



The Deuce Club

Volume 2, Issue 2

September 2011

Special Point of Interest

• Attend the Think Outside the Cell Symposium (P. 7)

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Winchell v. Evans — Cite it Frequently and Effectively in Your Parole Appeals

The decision of *Winchell v. Evans* that was handed down by Justice Frank J. LaBuda on July 19, 2011 is probably one of the best decisions in the area of parole denials. Many people thought that *King v. New York State Division of Parole* was a good decision. Although there was some excellent language in the *King* decision useful for other cases, it did not have the precedential value of the *Winchell* case simply because the *King* decision was based on the individual facts of his case that would most likely not be duplicated in any other case. The *Winchell* decision is couched in very general language that could apply to any individual denied

parole simply on the basis of the crime.

In *Winchell*, the court stated that "the Parole Board failed to comply with the requirements set forth under Executive Law §259-i by denying the Petitioner's application for parole in a contrived manner, and unjustifiably denying the Petitioner a fair hearing." The Court went on to state that the denial of parole seemed to have been predetermined, based on a failure to articulate any basis why the Parole Board could not believe "there is a reasonable probability that, if [petitioner] is released, he will live and remain at liberty without violating the law, and

that his release is not incompatible with the welfare of society and will not so deprecate the seriousness of his crime as to undermine respect for law." The Court stated that the parole denial was couched only on the "senseless and violent nature" of the crime.

The Court further stated that parole cannot be denied "solely based on the offense itself," and that "resentencing is not the purview of the parole board." The decision then recounts the stellar disciplinary history of Petitioner *Winchell*, his accomplishments in prison, including receiving a two-year college

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APB — Calling on All Artists! — Donate your Art to CPR's Fund-raiser

CPR will be holding a fund-raiser on March 1, 2012. If you are an artist, incarcerated or not, formerly incarcerated or not, and if you support the work of CPR, then please donate your art.

The art will be auctioned. For details, contact :

CPR
P.O. Box 1379
NY, NY 10013-0877
877-778-8047

CPR has been able to continue the work it has done for the past ten years mainly because of its supporters. Continue to support CPR!



From the Editor: The Re-entry World Just Got a Little Larger

There's this joke among insiders inside the re-entry world, that when you go to these re-entry conferences and the like, that you see "the usual suspects." This speaks to the fact that there's a small passionate group committed to doing work within the re-entry world, many of them formerly incarcerated.

As we all know by now, re-entry became a buzzword in the latter part of the 1990s. As a society, specifically from the government's point of view, at the federal, state and local levels, because of fiscal issues — we were spending too much money to maintain ineffective prison systems that yielded high returns of recidivism — and tough economic times, we had to seriously look at the feasibility of spending so much money locking so many people up for so long with such diminishing returns. And in locking so many people up, since Richard Nixon, campaigning for the presidency in 1968, inaugurated the modern "war on crime," in the 1990s we had to face the fact that many of the people we started locking up in the late 1960s and early and mid-1970s were completing their sentences and were being released, whether we liked it or not: they had served their time, paid their proverbial debt to society, and now it was their time to re-enter society; and most people return from prison. More recently, in New York, we began with reforming the draconian Rockefeller Drug Laws, something advocates had unsuccessfully been trying to do for as long as the Laws were on the books, since the early 1970s. Academics

"The current efforts to reform the parole law in New York is directly related to former Governor Pataki's parole policy not to release people who had the lowest recidivism rates of all people confined in prisons."

even began to write that there was a way to safely release people from prison without compromising public safety. And, lo and behold, at the same time, the prison population in New York State was dramatically decreasing. Many politicians, from former New York Governor George Pataki to former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani to the current Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, take credit for this reduction in crime and, whether they

like it or not, the reduction of the prison population. (The current efforts to reform the parole law in New York is directly related to former Governor Pataki's parole policy not to release people who had the lowest recidivism rates of all people confined in prisons because of the "nature of their crimes," mostly homicide-related offenses which, not so coincidentally, began with the reduction of crime and the many people who had served their time becoming eligible for parole, and serious talk of reforming the Rockefeller Drug Laws which, since the 1970s, as well as the 1980s with the explosion of crack, exponentially filled our prisons with people convicted of drug crimes. One could argue that Pataki's parole policy kept people in prison who perhaps should have been released in order to artificially keep prisons filled to capacity for our prison-loving politicians.) Now, for the first time in the State's history, we are talking about closing prisons. In the 1980s, the First Cuomo presided over unprecedented prison construction. Now, in the New Millennium, under the current Governor, the Second Cuomo, we are going to close

