



Benedict Center

Compassion Justice Action Transformation

135 West Wells Street, Suite 700

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203

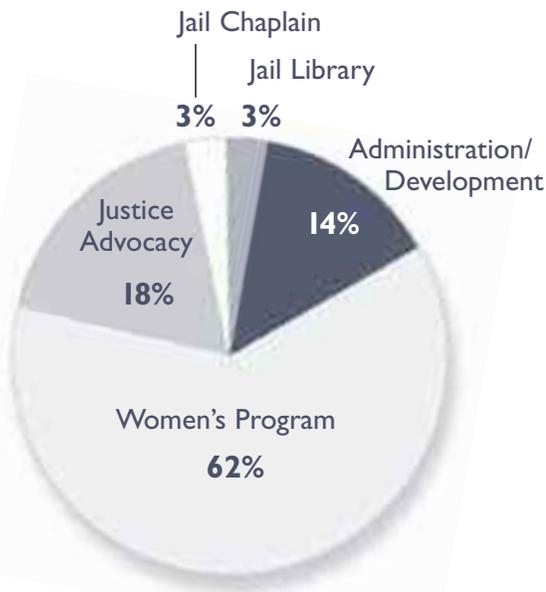
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Compassion
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Transformation

Register NOW!

May 7 Awards Luncheon & workshop

Where the dollars go



June 5, 11:30AM, Woman's Club of Wisconsin

*Friends of the Benedict Center
Spring Luncheon*

Women Accomplish Challenging Goals

In 2007, the number of court referrals to the Women's Program increased 250% 96% of the women referred by the Court and the District Attorney met their court obligation.

124 women participated in outpatient AODA treatment
63% completed the basic program or continue to work on their recovery
72% met at least one of their treatment goals

75 women participated in the new Day Reporting Center for women, an alternative to revocation of probation
56% successfully completed their program, continue on, or left for job training opportunities or more intensive treatment.

129 women participated in adult basic education/GED and HSED classes. The majority raised their academic skill levels to begin working towards their GED Of the students aiming for a GED, 10 women took 14 GED tests and successfully passed them.

Rational Justice is a publication of the Benedict Center

Executive Director ... Kit Murphy McNally

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MAY 7 AWARDS LUNCHEON

Engaging Families, Achieving Justice

With La Bodega de la Familia on Manhattan's lower east side, Carol Shapiro proved her theory that families are a major part of the solution when members are in conflict with the law. Now she travels the world training government agencies on methods of community justice that are family centered, innovative, cost effective and beneficial to the men and women who otherwise churn repeatedly through the criminal justice system.

At noon, May 7, Shapiro, who is Executive Director and founder of Family Justice in New York City, will bring her unique vision, experience and understanding to the Marquette University Alumni Memorial Union as the keynote speaker for the Benedict Center's Annual Awards Luncheon and Workshop.

"Family Justice taps the natural resources of families, the collective wisdom of communities, and the expertise of government to make families healthier and neighborhoods safer," according to the agency's mission.

Since its founding in 1996, Family Justice has emerged as a leading national nonprofit institution dedicated to developing innovative, cost-effective solutions that benefit people at greatest risk of cycling in and out of the justice system. By providing extensive training and support to government agencies and community-based organizations, Family Justice helps families to unlock their potential to lead healthier and more productive lives.



Carol Shapiro founded La Bodega de la Familia in 1996 in the heart of New York City's lower East Side in an abandoned grocery that had recently been the site of a shoot-out that paralyzed a police officer and killed an alleged drug dealer.

Shapiro has won many awards for her work, including selection as one of 10 in the first class of Ashoka Fellows in the United States, an honor that recognizes leading social entrepreneurs who have innovative solutions and the potential to change patterns across society.

Family Justice developed out of the experiences at La Bodega de la Familia, which was evaluated by the Vera Institute for Justice in 2002. Vera reported, "La Bodega de la Familia's uncommon approach to treating crime-involved drug users and their families challenges the prevailing practice of removing individuals from a negative environment so that they can focus on themselves and change their habits. La Bodega sees the drug user in the context of a family and sees that family as

a key strength to draw upon in promoting recovery."

