



AMICUS

Partners Building New Lives

2004-2006 Biennial Report

October, 2006

Dear Friends and Partners of AMICUS:

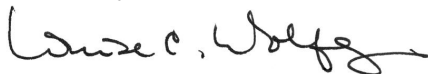
I am pleased to present AMICUS' biennial report for the past two fiscal years (July 2004 through June 2006).

That's more of a true statement than the usual polite "pleased," because the last two years have been a time of tremendous change and excitement for AMICUS. While AMICUS' core mission--to partner with inmates, ex-offenders, juvenile offenders and communities to build successful lives and stronger communities--remains unchanged, AMICUS is using powerful new tools toward that goal. A board-driven focus on increasing AMICUS' impact by sharing our knowledge has led to a blossoming in community education/capacity building, training, and consulting work. In the past few months, we have laid the groundwork for the formal launch of a new AMICUS Initiative, which will offer training and consulting to communities seeking to be more effective in their approach to offenders and/or to replicate AMICUS' successful programs.

The past two years have also been years of significant growth for AMICUS, with new staff added and the number of offenders served continuing to rise. For example, the number of offenders served by our transition planning and referral service, RECONNECT, increased over 500% from 2002 to 2005, and AMICUS' RADIUS program for girls in Ramsey County has more than doubled in size. With this significant increase in demand, AMICUS has been very fortunate to maintain adequate staffing and funding. I am proud to report that AMICUS once again ended the year in the black--with every dollar possible going to help offenders build new lives. That is yet another accomplishment to celebrate as AMICUS gets ready to celebrate its 40th anniversary next year.

Every time I see AMICUS' caring and talented staff and volunteers in action--every time I see the pride and integrity of a former offender who has achieved success in the community as a worker, family member, and community member--I remember why I took this job almost 35 years ago. AMICUS is unique, and uniquely effective. Our volunteers, funders and partners make this great work possible, and we can never thank you enough for that. I look forward to partnering with you again in 2006 - 2007 and hope you enjoy reading about AMICUS' accomplishments in the past two years. Like me, I think you'll be pleased.

Sincerely,



Louise Wolfgramm
President

AMICUS MISSION

AMICUS partners with inmates, ex-offenders, juvenile offenders and communities to build successful lives and stronger communities.

MODEL

AMICUS helps offenders transition from confinement to community. The AMICUS model is relationship-based, community-driven, culturally specific and outcome-oriented.

CORE VALUES

Caring, Community, Respect, Responsibility, Transformation

VISION

Through leadership, programming, policy and partnership, AMICUS:

- Brings offenders into positive human connection so that they may experience a sense of belonging
- Increases the number of offenders who make a successful transition into community life and become active and contributing community members
- Educates and encourages communities to be welcoming and supportive
- Instills hope and transforms lives.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

The AMICUS Board of Directors has established and will monitor progress towards the following organizational outcomes:

- Outcome 1: AMICUS expands the number of community partnerships
- Outcome 2: AMICUS expands programs to serve more offenders in transition
- Outcome 3: AMICUS increases its number of trained volunteers
- Outcome 4: AMICUS stabilizes its finances and core programming
- Outcome 5: AMICUS increases its impact by sharing its knowledge.

education & capacity building

When AMICUS came to St. Louis County to educate us about “Girls 101,” it really started new energy in our community to do something new and effective for the girls in our juvenile justice system. Their expertise is obvious and it was great to see how the program has worked both with the state-commit girls in placement and for girls on probation in Ramsey County. AMICUS brought all the players to the table and helped us figure out the gaps in our community’s services. We decided together what those were and came to a consensus that Men as Peacemakers was the best provider to develop the capacity to provide those services for girls. We have been successful in getting funding to begin this process and will continue to work with AMICUS to develop a program that reflects best practices for working with girls. They have done a wonderful job articulating their program model and guiding us through our own program development.

--Letter from AMICUS training client, Men as Peacemakers,
2006

EDUCATION/CAPACITY BUILDING Program

Successful launch builds foundation for new AMICUS Institute

2005 saw the launch of an exciting new effort for AMICUS: the EDUCATION/CAPACITY BUILDING program. Based on a 2004 pilot, in which AMICUS worked with faith communities and grassroots groups to train volunteer mentors for offenders, the EDUCATION/CAPACITY BUILDING program brings together several efforts to provide inmates, ex-offenders, their families, professionals, and the community quality education/training that increases the capacity of offenders and communities to re-integrate successfully. The program responds to a new strategic outcome set by AMICUS' board: AMICUS increases its impact by sharing its knowledge. Through the EDUCATION/CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM, AMICUS has been able to work at the problem of offender re-entry from both sides—helping offenders prepare for transition, and helping communities develop the capacity to assist them.

Since its formal launch two years ago, AMICUS' EDUCATION/CAPACITY BUILDING program has seen explosive growth, involving almost every AMICUS staff member in its activities. Accomplishments in the past two years included:

- Hired a program coordinator, a former AMICUS MEN OF RAFIKI participant.
- Conducted 6 adult mentor volunteer trainings.
- Conducted 5 youth mentor trainings.
- Held 10 ONE-TO-ONE volunteer orientations.
- Held 12 volunteer support and supervision sessions.
- Sponsored three major "Call to Action" events for faith communities (two in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul) and other interested in working with offenders, attended by over 266 people.
- Secured 45 speaking engagements with community groups, including The Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, Piper Jaffray, the Wilder Foundation, St. Thomas, Metro State, William Mitchell, Westminster Church, the St. Paul Kiwanis, and the St. Paul Neighborhood Network.
- Spoke at high schools (including Kennedy, Washburn and the Plymouth Christian Youth Center) to share experiences and advice of ex-offenders with youth.
- Made radio appearances on Insight News with Al McFarland, Minnesota Public Radio with Dan Olson, and "Relevant Radio."
- Made TV appearances on the Al Cunningham show and on MN TV (commenting on George Stoney film, "Getting Out.")
- Garnered newspaper coverage in the St. Paul Pioneer Press by Ruben Rosario.
- Presented AMICUS' best practices at the national Prison Ministries Convocation, the American Corrections Association, the Women in