prisons. Ironically, the "war on crime" in New York can claim a victory, reduction in crime and the prison population, yet the old guard politicians who campaigned on the politics of "more prisons" and "longer prison terms," who have a vested interest in an expanded prison system we no longer need, because they locked themselves into the "tough on crime" politics, and locked their constituents into depending on prisons for employment, looking at prisons as economic engines for their districts, do *not* want to close prisons we do *not* need, at least not for the confinement of people convicted of crimes. But that's another story.

From the re-entry world, we have three major events on the horizon: one, The Think Outside the Cell Symposium on September 24th; two, WORTH's (Women on the Rise Telling HerStory) seventh Anniversary on October 20th, along with its inauguration of the Susan Hallett Reentry Award (see Page 8); and Citizens Against Recidivism's Annual Citizens Awards on October 29th. Significantly, all three of these events, and these entities, are spearheaded and was created by people impacted by the criminal justice system, namely, the wife of an incarcerated man, with his assistance from behind the wall; formerly and incarcerated women and women (family members of the incarcerated) impacted by the criminal justice system; and the wife of an incarcerated man and the incarcerated man himself.

At the Think Outside the Cell Symposium, there's a cast of characters in the lineup that we can't consider the "usual suspects" in the re-entry world in New York, namely, The Rev. Al Sharpton; Newark, NJ

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Realities of Reentry: “Arrested Development”...Could It Be You?!

All those years of incarceration will tend to blur time somewhat, partly because “in there” everyday is pretty much the same. Anyway, there was this rap/R&B band (tribe) called “Arrested Development” that came out with some really socially-conscious music circa 1990 (*Tennessee, Everyday People & Mr. Wendell*). For the life of me I cannot remember any of the years the songs were made, but I do remember that I liked their particular brand of music. Now what does this have to do with reentry???? Well, if you’re a regular reader of my column, then you know my style, but if this is the first time---***watch out there now!!!***

The music associated with that group talked about growth and development, yet oftentimes having to do that in a world that wasn’t all that forgiving, kind or humane. They talked about issues that impacted lives, in some cases generationally. But ultimately, it wasn’t about the ability to just survive, it was also about those that LIVED. I love that line from raptress Nicki Minaj: “...everybody dies, but not everybody lives!” Before I digress, well, how you livin’?

What I’ve come to notice, and many have remarked upon, is our own “arrested development,” literally and figuratively speaking, I might add. It’s beginning to be very clear to me and others that the maturation process becomes stunted during incarceration, UNLESS there is a consistent, concerted and committed effort to grow up. Now, we can immediately jump upon the always ready “conspiracy theorems” surrounding the intent, purpose or design of “The System,” but I for one am at a stage where it’s about personal accountability and running your own life (real living) regardless

of the situations and circumstances that befall you. Peep the scenario: young man goes to prison age 18 thereabouts, no education, no marketable skills, lacks discipline, NEVER worked (no work history), poor interpersonal communication skills, criminal (warped) thinking, irresponsible, “parent” and is sentenced to 3-5 years or 7-10, or better yet 15-25 years. Chances are that when you add the very real, albeit unique environment of “Corrections” to this mix of a mess of a life you automatically have a recipe for failure, recidivism and only God knows what else!

That young man or woman, since women are being incarcerated at a rate three times that of men these days, will no doubt suffer from not having many of these important life issues addressed. His/Her growth and development will be stunted irrepealably by not just those issues but also by the fact that prison doesn’t provide you with a real life example to practice and/or model life as it really is....Some of the things you learn and experience in prison are diametrically opposed to success in the real world (that’s another topic for another time). Arrested development in this case is an oxymoron/double entrée if there ever was one. You can’t mature naturally because of the unnatural environment, then you can’t develop normally because of the inability to have significant life issues adequately and properly addressed. It is what it is people, like it or not.

