

CJM Connection

The bi-monthly newsletter of Criminal Justice Ministry -St. Louis

Dr. Doug - CJM's Volunteer Resilience Builder

by Alisa Bennett-Hart

Those who work helping people are often rewarded by the lives they impact and moving the needle on crucial social issues like homelessness, hunger, educational, racial, and justice equity. However, there is no doubt that the work is hard and can take a big toll on the physical and mental health of those committed to serving the underserved. So how do we at Criminal Justice Ministry keep doing the hard work and avoid burnout?



Volunteer Dr. Doug Pettinelli's monthly visits with CJM staff might be some of the resilience secret sauce in the mix. Gathering in the conference room once a month with lunch, the CJM staff and Dr. Doug have an open round table discussion to keep the air clear on the people, the work and the CJM mission to serve and not to judge. As one caseworker said, "90 percent of my clients are good and doing good. There are only a few [situations] that are really, really tough."

Dr. Doug believes that these facilitated processing sessions allow staff to share their clients' experiences of "vicarious resilience – clients are encouraged by seeing someone be resilient." Resilience being the ability to recover quickly from difficulties. Like the stretching of a rubber band, over time the ability to bounce back starts to fray and can lead to losing elasticity or snapping. Giving staff at CJM the space and access to a trained professional facilitator helps keep people from being overstretched.

For several years, Dr. Doug has volunteered with CJM while maintaining a busy private counseling practice and serving as an Assistant Professor, Division of Psychiatry, Department of Neurology & Psychiatry at Saint Louis University. Starting as a professional development opportunity for caseworkers, the sessions began to focus on the emotional issues that arise doing this work. As with all volunteers, Dr. Doug gets a return on his investment of time with CJM:

"I get to learn about a population that I don't know anything about. I get to talk to people who have fairly-complex lives. I'm inspired by their commitment and caring. The struggle they have when someone isn't doing well. Growing pains [can include] less connectedness but the commitment remains. Real love and commitment to the clients.

I wouldn't call this therapy. It is facilitation in a process group. Everyone who deals with people needs an opportunity to dialogue and digest. I like coming here, I feel honored."

Do you have a unique skillset to offer Criminal Justice Ministry as a volunteer? We are currently looking for childcare providers for our Tuesday night Women's Support Group Dinners. For more information on volunteer opportunities, please email **Anna at annam@cjmstlouis.org** or call her at **314-652-8062**.

In this Issue:

- Profile of Volunteer Dr. Doug
- Ways to Give - Special Wish List
- Trivia Night Wrap-Up
- News & Notes

Anger Management

- The next class starts **October 10th**
- 6 consecutive Thursdays
- 9am-12pm
- Advance registration is required:
- To register, visit our website
- www.cjmstlouis.org
- Or call us at (314) 652-8062

Ways To Give

Activate:

a CJM Partnership, the easiest, most effective way to give

Attend:

a CJM event and learn more about the criminal justice system

Donate:

money or in-kind items for clients

Special Wish List to furnish new in-house counseling office:

Desk (modest size), Small Bookcase, Side Table, Tissues, Essential Oil Diffuser, Bulletin Board, Journals, Pipe Cleaners, Fidget Toys and Stress Balls.

Click on the "**Get Involved**" button on CJM's website to learn more.



Trivia Night Succeeds!

On August 24th, Criminal Justice Ministry tested the memory of many with its Annual Trivia Night event. CJM supporters and friends gathered at St. James the Greater for a night of networking, trivia, and charity. Another successful trivia night in the history books!

Thank you to everyone for their generous donations and enthusiasm at the trivia event. Your support helped us to top previous years in terms of donations with a smaller (but mightier) group of attendees. The event blew the doors off of previous years by raising more than \$10,000.

These donations will directly fund more programming in our community and change the lives of hundreds of people impacted by the criminal justice system.

Photo caption (clockwise): 1) Kurt M., CJM client; Doug Evans, Program Coordinator; Bennie N., CJM client. 2) Trivia Night winners. 3) Treva Dixon, CJM caseworker and Nikayla Williams, CJM Admin Specialist. 4) Catherine (Kitty) Keefe, CJM Board Member and Trivia Night winner.

News & Notes

- **Sunday, September 22nd** - Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis (JCRC) and Samantha Stangl from Clark-Fox Family Foundation will be moderating a panel featuring justice-involved individuals who will present on the school to prison pipeline and the opportunities and challenges of incarceration and reentry. For more information, visit [click here](#).
- **Tuesday, October 22nd: 5 - 7 PM** - Tony Messenger, Pulitzer prize winning St. Louis Post-Dispatch metro columnist, will moderate CJM's fifth installment in the incarceration forum series. Regional leaders and community members will explore community solutions and innovative approaches to diversion and reentry. To register, click [here](#).



Remember writing letters?

We need a crew full of special people like you.

To become a Pen Pal volunteer, please contact our Pen Pal Coordinator, Myra Vandersall, at myravandersall@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE: DIVERSION AND REENTRY

Join us for a panel discussion moderated by Pulitzer prize winning journalist Tony Messenger and featuring regional leaders in criminal justice practice, policy, and



IL MONASTERO
3050 OLIVE STREET
ST. LOUIS, MO 63103

OCT 22 5-7 PM

The Incarceration Forum series is a collaborative effort of the following partners:



SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY



THE BAIL
PROJECT



WOMEN IN
TRANSITION



CJM



CLARK FOX
FAMILY FOUNDATION