



CJM Connection

The newsletter of Criminal Justice Ministry St. Louis

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Man with a Plan

Earl is part of a large family and moved often between St. Louis and Chicago. He was abused as a child and ran away repeatedly. When he was 16 he left home for good. He never finished high school, but got his GED when he was 18, and went to college when he was 22. He graduated from college, and prior to his incarceration, he worked his way up to running restaurants.

Earl spent 14 years in prison before becoming eligible for parole. Even though he was eligible for parole, he needed an approved home plan before he would be released. A home plan is the physical address where you will live after release. A Parole Officer must review and approve the home plan. He had nowhere to go, and because of his conviction he was barred from many housing programs. He applied to CJM's Release to Rent program, and that became his home plan. If not for CJM, he would have remained incarcerated.

"CJM was instrumental to get a foothold back in society after being gone 14 years." Earl said going to CJM was a good transition. "I was apprehensive when I got out. Didn't know anything, didn't know anyone. My Case Manager, Loretta, was really supportive, kind, and went out of her way." He wanted to go to work right away, even though CJM cautioned him not to rush into things. He said "CJM got me new glasses, a uniform, and my hepatitis shot, so I could start working, and I had a job within a week."

Earl had a specific plan in mind for his reentry. He was going to work in a fine dining restaurant. He was going to buy a house within a year, and have his mom, his brother and sister move in with him. The price of real estate had gone up since he had been away, so he had to delay his plan to buy. But, a year after being released he was saving, rebuilding his credit, and working at a fine dining restaurant. He opted to leave the apartment that CJM found him when he finished his year in Release to Rent, instead signing a lease and paying six months' rent up front for a house in the county. He still has plans to buy a house within the next year.

"In prison, it's weird, people don't use your name, it's your number. Loretta [my Case Manger] showed kindness, and

Events

Reentry Resource Fair

Meet CJM representatives at the Reentry Resource Fair on Tuesday February 27, 6:00 - 8:00 pm, at the St. Louis County Library Florissant Valley Branch.

Reentry Resource Fair

Tuesday, February 27
6:00-8:00 p.m.

The St. Louis County Reentry Resource Fair, in partnership with the Tap-In Center, brings vital resources to address the needs of people returning to their communities from incarceration. Fairs will be held on the last Tuesday of every other month. Call 314-694-8300 for more information.

Adults.

TAP IN CENTER

STAR Reentry Summit March 13

2024 Summit

STAR
STL ALLIANCE FOR REENTRY

Weds., March 13
St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley

\$35 reg. fee:

- Educational sessions
- Breakfast
- Lunch

ARCHS

Legislative Advocacy Day - Missouri Day of Empathy March 6

#MoInnocence
MARCH 6TH 9AM - 4PM

#MoEmpathy
MISSOURI STATE CAPITOL
201 W. CAPITOL AVE. 63101

#MoJustice

Empathy Across The Nation

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY DAY
TO URGE ACTION & CENTER EMPATHY FOR OUR INCARCERATED LOVED ONES

Register at: bit.ly/MOEOE24

SNACKS PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

DREAM.ORG

nurturing. I needed that human touch, and that made all the difference in the world. I'll forever appreciate that."

Earl had advantages compared to others returning from prison. In addition to motivation and goals, he had an education and work experience. He still recognized that without CJM, his transition and achieving his plan would have been much harder.

Save the Date - July 13

CJM Client and Volunteer summer BBQ.
Contact info@cjmstlouis.org for details.

Volunteer Spotlight

We are excited to welcome Caitlin as a new volunteer. She is a substitute teacher who is assisting at the front desk and with updating the Start Here Resource Directory. She will be assisting FIRST Services, and eventually go to the Transition Center to serve with other CJM volunteers.

The Holy Haulers from the Queen of All Saints Society of St. Vincent de Paul, continue to be an amazing resource. Recently they assisted moving several clients into new apartments, and moved several large pieces of furniture and appliances into storage.

Our Mission Welcome Home teams are doing incredible work cleaning and preparing apartments. Winter weather has not slowed them down.



"Makin' it Work" graduation at Transition Center St. Louis. Class taught by CJM volunteers.

Click the button below to learn more about volunteering with CJM.

[Volunteer](#)

Please Support CJM

Help improve our communities by supporting, empowering, and recognizing the human dignity of those affected by incarceration. Your generosity creates safe, supportive communities that benefit from the full participation of returning citizens.

You can donate online by clicking [here](#), mail checks to our office at 2342 LaSalle, St. Louis, MO 63104, or contact us at info@cjmstlouis.org to make contributions of stock or by direct deposit.

[Your gifts go further with tax credits and qualified charitable contributions](#)

If you have Missouri Business Income, you can get a 50% credit on your Missouri business tax by donating to CJM. We have credits available through the **Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)**. The credits are in addition to other deductions. Get more information [here](#) or by contacting info@cjmstlouis.org.

A **qualified charitable distribution (QCD)** is a donation from your retirement account and can be made after age 70½ even if you are not subject to Required Minimum Distributions. A QCN is not subject to ordinary federal income taxes – the amount is simply excluded from your taxable income. Consult a qualified tax advisor to determine if a QCD would be beneficial for you.

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