I’m not trying to give anyone a built-in excuse for failure, because ultimately if you want to not suffer from arrested development YOU

have to take on the project of self-development. Those life issues can be dealt with by you addressing them in your life NOW! Get an education, learn and develop some marketable (job/career) skills, discipline yourself (the only kind that’s ever really existed), work in prison like you’re going to work on the street (practice like you play), learn and develop better communication skills....I think you get the picture – your life is up to you to do something about. Don’t wait on anyone or anything to provide for you what you can provide for yourself. And, when you need help, don’t be afraid to ask for it. I’ve watched too many come home ill-prepared for freedom and blame everyone but themselves for *their* situation. It’s time, and probably past time for most of us, to grow up, MAN UP. The reality of reentry is that if you haven’t grown up before you hit the bricks you’ll probably not grow up while on the brick. Which usually leads to throwing another brick and you

“The reality of reentry is that if you haven’t grown up before you hit the bricks you’ll probably not grow up while on the brick.”

know the rest of the story. We really need to get with the program and understand that our lives are what we make or do with them. There is no need to be a victim of circumstance or “the system.”

We must grow up and we must see to it that the issues in our lives that keep us from growing are addressed and dealt with or we could just continue to be at the mercy of other people, places and things. Remember, “when a man (woman) wants to do something he will, when he doesn’t he’ll find an excuse.”

So, where are you in this process? Still waiting on “the system” to

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Winchell v. Evans — Cite it Frequently and Effectively in Your Parole Appeals

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degree, numerous certificates of achievement and appreciation as well as letters of support. The Court further noted that the Petitioner had been offered a full-time position at a local construction company and a part-time position in a financial service company, to which he would start immediately upon release. The Court cited his outside clearance that allowed him to work outside the facility doing sanitation and environmental work for three years as proof that he was well trusted by the prison administration. The court states conclusively that the Parole Board has broad discretion in deciding what weight should be given to each of the factors listed in Executive Law §259-i(2)(a), but the reasons for denying parole must "be given in detail and not in conclusory terms" and denial may not focus exclusively on the seriousness of the crime.

"Every individual that has been denied parole based on the seriousness of the crime must use the language cited...from the Winchell decision in his or her appeal."

Every individual that has been denied parole based on the seriousness of the crime must use the language cited above from the **Winchell** decision in his or her appeal. However, it is extremely important that the individual cite specifically what factors are present in his or her case to show that "there

is a reasonable probability that, if released, he or she will live and remain at liberty without

violating the law, and that his or her release is not incompatible with the welfare of society and will not so deprecate the seriousness of his or her crime as to undermine respect for law." This can be accomplished by citing the individual's good disciplinary history while in prison, record of accomplishments in prison

including any college degrees received and/or certificates of participation in institutional programs including but not limited to A.V.P., A.R.T, Work Release, numerous letters from the community supporting his or her release, and any definitive employment offers he or she has presented to the board. Of course, all of the above documentation should have been included in a parole packet sent to the board prior to the hearing and the individual should have reiterated all of the above during the course of the hearing. The parole preparation manual available from CPR details how to write such a packet and how you should present it to the board at your hearing.

If anyone has any question about how to use the **Winchell** case to their advantage in a parole appeal, please feel free to contact CPR.

Claudette R. Spencer-Nurse



"Arrested Development" ...Could It Be You?!

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right itself, waiting until you get out to get it right, still blaming everybody and your mama, or ready to stand up, man up and take control of your life? Because one of the realities of reentry is that you either address your issues or they'll surely address you!!! It took me about 12 years into a 20 to LIFE sentence to figure this out and probably another 2-3 years after that to start living it out. That means I know better than most that it is not going to be easy or fast, but in my book "easy" and "fast" got my butt into all that mess to begin with. But you have to start

somewhere and at sometime, and no time is ever better than RIGHT NOW!

Make no mistake about it: maturation is the key to life because whenever something stops growing, then it starts to die....How you livin'?

Jerome "Romeo" Wright



CPR Looking for "Prison Liaisons"

If you are in the following prisons, and if you are interested in promoting the work of CPR at your respective prison, please contact CPR for more details.

