	Z	P	A



She Fell. She Rose. She Conquered

My name is Renee Matthews, and I am known as Bacoat. I was incarcerated at MCI-W for 25 years. What you put in is what you get out.

The results for me are great. I work at Johns Hopkins as a case manager. I am a public speaker at different Universities. I have my own apartment, car, and peace of mind. I am on parole, and I report to my agent as scheduled.

My freedom means everything to me. I have even traveled internationally. It is a blessing to be able to smell the flowers every day. I don't let my time there dictate who I am today. I was given two life sentences, plus five years, and now I can say that I live my life.

If it were not for Mary Joel, I wouldn't be here to tell my story. Thank you, Mary Joel.





WORKSHOPS

Schedule At-A-Glance

Workshop Topic	Location
The Comeback Journey: Rebuilding Life After Reentry	Classroom 5
The Comeback Mindset: Healing, Reframing, and Rising Again	Visitor Room
Strong on Paper, Strong in Life: Journaling for Growth and Healing	Classroom 2
Home Team Advantage: Reuniting Families	Computer Lab
Back in the Game: Winning Strategies for Career Success	Post 27 Library
The Comeback Wallet: Smart Strategies for a Stronger Financial Future	Classroom 4



WORKSHOPS

The Comeback Journey: Rebuilding Life After Reentry

Description: Learn proven strategies that are beneficial in navigating the decision-making processes, steps, and resources needed to develop a path towards successful reentry, no matter where one might be starting upon release.

Presenters: Lamont Carey, Mark Foster & Jordyn Seide

MORCA Director Lamont Carey (pictured) oversees the coordination and advisement of all reentry affairs in the District of Columbia. A native of Washington, DC, he has been involved in various facets of reentry for the past 17 years. He has worked with legislators, nonprofits, philanthropists, and other groups focused on policy, prevention, and successful reentry. Lamont uses his experiences with the criminal justice system to fuel his passion for helping others recognize and overcome barriers, increasing the opportunities for success.





WORKSHOPS

The Comeback Mindset: Healing, Reframing, and Rising Again

Description: Develop a multifaceted approach to healing after incarceration that includes seeking professional support, reframing social connections, self-care, and a support network.

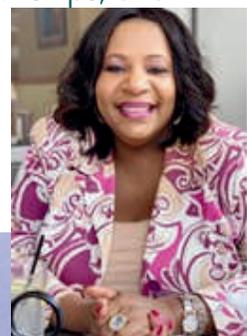


Presenters: Dr. Bridgette Chase & Dr. Carmen Johnson

Dr. Bridgette Chase (pictured) is the passionate CEO and founder of Chase Counseling and Consulting Services (CCCS). CCCS is a community-based, woman and minority-owned organization headquartered in the heart of Washington, DC. CCCS provides essential clinical counseling services to families, individuals, groups, and faith-based organizations in the metropolitan area.

Dr. Chase brings over 30 years of experience practicing in Washington, DC, and the surrounding areas. Her commitment to addressing the mental health needs of her community has been the driving force behind the establishment and success of CCCS. Throughout her career, Dr. Chase has worked extensively with clients facing severe co-occurring disorders, homelessness, and incarceration due to mental illness and substance use disorders.

Driven by a passion for service and a commitment to empowering clients, CCCS continues to make a positive impact on the community. Through their comprehensive counseling services, CCCS strives to foster mental wellness, strengthen relationships, and guide individuals towards fulfilling and meaningful lives.





WORKSHOPS

Strong on Paper, Strong in Life: Journaling for Growth and Healing

Description: Journaling is a powerful tool for self-healing and improving overall well-being. Learn how to create a safe space for emotional expression and self-reflection in this workshop.

Presenter: Keisha Byam-Simmonds

Keisha is a faith-driven speaker, entrepreneur, and creative visionary whose mission is to help women embrace self-love, walk boldly in their God-given purpose, and write the vision for their lives—both literally and spiritually. As the founder of KBanx Designs, she designs inspiring journals, beadable pens, and custom gifts that empower women to prioritize mental wellness, self-reflection, and intentional living.



With a professional background in healthcare administration and years of experience speaking to diverse audiences, Keisha brings a unique blend of storytelling, research-based insights, and humor to every stage. She believes transformation starts within, and her sessions guide women through powerful journaling exercises, practical tools for personal growth, and the reminder that God's promises are uniquely designed for them.