Individual tickets for the Awards Luncheon are \$55 with complimentary parking in the 16th Street garage. Recognized table hosts for tables of 10, \$600; benefactors \$800 and co-sponsors \$1,000. A percentage is tax deductible and supports the work of the Benedict Center.

To register or for more information, contact Larry at 414-347-1774, x220 or justice@benedictcenter.org; or register online at www.benedictcenter.org.

See page 2 for information on free morning workshop.

Luncheon Honors Great Achievement: Lerman, Young, Flanagans, Women

The **Phillip Lerman Heart of Justice Award** honors an individual who always stands up for what is right just because it is the right thing to do. This year the award is especially significant because it is bestowed on Phil's son, **David Lerman**. David determinedly brought restorative

justice to reality in the District Attorney's Office and in Milwaukee. Undeterred by skepticism over bringing victims together with offenders among some of his prosecutorial colleagues, David persisted. When the Benedict Center tried to introduce victim/offender reconciliation in the early 1980's, it ultimately failed for lack of support from the prosecutors and witness protection. David would not fail, and today churches and community organizations throughout the state actively engage in restorative conferencing, circles, victim impact sessions and other forms of mediation and accountability.

One of David's very significant accomplishments is the introduction of restorative justice into the schools.

A new major award is making a debut this year. The **Margi and Joe Flanagan Award** is created in memory of Margi Flanagan, who was a tireless founding "mother" of the Benedict Center and her husband Joe, who became a constant cheerleader for the work of the Center over its 34 year history. Margi remained involved with concerns of the Benedict Center,

Continued on page 2



Maricolette Walsh is the newly elected president of the Benedict Center Board of Directors. Dr. Seth Foldy is treasurer.

New Board Officers Lead Mission for Justice

New officers, perspectives and commitments to justice mark transitions on the Benedict Center Board of Directors, now under the leadership of Maricolette Walsh, retired Mayor of Wauwatosa and a leader of Milwaukee's renowned Irish Fest.

Another new officer, treasurer Seth Foldy, is a consulting physician and former City of Milwaukee Health Commissioner, who is also deeply engaged with Healthcare for the Homeless, a kindred organizations with which the Benedict Center once shared a building at St. Benedict the Moor.

Diane Pollard, Professor Emeritus at UWM, is the new board secretary, with six years tenure on the Board. Nan Roddy, immediate past president of the Friends of the Benedict Center, joined the Board in January.

Newest Board members are U.S. attorney and former judge Joseph Wall, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission program manager Maria Elena Flores, and Richard Cox, former Benedict Center assistant executive director and former superintendent of the Milwaukee County House of Correction, and now the new executive director of Neighborhood House.

Other Board members with seniority include attorney Curry First, community volunteer Sandra Dermond, Fr. Johnny Klingler, SCJ, from the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, and immediate past president Dr. William Rogers, PhD, UWM Department of Africology.

Individuals interested in serving on the Benedict Center Board or Board committees, especially Fund Development, may contact Maricolette Walsh at mwalshirish@wi.rr.com.

MAY 7 AWARDS LUNCHEON

Continued from page 1

Free Morning Workshop Highlights Experiences of Offender's Families

From five perspectives, Workshop presenters will talk about their experiences with families, or as families, where at least one member has been or remains in conflict with the law.

THERE USED TO BE A GROUP for families of prisoners in Milwaukee called We Are Inmates Too (WAIT). Both the name and acronym are significant. Another grassroots group that recently reactivated in Milwaukee is CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants), which is part of a national network of prison families and activists for reform. Families of offenders are often blamed, forgotten, ignored and even despised. Most have not experienced the family centered support and involvement that La Bodega de la Familia offers in lower Manhattan.

This free workshop runs from 9-11:30am and will be an ideal warm-up for the keynote luncheon presentation *Engaging Families, Achieving Justice* by Carol Shapiro of Family Justice in New York. Breakfast bread and coffee will be available at 8:30am in Weasler Auditorium adjacent to the Marquette University Alumni Memorial Union.