- Albion
- Attica
- Bayview
- Clinton
- Collins
- Elmira
- Great Meadow
- Green Haven
- Southport
- Wallkill
- Wende
- Wyoming



Letter to the Editor — Urging Gov. Cuomo to Support SAFE Parole Act

Re: The SAFE Parole Act (Bill S.5374)

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing to you to voice my support for The SAFE Parole Act (Bill S. 5374), sponsored by Senator Thomas K. Duane, and to inquire as to your position regarding this bill.

I appreciate your attempts to make the parole process fairer with the provisions you included in the 2011 Budget, but I do not think you went far enough. Leaving the nature of the crime as a criteria for denying parole not only wastes close to \$70,000 (for each two-year parole denial), but also does nothing to increase public safety. It is the *present* dangerousness of the person today which is the crucial consideration, not the crime for which he or she was convicted years ago, which can never change. Almost every person in prison will be released someday. The nature of the crime will be the same then as it is now and was at the completion of the minimum period of imprisonment. If there is evidence that an individual is a community-ready person, then why waste money by keeping them in prison at a total cost of close to \$40,000 a year. There is a better solution: The Safe and Fair Evaluation Parole Act.

To legislation is very important to me and my family and I, and thousands of others. Therefore, I respectfully urge you to support the SAFE Parole Act.

As you know, there are approximately 60,000 people incarcerated in the New York State prison system, and each incarcerated person has at least ten family members (mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, aunts and uncles, and grandparents), and when you add friends into the mix, I am sure you will agree that we make up a very sizable voting block. When you add to that the number of people in local jails and those on probation/parole, and include their family members and friends, I believe you will agree that we will have a major impact on the 2012 Election Day results and the 2014 Election.

The Internet is a wonderful way of getting the word out and an Internet campaign has already begun to support our elected officials who support legislation such as the SAFE Parole Act, Merit Time (S.338/A.154), etc., and to defeat those that don't.

I look forward to being informed regarding your position on the SAFE Parole Act.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this matter.



Editor's Note: This letter should be adapted and sent to Gov. Cuomo. Readers with access to the Internet should sign the petition of the NYS Parole Reform Campaign at www.parolereform.org to support the SAFE Parole Act.

RESOURCE CORNER

Citizens Against Recidivism

137-58 Thurston Street
Lower Level
Springfield Gardens, NY 11413
347-626-7233 ext. 1
Info@citizensinc.org

Community Service Society

105 E. 22nd Street
#303
N:Y, NY 10010-5495
212-254-8900
www.cssny.org

Legal Action Center

225 Varick Street
NY, NY 10014
212-243-113
www.lac.org

Prison Action Network

PO Box 6355
Albany, NY 12206

Think Outside the Cell Foundation

511 Avenue of the Americas
Suite 525
NY, NY 10011
877-267-2303
www.thinkoutsidethecell.org

Women on the Rise Telling HerStory (WORTH)

171 E. 122nd Street, 2R
NY, NY 10035
info@weareworthit.org



The Re-entry World Just Got a Little Larger

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Mayor Cory Booker; Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow*; CNN anchor Soledad O'Brien; "Chef Jeff" Henderson of the Food Network; Randall Robinson; CBS *60 Minutes* correspondent Bryon Pitts; Terrie Williams, youth advocate and author of *Black Pain: It Just Looks Like We're Not Hurting*; Dr. Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; *El Diario La Prensa* publisher Rossana Rosado; Marc Lamont Hill, Black Enterprise TV; and of course some of the "usual suspects," namely, Alan Rosenthal, Center for Community Alternatives; Julio Medina, Founder and Executive Director, Exodus Transitional Community; and Jeremy Travis, President of John Jay College of Criminal Jus-

tics and author of a journal article entitled: "But They All Come Back: Rethinking Reentry."

Anyone in the criminal justice field, anyone impacted by incarceration, needs to attend these events, beginning with the Think Outside the Cell Symposium.

The more people that attend this Symposium, the more the re-entry world will get a little larger, in a good way.

Let's make it a new day, a new way.



SYMPOSIUM — Think Outside the Cell: A New Day, A New Way

SYMPOSIUM:
Think Outside the Cell:
A New Day, A New Way

Where:

The Riverside Church

West 120th Street &
Riverside Drive
New York City

When:

Saturday, September 24, 2011

Register at:

<http://www.thinkoutsidethecell.org>



CPR's Incarcerated Family Support Group

Do you have questions about visitation, tickets, appeals? Is your loved one going to the parole board and needs assistance preparing or do you just need someone to talk to about having a loved one in prison?

