



DC Project Connect

Celebrating Rights of the Child

DC Project Connect: CELEBRATING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

SUPPORTING FAMILIES OF THE INCARCERATED THROUGH EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES

WWW.DCPROJECTCONNECT.COM

DC PROJECT CONNECT 2017 MENTOR PROGRAM UNFOLDS AT THE FAIRVIEW RESIDENTIAL REENTRY CENTER (2ND YEAR)

Fairview residents, who have transitioned back into the DC community. These volunteers have completed mentorship training provided by the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency; completed mentor applications, background checks, and selection interviews conducted by DCPC.

The Fairview staff, our sponsors, mentors, and mentees, and the DCPC family of volunteers will be invited to the commencement ceremony.

DCPC can't accomplish its pro bono services to assist families and citizens affected by incarceration without partnerships and support from the Washington DC community. As such, we give special thanks to the DC National Office of Scientology for letting us use your facility for the mentor-mentee graduation ceremony.



As the mentorship program unfolds, DCPC provides orientation and training sessions that are specific to maximizing successful relationships between mentors and mentees while maintaining the goals established by DCPC and The Fairview.

DC Project Connect: Endorses Legislation Proposed by Senators Booker & Warren

DC Project Connect in collaboration with Charlie Sullivan of C.U.R.E, reviewed proposed legislation and wrote a letter formally supporting the spirit and intent of the "Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act."

After receiving positive feedback and critical analysis (both oral and written) from the rollout of our Pilot Mentorship Program (2016), DC Project Connect refined our objectives, updated the mentor training manual, and began recruiting sponsorship and mentors for this fiscal year's mentorship program at The Fairview RRC. DCPC obtained sponsorship from DAVITA and the community liaison division of BB&T bank.

Orientation and Mentors – Mentee pairing (i.e. initial introductions) occurred this month (May 2017). Needless to say, this kick-off event was exciting; the dynamics that unfolded between the mentors and mentees were carefully crafted through workshops and roll play that encouraged communication and joint participation. DCPC would like to recognize The Fairview Director and staff, sponsors, volunteers, Board, and our mentors and mentees for making this event, as well as the mentorship program possible.

Since our inception, DCPC has advocated against draconian policies that require shackling a woman to a bed during her pregnancy. In concert with the legislation, DCPC also supports the fundamental rights of a child and believe that children have the right to be parented, even if that parent is incarcerated.

DCPC entered into partnership with six (6) women who agreed to volunteer their time, compassion and wisdom to six

UPCOMING EVENT: Upon completion of the 2017 Mentorship Program, a graduation ceremony will be held at the Fraser Mansion in September 28, 2017. [Please mark your calendars and plan to attend]



The “Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act” (Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Sen. Corey Booker, co-sponsors – shown in photos) has several other components that speak to the basic human rights of prisoners and families. These include the vetting of criminal justice system policies and practices to ensure that segregated housing, health care, and the training of correctional officials are amended to promote fair treatment of prisoners; DCPC also supports the placement of prisoners as close to their children as possible.



Recognizing the importance of such progressive legislation, DC Project Connect offered additional support via our pending peer reviewed empirical research. The findings suggest that it is essential to transform

trauma-producing environments that can place children at risk to negative outcomes, based on adverse factors encountered when visiting their incarcerated parents.

DC Project Connect: Disseminates Its Family Advocacy Efforts on Gospel Radio



On March 5, 2017, Dr. Hart Johnson was interviewed by Reverend “Sue” Green,

Assistant Minister (shown in photos), New Bethel Baptist Church, Washington D.C. Rev. Green reached out to Dr. Hart Johnson after reading her book, “*The Symbolic Imprisonment of African American Women: A Legacy of Mass Incarceration.*” Dr. Hart Johnson was asked questions about her book and research, as well as DCPC’s nonprofit activities. Dr. Hart Johnson discussed



these issues and the affects mass incarceration has had on women and children in the Washington D.C. area.

She also gave a brief overview of the DCPC mentor program provided at the sole women’s residential reentry center in Washington DC. The interview took place on Radio 1340 WYCB.



DC Project Connect: Welcome Placard Donated to The Fairview RRC

On May 6, 2017, Executive members of DCPC presented the Director and Assistant Director, Fairview, a welcome sign which states:

Welcome to The Fairview

Dear Residents, Family, Visitor, and Volunteers:

“We welcome you to our home and residence. We honor this space and treat this home with care and respect. We support each other through sisterhood and human decency. We hope that all

people who come through these doors will work collectively to contribute a brighter future for all residents. While you are here we hope that your stay is filled with rays of hope and the bright light of a promising future.”

“Home isn’t where you are from, it’s where you find light when all grows dark.” ~Pierce Brown



The Director commented that this greeting will be part of The Fairview’s beautification process.

DC Project Connect: Literature Designed to Address the Sensitive Topic of Parental Incarceration with Children

DC Project Connect has several books and literary projects that await publication. Dr. Hart Johnson has developed a children’s book on parental incarceration entitled “*Jamie’s Big Visit © 2016.*” DCPC seek funding to publish the book in quantities large enough to disseminate freely throughout the Washington D.C. area. Through this wonderfully illustrated book, children and their non-incarcerated caregiver can read about the chronicled journey of Jamie, the bear whose dad went to prison.