For more information, contact Larry at 414-347-1774, x220.

Luncheon Honors Great Achievement

Continued from page 1

especially the Awards Luncheon, until her death three years ago. Joe, the consummate Irishman, died this March, the day after a last St. Patrick's Day celebration with his family.

The **Margi and Joe Flanagan Award** will be presented to a graduate of the Women's Program whose courage and determination to succeed has taken her far from her justice involved past. **Darlene Dyson**, who is now pursuing another degree at Mt. Mary, will be a very special recipient of this award personifying Margi's belief in the power of women to succeed with support from an agency like the Benedict Center.

The **Committed to Justice Award** is presented to an individual or organization that has made a remarkable contribution to justice, and working with the Benedict Center in the process. The award this year goes to an all-time champion of justice, former **State Representative Rebecca (Becky) Young**. She championed justice tirelessly during her years in the Legislature and hasn't slowed down since. The recent collaboration to draft a Community Justice Act would not have been completed without Young's determined and persistent leadership.

The fourth award is one for **Personal Achievement**, presented to **Veronica Bracey**, who took full advantage of opportunities offered her at the Benedict Center, and who is continuing to make positive life decisions as she moves away from traumas and conflicts of the past.

Community Justice Council Launches into Action

Community is a word of immense significance in Milwaukee's new Community Justice Council

For the first time in Milwaukee's history, key criminal justice and government leaders, across all jurisdictional boundaries, are officially meeting to collaborate on administering justice by the best means possible to protect public safety and raise the quality of life for all residents. But even more striking is the actively encouraged collaboration of the community.

The Council's Executive Committee, which includes the Benedict Center, met throughout 2007 to discuss purpose, draft bylaws and consider membership in this body, which has the potential to ultimately and dramatically change the way Milwaukee does justice.

The real work and policy formation of the Council will occur in committees, which are open to everyone in the community who has expertise, ideas, experience, interest or relevant perspectives to bring to the discussion. Committee recommendations go to the Executive Committee, which will then bring issues to the full 27 member Council for action at meetings — also open to all interested persons.

The Public Policy Forum, now directed by Rob Henken, will be providing research assistance to the committees during this first year. This is extremely valuable support from an entity that has a long history of high quality, unbiased research on issues of significance to the greater Milwaukee community.

The committees, which convened for the first time in March, include Programs and Interventions, Public Health, Jail and Huber Utilization, Juvenile Justice, Public Outreach and Education, and Data Analysis and Information. Committees meet monthly.

The Council meets every other month on the 4th Wednesday, currently from 9:30 to 11am at Washington Park Senior Center. The next meeting will be May 28.

The only committee already working on an issue is the Jail and Huber Utilization Committee, which is deliberating the County Executive's recommendation that the Community Correction Center be closed and its residents instead be placed on GPS monitoring bracelets. The County Board referred this issue to the Council as its first charge.

In addition to the Benedict Center Executive Director, the executive committee consists of the Chief Judge as Chair, Mayor, County Executive, Sheriff, Sheriff's Inspector, District Attorney, Public Defender, Police Chief, and County Board Chair.

For more information about the Council contact Kit Murphy McNally at 414-347-1774 x202 or kit@benedictcenter.org. To check time and location of future committee or council meetings contact Deputy Aisha Barkow, abarbow@milwcnty.com.

Effective Justice Strategies Drive Change

Effective Justice Strategies is rapidly becoming the new umbrella term for good works in justice that are happening in Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

An Effective Strategies Committee began meeting at the State Capitol late last year to design and draft a plan for a Community Justice Act for Wisconsin. The Benedict Center participated in the deliberations, which resulted in a draft that will be submitted for scrutiny and deliberation for inclusion in the 2010 budget bill.

The heart of the draft Act is a process that would enable counties to propose innovative justice initiatives aimed at reducing criminal involvement and recidivism. A state justice coordinating board would make decisions on funding allocations to the counties, while also coordinating, monitoring, evaluating and promoting successful innovations.