Come to the **Incarcerated Family Support Group** sponsored by the **Coalition for Parole Restoration**.

Date: The Second Tuesday of every month

Place: North Star Fund

520 8th Avenue (bet. 36th and 37th Aves)
Manhattan

Time: 6-8 pm

For further information, contact **CPR** at 977-778-8047 or parolecpr@yahoo.com or visit us on Facebook.



CPR doing parole board appeals

Have you been denied parole? Do you need a lawyer for either your administrative appeal and/or Article 78?

Claudette Spencer-Nurse, an attorney and one of the founders of CPR, is doing parole board appeals.

The fees are as follow:

Administrative Appeal — \$1500

Article 78 — \$3500

Administrative Appeal & Article 78 — \$4000.

Checks should be made out to the **Coalition for Parole Restoration**.



WORTH Honors One of Its Own — Creating the Susan Hallett Reentry Award

APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION

Application Instructions

Thank you for your interest in joining Women on the Rise Telling Her Story (WORTH) as a recipient of the Susan Hallett Reentry Award!

Please review and complete the information in the application that follows and return it to us as soon as possible.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 20, 2011

Eligibility Requirements

- Demonstrated interest in working with women who have been impacted by the prison industrial complex
- Demonstrated interest in women's issues, particularly those related to women's reentry
- Previous incarceration and/or history of conflict with the law a must
- Volunteering for WORTH for 60 hours over a 3-month time period

We encourage individuals of diverse backgrounds, in terms of gender, race, culture, sexuality, class and other backgrounds to apply. We are strongly committed to bringing a team together that possesses a diversity of voices, opinions, experiences and perspectives.

Please respond thoughtfully and thoroughly to all questions. **Application Deadline is September 20, 2011.** Interviews will be conducted during the first week of October. The awardee will be notified

by October 12th.

Your receipt of the Susan Hallett Reentry Award requires that you are able to volunteer 60 hours over a 3-month time period.

About Susan Hallett



Susan Hallett was one of the founding members of WORTH. While still incarcerated at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, Susan secured WORTH's initial funding from Bedford's Long Termers' Committee. Upon her release, Susan secured a paralegal position at the Legal Action Center where she worked as a fierce legal advocate for ten years until her death. Susan helped thousands of formerly incarcerated people take the steps necessary to overcome hurdles to reentry. Susan also served as the program analyst for Legal Action Center's national project, Helping Individuals Reenter through Employment (H.I.R.E.) Network, which aims to increase employment opportunities for people with criminal records. She helped create a comprehensive Resource and Assistance web page that has been visited by millions of individuals who seek resources and help in their state.

Susan gave effective, meaningful advice and counsel on everything from employment discrimination to sealing of records. She also trained advocates and peers on rap sheet

and reentry-related topics, and was much in demand as a speaker. She conceived of and was the main force behind creating the Legal Action Center's DVD, "Your Rights, Your Future," which is geared to helping incarcerated people learn their rights and make plans for what to expect "on the outside."

Susan not only encouraged people who sought help to do what they could for themselves, she also taught them how to find the strength to make that happen. Her compassion and talent came both from personal experience with the criminal justice system, and from the heart.

You must submit the following to be considered this Award:

- 1) A completed application (following)
- 2) One referral
- 3) Resume
- 4) Photo

Please direct all questions, completed applications, and supporting materials to:

Women on the Rise Telling Her Story (WORTH)
171 East 122 Street, 2R
New York, NY 10035
info@weareworthit.org

APPLICATIONS CAN BE HAND-DELIVERED OR E-MAILED

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Susan Hallett Reentry Award

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Personal Information

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Current Address _____

Permanent Address (if you are not sure of your address upon release, do you have a family member that we can contact to pass information to you? If so, please list their contact information)

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____ IM Address _____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____ Preferred Gender Pronoun _____

Languages and Proficiency _____

How did you learn about this program?

Please answer the following questions honestly and concisely: Attach an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

1) Please provide us with a one paragraph description of yourself, including any relevant personal information, and your background. (500 word maximum)

2) Why are you interested in receiving the Susan Hallett Reentry Award? What do you hope to gain?

