



Monroe DRC Update



OCTOBER 2020

WELCOME

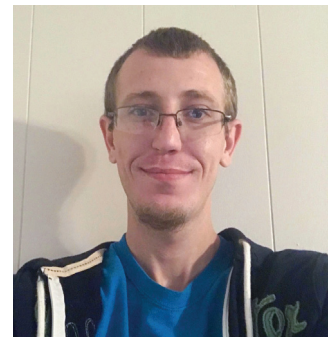


Marc Reimer
Program Manager

While normalcy has been disrupted for many during the pandemic, the Monroe DRC has made great strides in continuing services for our participants. In November, we will be starting once again with van transportation services, but this time, each participant will have their own socially distanced seat, all riders will be masked and the driver will be in full PPE gear. Just like we have been temperature screening visitors and participants arriving at the center, we will also be screening participants as they enter the van. As we move toward tax season, we have also entered a partnership with Advance Tax to make sure that our employed participants have what they need to do their tax paperwork; in addition, we are continuing to refer participants out to virtual Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings so they have access to these services. Finally, we recently introduced a new mentorship program where participants can use a call-in phone number to contact two former GEO Reentry program participants who have agreed to be available for advice. Thank you for reading our October update, and please stay safe!

SPOTLIGHT ON... JAMES H.

Participant James H. arrived at the Monroe DRC five weeks ago after his parole agent requested that he restart the program for the third time. But this time, James came in with a new attitude and has been actively participating in group sessions. For James, the most helpful classes have been Anger Management, MRT, and Living in Balance, which taught him coping skills. He has also built a strong bond of trust with his Case Manager, Mr. Sherman Ashley. "Before, I just wasn't ready to put in the effort, but so far it's been a really positive experience," said James, who passed his most recent MRT steps on the first attempt and has also been passing random drug tests. James said the DRC program has also helped with job readiness skills. After the program, he plans to go to training school to become a commercial truck driver. James said he advises anyone who is just starting the program to "give it a try. If you don't like it one day, you should still give it a chance."



DID YOU KNOW?



GEO Reentry Services' **Community Connections** program links parolees with representatives from social services, governmental agencies, faith-based organizations, community groups and businesses. These valuable local service providers offer participants useful information about employment, vocational training, education, family services, food, clothing, housing, mental health, identification, substance abuse, support groups, mentoring and legal assistance. During the pandemic, staff at GEO Reentry centers nationwide took initiative to develop additional programming so that participants could access such essential resources while centers' in-person services were modified or suspended. Efforts included bringing in representatives from the state workforce commission to help participants fill out job applications, connecting with nearby community colleges to offer remote and in-person GED tutoring and building relationships with local

retailers and restaurants to donate food and hygiene items, which program staff delivered to participants' homes. Through compassion and innovation, GEO Reentry staff helped program participants hold onto progress made prior to the pandemic and continue their reentry journeys without interruption.

By Wendy Dressler, GEO Care Research Analyst