This book is designed to reach an audience of children under 8 years old. According to a recent Rutgers University study, almost half of children with incarcerated parents are under 10 years old. **Call to action:** This book will be distributed to children and parents at no cost. To contribute to the campaign to fund this project, visit

www.dcpconnect.org and click the donate button. Please support our efforts.

DC Project Connect: Attorney General Panel on Families & Reentry

Attorney General Racine and representatives from nonprofit organizations (e.g. DC Project Connect), community groups, and the D.C. and Federal government held a panel discussion on “Barriers to Reentry and the Impact on Loved Ones.” This powerful and insightful gathering provided information on both the challenges of reentry and local resources available to help returned citizens and their families.

DC Project Connect provided information



on our mission and services provided by DCPC which include advocacy, information about arrest, incarceration and aspects of the criminal justice system, and psycho-educational support for families affected by a loved one’s incarceration. *Photo (Left to right): Tony Lewis, Dr. Avon, Brian Ferguson, Petrina Williams, Atty. Gen. Karl Racine. CSOSA Director Nancy Ware shown below on the left)*

Dr. Hart Johnson provided stirring testimony and comments throughout this forum. She spoke of the challenges that women and families face via the incarceration of a loved. Members of the audience commented on her insight. The panel, as moderated by Atty. Gen. Racine, addressed the plight of returned citizens and their families.



Assistance to Families with an Incarcerated Loved One

DC Project Connect provides ongoing assistance to family members who suffer

from the pain and complexities associated with having an incarcerated loved one. DCPC receives inquiries via word of mouth and through our information hotline and website. Mr. Johnson recently disseminated information about residential reentry centers (half-way houses) in the city and oversight conducted by CSOSA and other entities.

DC Project Connect: Key Note Presentations Domestically & Abroad



Dr. Hart Johnson (above) was a key note speaker at two conferences. She also conducted a workshop at another forum. The following topics were addressed:

- “A Transformative Movement: Using the Mass Incarceration Continuum to Influence Social Change.” Presented at International Coalition of Children with Incarcerated Parents, Rotorua, New Zealand (March 2017)
- “From Victim to Advocate: Pathways to Empowerment.” International Prisoner Family Conference, Dallas, Texas (May 2017)



- “A Child’s Right to Visitation with an Incarcerated Parent.” Global Wellbeing Conference, Millersville University, Lancaster, Pennsylvania (June, 2017)

DC Project Connect: Exploration of United Kingdom Prison Visitation Policies & Practices

DC Project Connect’s executive officers conducted exploratory research on prison visitation policies and practices in the United Kingdom. Dr. Hart Johnson, principle investigator, will soon release a

multi-case study on amendments to the often intimidating, intrusive and stressful elements associated with visiting correctional facilities, especially affecting children. Several prison facilities in the UK have recognized the importance of family contact and have developed visitation centers that welcome and embrace children and familial support.

DC Project Connect Update: Family Handbook: How to Survive a Loved Ones’ Incarceration

DC Project Connect awaits publication of the family handbook, “How to Survive a Loved Ones’ Incarceration.” DCPC has assembled information to assist families with issues associated with the arrest and incarceration of a loved one. The handbook addresses three primary topics:

Section 1 discusses dynamics which affect a spouse and/or head of household, including the trauma associated with a family member’s incarceration and the implications of symbolic imprisonment on family members. The handbook also delves into the financial challenges that typically arise when a breadwinner is imprisoned.

Section 2 addresses the unique needs of a child when a parent is arrested and involuntarily separation from the household. This section discusses a child’s challenges in the home and in their schools and communities. The handbook also discusses the dynamics of a child’s visitation to a prison; and the complexities associated with a parent’s reentry back into the household.

Section 3 provides context on the incarcerated parent, including, maintaining communication. The handbook provides information on reentry planning, including city services and sources of support for his/her health, housing, and employment.

The handbook is family a friendly guide that we hope will empower families with basic need-to-know (or at least, need-to-consider) information concerning a loved one’s incarceration.

Board Member Notice:

**Next Meeting: June 29,
2017 Thank you for your
Support** www.dcpjprojectconnect.org
www.dcpjprojectconnect.com

Join us for the special screening of the movie: **'Hidden Figures'**

All residents are invited!

Courtesy of 21st Century Fox; coordinated and sponsored by DC Project **Connect and in collaboration with The Fairview and its Community Relations Board.**

When: 5/25/17; Time: 6:15 – 8:30 p.m.

Where: Trinidad Baptist Church Fellowship Hall (right around the corner from The Fairview) 1611 Benning Rd NE, Washington, DC 20002

EVERYONE IS INVITED!

Three brilliant African-American women at NASA -- Katherine Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe) -- serve as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn (Glen Powell) into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race and galvanized the world.

If you have questions, please
speak with:
Dr. Hart-Johnson, Rev. Mercer, or
Director Hagar

NOTE: DC PROJECT CONNECT BOARD MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!