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Susan Hallett Reentry Award

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Volunteer Opportunities:

Outreach:

- Make reminder phone calls to WORTH members and prospective members
- Correspond with sisters inside
- Send out reminder e-mails about meetings
- Community outreach

Advocacy

- Research advocacy dates & events for monthly WORTH calendar
- Send out reminder e-mails about meetings and e-mails about resources
- Attend general and support meetings
- Give testimony (share your personal experiences) when advocating to get legislation passed
- Help organize advocacy days
- Attend advocacy days
- Attend Community Service Society roundtables

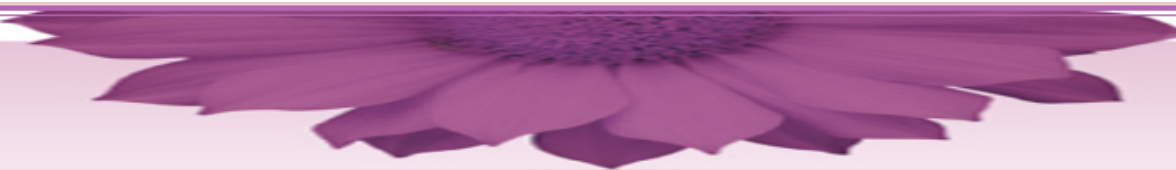
Administrative

- Develop activities & events for children of WORTH members and community members
- Make copies
- General administrative/office management

In addition to the Susan Hallett Reentry Award, the recipient, upon successful completion of her volunteer hours, can choose from one of the following:

- computer netbook (\$200-\$250)
- paying for another certified training of your choosing (not to exceed \$250)
- \$250 Pathmark card
- Camera + photo printer
- Shopping spree at Macy's (not to exceed \$250)
- Shopping spree @ Gap or Old Navy (not to exceed \$250)
- Game Stop gift card (not to exceed \$250)
- Bed, Bath & Beyond gift card (not to exceed \$250)
- Furniture outlet—Ikea, Pier 1, Bob's Furniture (not to exceed \$250)





WORTH Women On the Rise Telling HerStory

*The Women of WORTH cordially invite you to attend the
7th Annual Celebration of Sisterhood
&
The 1st Annual Susan Hallet Reentry Award*

*This is a Fundraising Event
to support the
"Stayin OVI" Project
In Bayview Correctional Facility*

*The theme of this year's annual celebration is:
"OUR SISTER'S KEEPER"*

The 1st Annual Susan Hallet Reentry Award

*will be given to two candidates who have
demonstrated:*

- *An interest in working with women who have been impacted by the prison industrial complex.*
- *Demonstrated interest in women's issues, particularly those related to women's reentry*

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Previous incarceration and/or history of conflict with the law a must

FUTURE COMMITMENT

Volunteer at WORTH for 80 hours over a 3-month time period

See Attached Application for details of the nomination process

When

*OCTOBER 20, 2011
6PM TO 10PM*

WHERE

celebrating what **harlem** is...

DWYER
CULTURAL CENTER

258 St. Nicholas Avenue
New York, NY • 10027

[CLICK TO SEE GOOGLE MAP AND CITY DIRECTIONS](#)

HOW

RSVP by using the **CONTACT US**

link on our website

[CLICK HERE TO CONTACT](#)

Or

by emailing us at:

info@womenontherise-worth.org

(Write the **7th Annual Celebration** in the subject or body of your message)

TICKET PRICE = \$100.00

**FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE AND
FAMILY MEMBER: \$50.00**

Parole at Fishkill

Following is the month and the Parole Commissioners that sat on parole board “interviews” at Fishkill Correctional Facility in 2011.

- ♣♣ Jan. 2011: Ferguson & Smith
- ♣♣ Feb. 2011: Ferguson & Haglar
- ♣♣ Mar. 2011: Ludlow and Lemons
- ♣♣ April 2011: Ross, Ludlow & Ferguson
- ♣♣ May 2011: Hernandez & Ross
- ♣♣ June 2011: **Hernandez, Ross & Lemons**
- ♣♣ July 2011: Haglar and Ludlow

Note: In the June 2011 parole board, approximately 85% (including homicide-related crimes) of the people interviewed were released to parole supervision.