The Benedict Center and Justice 2000 have been meeting with various state and local organizations to discuss new directions in community justice for the last couple of years with Edgewood College Professor Esther Heffernan, OP, and former State Representative Becky Young, who initiated and propelled the action for reform.

Young took the lead in creating the Effective Strategies Committee of 15, representing state and county government, state and local justice agencies, state and local nonprofits and legislative representatives including Mark Pocan (D-Dane Co.) and Scott Suder (R-Clark Co.). Judge Michael Malmstadt chaired the committee. In addition to Benedict Center and Justice 2000, others involved from Milwaukee included WISDOM and the District Attorney.

For more information contact Kit Murphy McNally at 347-1774 x202 or kit@benedictcenter.org.



Two voices callers to the Benedict Center hear often belong to administrative and development assistant Larry Jones and receptionist Tyanna James. James is a stellar graduate of the Women's Program, now working at the Center through the DOC Community Corrections Employment Program.

Benedict Center's River Walk is a whole family affair – though the cats would probably rather just hear about it later. Circle the date – June 22, 2008 – and come out to celebrate the second day of Summer.

JUNE 22!

Walking the River Walk

By Co-Chairs Pat Netzow & Fr. Johnny Klinger



Benedict Center women help out on walk day and definitely walk the Walk. Christie, Margtrinnia and Evelyn take a break in the shade.



AFTER THIS LONG COLD, SNOWY WINTER it is hard to remember back to a beautiful day in June 2007 and the Benedict Center's 1st Annual River Walk. Those who attended or volunteered know the perfection of that day from the Blessing of the Animals to the symbolic dove release to the gospel choir to the 3K walk on the most interesting walk in the city.

The 2nd Annual River Walk heads out from Pere Marquette Park Sunday, June 22, 2008. To raise vital funding for the Benedict Center, we're counting on a huge turnout. Bring the whole family, friends, neighbors and co-workers — and the dogs. Make a big splash by collecting the most pledges. There will be prizes. Nice prizes.

For more information contact Pat Netzow, patnetzow@sbcglobal.net or Fr. Johnny at klingerjohn@yahoo.com.

Watch for your brochure in the mail.

Enter
YOUR PUP
FOR
Walk Mascot 2008!

Partnership Targets Barriers to Mental Health

The Wisconsin Partnership Program at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health awarded the Benedict Center a \$67,000 planning grant to implement a community academic partnership that addresses the unmet mental health needs of justice involved women and the barriers that prevent them from accessing treatment.

At the end of 18 months, the Benedict Center intends to have concrete knowledge of the prevalence of mental health disorders experienced by justice involved women; factors influencing their perception of the cultural competency of mental health services, and systemic and other barriers experienced by women, advocates and mental health providers. This information will contribute to a plan that includes practical, realistic strategies to reduce barriers to access and improve communication and collaboration between criminal justice, mental health and other relevant systems.

Principles in this 18 month collaboration include academic partner Ron Diamond, MD, Professor of Psychiatry at UW School of Medicine; project champion

Michael Bohn, MD, medical director of Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment at Aurora Psychiatric Hospital and Benedict Center medical director, and Susan Rose, PhD, Center for Addictions and Behavioral Research at UW-Milwaukee. Mental health consumers at the Benedict Center and Horizons, Inc. will participate in focus groups and screening.

An advisory panel to the project includes representation from the Lt. Governor's Office, Wisconsin Department of Corrections, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Justice 2000, Milwaukee County Mental Health Center, Wisconsin Public Defender's Office, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department, Wisconsin Bureau of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, Grand Avenue Club and other public and private mental health experts.

For more information contact Kit Murphy McNally at 414-347-1774 x202 or kit@benedictcenter.org.

Dave *
By Michelle Legener, GED '08

Tea man
thinker man
Patient man

I ask for
a spot
of tea
tea man
hands me
a packet
of tea
he cracks
a joke
I say
thank-you
he says
anytime

I ask for
A spot
Of his time
Thinker man
Pauses
Thinks
Before he answers
Then says
Sure
He cracks
A smile
I say
Thank-you
He says
Anytime

Patient man
Brings a spot
Of his time
To me
And

His thoughts
He's a thinker

After
His patience
And
His thoughts
I understand
Math
And patience
And
Thinking
And

My tea was tasty

*Written in tribute to Academic Coordinator David Peters

Chaplain Sidney Opens New Books in Jail

The Benedict Center's interfaith Jail Chaplain Catherine Sidney believes in finding ways to meet inmate needs, whatever that may take. As a result, she's developing a plan to create book discussion groups on jail pods housing longer-term men and women.