Anchored in her life scripture, "Write the vision and make it plain" (Habakkuk 2:2), Keisha's journey is a testimony of resilience, faith, and the courage to step from behind the scenes to center stage. Whether speaking at conferences, retreats, or intimate workshops, she inspires women to heal, laugh, grow, and boldly live out the vision God has placed on their hearts.



WORKSHOPS

Home Team Advantage: Reuniting Families

Description: Reuniting families after incarceration requires complexities involving legal, emotional, and logistical challenges, along with dedicated effort and support from family and others. We will examine practical approaches to reconciliation and support.

Presenter: Shannice Anderson

Shannice Anderson is a native Baltimorean and a graduate of Bowie State University, currently serving in the inaugural position of Community Engagement Coordinator for Maryland's Office of the Public Defender. She builds and maintains partnerships with agencies and organizations, and provides reentry planning and post-release support to clients of public defenders.

She collaborates with attorneys, social workers, peers, and advocates to advance holistic representation statewide for the justice-impacted. Shannice currently serves on the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative's reentry work group and several reentry advisory boards and committees across the state of Maryland.



Presenter: Shareese Kess, LCSW-C, CCM

Shareese Kess is a Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical, Certified Case Manager, and a Licensed Approved Drug and Alcohol Supervisor. Shareese has worked as a Clinical Social Worker for over 23 years and in various settings. As a native of Baltimore City, Shareese is extremely passionate about providing fair opportunities, resources, and needed services for people, regardless of race, age, and sexual orientation. She is an active volunteer to help the homeless population; sits on the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative; and participates in the Office of the Attorney General's civil rights division meetings to contribute towards valuable discussions for change.



WORKSHOPS

***Back in the Game:
Winning Strategies for Career Success***

Description: This workshop will assist you in setting employment goals, crafting a compelling resume, and embracing the skill sets needed to be adaptable to enter the workforce.

Presenter: LaSharn Hanilton



WORKSHOPS

The Comeback Wallet: Smart Strategies for a Stronger Financial Future

Description: Building a solid financial future requires thoughtful planning, consistent effort, and smart decision-making. This workshop will unpack key strategies for financial reentry success.

Annie Weinschenk & Ann Holmes

Annie Weinschenk (pictured) is the Senior Manager of University Partnerships at SECU, where she channels her passion for community engagement and financial education. Dedicated to empowering students and residents with personal finance knowledge, Annie brings both heart and expertise to her work. She resides in Howard County with her husband, their two children, and their beloved Bernese Mountain Dog, Benny.



My Stronger Than Before Plan

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My Stronger Than Before Plan





My Stronger Than Before Plan

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My Stronger Than Before Plan





My Stronger Than Before Plan



are you
ready?



Karlana Rose

Walking In My Shoes

Connie Bridges

After serving 25 years on a life sentence, I was paroled in 2020. I completed the program at the Marian House. In 2021, I started working at the University of Maryland Medical System. I moved into my own apartment and purchased a car. I am enrolled in the Community College of Baltimore County to further my education. I am also attending home-buying classes in preparation to purchase my own home. I have even had the opportunity to travel internationally.

I am living a peaceful, Godly lifestyle.



EDUCATION
FAMILY
SURVIVAL

HEALING
JOB OPPORTUNITIES
BETTER CHOICES

Life is
an
Open Book

PLAN FOR
your
CHAPTER

S. Petre

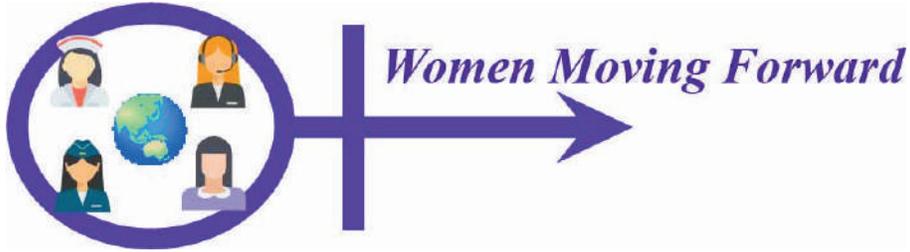
Walking In My Shoes



Towanda Jones

I graduated from Marian House and Alternative Directions after completing their two-year program focused on independence. I am an oncology staff member at Johns Hopkins Hospital, caring for patients with cancer. I am successfully managing my finances by saving money to help me reach my goal of owning a home and a car.

I have learned to appreciate life and not take God for granted. I feel blessed to have received a second chance, which has helped me become the woman I am today. I focus on who I am now, not who I used to be. Life is a blessing. Some lessons are learned, some are not, but I believe you should never let difficult circumstances define your future.



CONTACT US!

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