An observation from the individual who provided these stats: “I have watched a few people granted parole release the last few months; however, at these same parole hearings I have witnessed other equally deserving individuals denied parole solely for the nature of their crimes. This leads me to believe that until Executive Law 259-i is changed to reflect the modifications reflected in the SAFE Parole Act, parole decisions will continue to be biased and determined on what commissioners you appear before.”



Community Minded Organization Long-Termers and Lifers Subcommittee at Fishkill Urges Support of the Safe and Fair Evaluation Parole Act

Thanks to the Coalition for Fair Criminal Justice Policies, the Sentencing Project, advocacy organizations, families, friends and supporters, like you — the Safe and Fair Evaluation (SAFE) Parole Act, which seeks to amend Executive Law 259-i, has been formulated into Senate Bill 5374 and Assembly Bill 7939. The bills, if enacted, will accomplish the goal of removing ambiguity from existing parole language, and focus rather on the applicant’s pro-social activities and demonstrated rehabilitation. In other words, the Parole Board would no longer be able to deny parole applicants solely on the nature of their crimes. S5374 and A7939 have garnered the support of State Senator Thomas Duane and Assembly member Jeffrion Aubry, who are expected to introduce the bills to their respective committees for a vote. If approved by both the State Senate and the State Assembly, then the bills will need the final approval of Governor Andrew Cuomo in order for it to be enacted into Law.

From where we sit, we are not blinded by the fact that although more Lifers and Long-Termers are being released, Parole Commissioners have been denying many others who are equally deserving. On the one hand, we are happy for those who were granted parole and given a chance to reunite with their loved ones; however, our hearts go out to the families, friends and supporters of those who equally deserve to be released to parole supervision but were not.

We would like to suggest a simple and doable action plan to support the passing of these bills, and to

promote the change that is so desperately needed.

- 1) Have your family and friends contact Legislators (Senators and Assembly Members) expressing their support for Bills S5374 and A7939. Phone calls or e-mails are very effective means of having their voices heard.
- 2) Have your family and supporters forward a copy of a brief letter expressing their support of the Bills. (See P. 6)
- 3) Have your family and friends support Prison Action Network and other organizations that are campaigning for fair parole practices.



2011 Citizens Awards

Where:

The Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial & Educational Center
3940 Broadway
NY, NY 10032
info@theshabazzcenter.net

When:

Saturday, October 29, 2011

For more information contact **Citizens Against Recidivism** at <http://citizensinc.org>.



CPR'S MISSION STATEMENT

The Coalition for Parole Restoration is a broad-based grassroots organization created to inform, organize and bring to light all aspects of the prison industrial complex as it affects our communities, families, people in prison and formerly incarcerated persons.

Our mission is two-fold: (1) to assist people in prison in obtaining parole release and (2) to assist formerly incarcerated persons and their families with transition and re-entry.

COALITION FOR PAROLE RESTORATION

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MEMBERSHIP & DUES STRUCTURE

- FAMILY MEMBERSHIP - \$25.00 PER YEAR (PERSON IN PRISON INCLUDED)
- INDIVIDUAL PERSON IN PRISON - \$5.00 PER YEAR
- BENEFACTOR MEMBERSHIP – \$250 OR MORE PER YEAR

YEAR WILL BEGIN IN THE MONTH THAT THE MEMBERSHIP DUES IS RECEIVED AND END IN THE SAME MONTH THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

MEMBERSHIP ENTITLES YOU TO RECEIVE CPR'S NEWSLETTER, WHICH IS PUBLISHED EIGHT TIMES A YEAR, A COPY OF THE PAROLE PREPARATION MANUAL, AND NOTICE OF ALL CPR-SPONSORED MEETINGS, RALLIES AND EVENTS.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, POEM, ETC. TO THE NEWSLETTER, YOU SHOULD SEND IT BY EMAIL OR U.S. MAIL BEFORE THE FIRST OF THE MONTH IN WHICH THE NEWSLETTER IS BEING PRINTED. SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE 750 WORDS OR LESS AND WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO EDIT ANYTHING APPEARING IN THE NEWSLETTER. ALL WORKS MUST BE ORIGINAL. WE WILL NOT PUBLISH ANYTHING WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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