



U.S. Department of Labor

News Release

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**U.S. Department of Labor announces nearly \$5.5 million in awards under
President's Prisoner Re-entry Initiative**

Grants made to faith-based and community organizations in 18 areas nationwide

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Labor today announced nearly \$5.5 million in awards to 18 faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) as part of the President's Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (PRI). Each chosen group was awarded more than \$300,000.

"These \$5.5 million in grants will advance local faith-based and community organization efforts to equip ex-prisoners with basic job skills, counseling and opportunities to earn an honest living in our communities," said Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao.

In spring 2008, the U.S. Department of Justice awarded grants to selected state correctional agencies to provide pre-release services to exiting prisoners. The Department of Labor, in turn, announced a competition in early September to follow through with post-release services for those same newly released civilians. Each of today's award-winning organizations will serve at least 100 recently released individuals during the program's first year.

"These faith-based and community organizations will partner with ex-offenders and equip them with the skills necessary to compete as members of the modern-day workforce," said Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Brent R. Orrell. "Steady employment, mentoring and moral support help break the cycle of despair and disordered, often criminal, lives."

Introduced by President Bush in his 2004 "State of the Union" address, the Prisoner Re-entry Initiative helps strengthen urban communities and assist ex-prisoners re-entering the community through an employment-based program that incorporates mentoring, job training and other services.

Today's announcement follows 30 awards granted in November 2005, and 23 projects chosen last April. As a result, FBCOs and their partners have enrolled more than 17,000

ex-offenders in programs, and ex-offenders have been placed in more than 11,000 jobs. Those entering PRI programs have a recidivism rate of 15 percent, or almost two-thirds below the 44 percent national average. For more information on the Prisoner Re-entry Initiative, please see <http://www.dol.gov/cfbci/reentry.htm>.

Editor's Note: A list of award-winning faith-based and community organizations is below.

**2009 President's Prisoner Re-entry Initiative
Award-Winning Organizations**

Award-Winning Organization	Target County	State	Amount
The Dannon Project	Jefferson County	Ala.	\$304,117
Arizona Women's Education and Employment (AWEE)	Maricopa County	Ariz.	\$304,117
Volunteers of America of Greater Los Angeles	Los Angeles County	Calif.	\$304,117
The Empowerment Program Inc.	Denver County	Colo.	\$304,117
Career Resources Inc.	Fairfield County	Conn.	\$304,117
Connections Community Support Programs Inc.	New Castle County	Dela.	\$304,117
Chicago Christian Industrial League	Cook County	Ill.	\$304,116
Blue Jacket Inc.	Allen County	Ind.	\$304,116
One Church One Offender of Louisiana	Caddo and Bossier parishes	La.	\$304,116
Episcopal Community Services of Maryland Inc.	Baltimore County	Md.	\$304,116
Flint Area Specialized Employment Services	Genesee County	Mich.	\$304,116
MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries	Greene County	Mo.	\$304,116
Las Vegas-Clark County Urban League	Clark County	Nev.	\$304,116
Helping Arms Inc.	Mercer County	N.J.	\$304,116
Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa	Tulsa County	Okla.	\$304,116
Connection Training Services	Philadelphia County	Pa.	\$304,116
Project Return Inc.	Davidson County	Tenn.	\$304,116

Word of Hope Ministries Inc.	Milwaukee County	Wi.	\$304,116
			TOTAL = \$ 5,474,094

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