The Benedict Center also manages the jail library, which has a collection of more than 15,000 new and used books. Because jail inmates do not leave their housing pod (unit), they must request books or pick one from a limited pod collection. To encourage reading and get more of the library's excellent books into circulation, Sidney is collaborating with librarian Eric Beaumont. Her goal is to

eventually have book groups under way in every housing pod.

Sidney is also in discussion with the Salvation Army about creating an aftercare jail network, based on the success of the Prison Aftercare Network. Too many inmates leave the Jail without proper clothing, a safe place to go, medications, or any plan about what to do next, Sidney explains. She sees neighborhood churches as having a major role in making an aftercare network work in Milwaukee.

Sidney's two new ventures come on top of coordinating the services of 200 religious volunteers, and her own Bible study and counseling to help meet the spiritual needs of 900

Milwaukee County Jail inmates. Sidney receives major assistance from volunteer James Williams, who took a break from his advanced theological studies to assist with the jail ministry. There is a continuous need for donated Bibles, Qur'ans and postage stamps in the jail, Sidney notes whenever given the opportunity.

For more information about volunteer opportunities with the Benedict Center programs in the Milwaukee County Jail, contact Volunteer Coordinator Mary Pat Utech Mondays and Wednesdays at 414-347-1774 x217 or mutech@benedictcenter.org.



Benedict Center Jail Chaplain Catherine Sidney is working on a proposal to recruit volunteers to lead small book discussion groups in Milwaukee County Jail housing pods.

WCCC Women Commute for Intensive Treatment

Twelve women from the Milwaukee Women's Community Correctional Center will begin an intensive substance abuse treatment program Monday through Friday at the Benedict Center April 18.

The women will work together as a cohesive group within the context of the larger Women's Harm Reduction Program, and will occasionally integrate with others in the program for monthly awards luncheons, craft classes and weekly wellness sessions.

The WCCC women will follow a New Freedom curriculum favored by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections vs. the Stages of Change Harm Reduction curriculum used in other treatment components at the Benedict Center. The dual curricula provide an interesting opportunity to contrast progress and success, as well as participant feedback.

With this new relationship, the Women's Harm Reduction Program now receives referrals from 11 different sources within the criminal justice system. The referrals bring nearly 400 women into the program annually.

Some women come only for specific program components — drug treatment, adult basic education and GED, anger and stress management, cognitive development, women's health and sexuality, trauma counseling, parenting and family nurturing, or career skills.



Some are able to benefit from the entire holistic program. The more holistic the track, the more lasting and effective the benefit, but funding and referral support often end before the need.

In addition to the WCCC, women arrive at the Benedict Center through Treatment Alternative Diversion (TAD), deferred prosecution referrals to treatment by the district attorney; diversion and deferred prosecution referrals from the police, district attorney and courts to the Second Chance Women's Sexuality and Seeking Safety Trauma Recovery groups for women engaged in prostitution; alternative to revocation referrals from the Division of Community Corrections for holistic gender responsive services, education and treatment, and general or specific referrals to holistic services from Children's Court, Misdemeanor and Felony Courts, Community Corrections, Municipal Court and occasionally Milwaukee Police Department, defense attorneys and self-referrals.

For more information contact Donna Hietpas, Women's Harm Reduction Program Director, 414-347-1774 x206 or dhietpas@benedictcenter.org.

Substance abuse counselors discuss new evidence in support of gender responsive treatment. FROM LEFT: Nochia Perry, Kia Holloway and Deborah Bent



Ben Pabich and Lisa Canady, interns from the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare at UWM, have been an integral and highly valued part of activities in the Women's Harm Reduction Program since last September.