



Renewing
COMMUNITIES

Restoring
HOPE

Transforming
LIVES



“Working together, we can continue to ensure that everyone in our society has a second chance, and the tools they need to build lives of independence and dignity.”

—Elaine L. Chao, U.S. Secretary of Labor, March 22, 2007

Julio vowed to create safer communities and to instill hope in men and women returning home from prison. He never heard anyone remark that he or she could not wait to come back to prison; instead, he heard many say that they wanted to be good fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and friends and return to heal some of the damage they had caused in the impoverished communities from which most came. Even though many left prison with good intentions, they soon returned for a variety of reasons, including lack of employment and housing opportunities and untreated substance abuse.

“America is the land of the second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.”

—President George W. Bush, January 20, 2004

In 1999, after working through many of his own reintegration issues, Julio founded Exodus Transitional Community, Inc. (Exodus), a nonprofit organization in East Harlem, New York focused on working with men and women transitioning from incarceration to society. Julio established Exodus to help ex-prisoners secure employment and

develop the attitudes necessary to succeed in their jobs, reconnect with their families, and fully integrate into their communities. Under the leadership of Julio, Exodus fulfills this mission daily. Exodus has served more than 5,000 men and women since 1999 and is one of the most successful reentry programs in the United States.

Julio often visits prisons to meet with and listen to the men and women there. Their faith and encouragement have sustained Exodus's mission and have inspired Julio's continued personal transformation.

Notably, Exodus was selected to participate in DOI's Ready4Work pilot program. This DOL funding allowed Julio to expand his program and provide more reentry services for ex-prisoners. Then, Julio received the highest honor when President Bush recognized his good work and highlighted his successful reentry program during the 2004 State of the Union address.

Julio and the lives Exodus has transformed are only a few of the many lives transformed through DOI's prisoner reentry programs.

Each year, more than 650,000 inmates are released from prison and reunited with their families and communities. Released inmates face a myriad of challenges that sometimes contribute to their return to criminal activity, re-arrest, and re-incarceration, including joblessness, substance abuse, mental illness, lack of education, lack of identification (e.g., driver's license or state-issued IDs), lack of stable housing, and

FINDING DIRECTION THROUGH MENTORING: ARIZONA WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT, INC.—PHOENIX, ARIZONA



Teresa came to the Paths to Living Free (PLF) program after a two-and-a-half-year sentence for her third driving-under-the-influence conviction. Before prison, she worked as an administrative assistant at Scottsdale Culinary School, had no desire to move beyond the status quo, and attributed her drinking to a lack of direction in her life. While still in prison, she began planning her life beyond incarceration. She explored programs available through the Arizona Department of Corrections' partnership with Rio Salado Community College. Teresa discovered a passion for the electrician trade and began the necessary training to become a licensed electrician. Teresa is an excellent example of the benefits FBCOs provide in serving ex-prisoners. Teresa, who has been enrolled in the PLF program since July 2007, accomplished her employment goal. She wanted a job earning at least \$14 an hour, and she exceeded that goal earning \$15 an hour at Construction Secretaries. Since that time, she was hired at Banner Desert Medical Center and now makes \$21.50 an hour. She is also applying for Federal student-aid funding and scholarship opportunities to attend school at Mesa Community College. Teresa wants to complete her training and education so she can work full-time as an electrician.

Teresa embraced the PLF program from the beginning of her enrollment. She actively participated in the program and mentoring workshops, and she maintained contact with her two mentors as an integral part of her support system. Their efforts inspired Teresa to become a mentor in March 2008 when she got her vehicle and driver's license back. Teresa shows a commitment to replace old behaviors with new ones and to ultimately fulfill her career aspirations.