- Corrections conference, the National Workshop on Adult and Juvenile Female Offenders, and a national gathering of federal re-entry grant recipients.
- Participated on panel for the Council on Crime and Justice's "Call to Justice" event, an event highlighting racial disparity in Minnesota's justice system and drawing over 700 people.
 - Convened two meetings on "Girls 101" for probation and social service providers in the Arrowhead region and provided extensive technical assistance to start a new community-based program for girls in Duluth.
 - Provided training and technical assistance to new restorative justice ministry at Unity-Unitarian Church, St. Paul.
 - Provided technical assistance to the Central Minnesota Re-Entry Project (CMNRP), a non-profit start-up in St. Cloud.
 - Supported "life coaches" in the Hennepin County FINDS project to work with families with multigenerational criminal justice involvement.
 - Trained Ramsey County JDC staff in girls' services.
 - Held a community discussion with the Girls Task Force in Blue Earth County.
 - Offered 39 classes to offenders at 8 prisons to help graduates of prison technical and trade programs develop portfolios to market their skills and abilities in the industries.
 - Collaborated with the Career Construction Training Program (a collaboration of over 30 construction companies) to nurture "second chance" employers willing to hire ex-offenders into living-wage jobs.

These efforts have led to new partnerships with several faith communities, grassroots groups, and government initiatives, where AMICUS provides strategic planning assistance, technical assistance, and volunteer and staff training. Through this innovative new model of sharing its expertise with others, AMICUS is creating community capacity to support offenders where none existed before.

Opportunities for AMICUS to provide training and consulting on offender-related projects are accumulating more rapidly than AMICUS can respond to them. In spring 2006, the AMICUS board initiated a strategic planning process to conceptualize a new "AMICUS Institute" that would partner with communities and government to develop strategies regarding offenders and to educate and train leadership, consult on existing and new program models to those interested in replication, train individuals, organizations and communities interested in effective mentorship, re-entry, and restorative justice practices, inform public policy through education, partnership and sharing expertise, provide innovative direct services, incubate and evaluate new program models that meet emerging issues and trends, and conduct research and outcome-based evaluation in efforts to remain relevant and promote best practices. A substantial internal capacity building and organizational development effort is underway to prepare AMICUS to undertake this work of the Institute at a level that meets community demand.

AMICUS' Education/Capacity Building Program has to be one of the most notable initiatives AMICUS has undertaken since its inception, almost 40 years ago. Just as AMICUS took a leap forward when it created RECONNECT in 1986, another leap when it launched its transition programs in the mid-1990s, and yet another when it added juvenile programming in 2000, AMICUS is taking another strategic leap forward today. While acting as an Institute is a significant departure from AMICUS' traditional direct service model, these efforts forward our mission to partner with offenders and communities to create stronger lives and safer communities in a logical, effective, highly leveraged way. We expect AMICUS to be involved in many additional training and consulting projects in the coming years.

radius

Terry has helped me to know how I was really feeling on the inside, and then she helps me to say it in way that people would listen to me. Then I can get the help that I needed. I have always used my anger and violence to get what I wanted and that wouldn't work for me and I would hurt other people. I didn't think there was any other way to tell people things. Terry showed me there is. I don't have to be so mad all the time, cuss people out and push them away. Terry showed me that not everyone will hurt me or leave me. She always gives me hope, and I do know people care no matter what I do or say. I don't have to be pissed off at the world.

--Letter from RADIUS participant at Woodland Hills, 2005

*It really helped me in my problems/situation. . . . I learned to communicate better with my female peers. . . . I learned I can get along with others besides Hmong. . . . I learned it is better to deal with things than just to hold it all in. . . . I learned I can be in a bad position but I can get through it and learn about it, learn a lesson. . . . **I learned that I am important and girls are not that bad.***

--Comments from Ramsey County girls, 2006

RADIUS PROGRAM

New name, new sites, new energy

In 2000, AMICUS used research on girls' needs plus the principles of restorative justice to launch one of the few programs nationwide that is designed from the ground up to meet the needs of girls. Since it was first implemented to work with serious and chronic female juvenile offenders committed to the commissioner of corrections, AMICUS' programs for girls have spread. AMICUS began offering services to girls on probation in Ramsey County in 2003, and found the girls' program model (consisting of weekly Girls Groups led by an experienced counselor, individual counseling to address trauma and ongoing issues, restorative justice support circles, and support and referral services) to be equally effective with this lower-risk population.

The RADIUS program is thriving today, and the past two years have shown continued growth and recognition for the program. The RADIUS program as a whole underwent several exciting changes:

- **Developed new name and logo.** Thanks to a generous in-kind donation by Spyglass Creative Group, AMICUS' "Girls Restorative Justice Program" became RADIUS in 2006. The name is designed to evoke the girl-centered nature of the program, which helps girls develop strength that radiates from within and surrounds them with circles of adults who care for them, support them, and provide relationship-based accountability. The new name establishes a solid "brand identity" for RADIUS as AMICUS continues to spread the model.
- **Gained national exposure.** AMICUS presented the RADIUS model at three national corrections conferences: the National Workshop on Adult and Juvenile Female Offenders, the American Corrections Association conference, and the Women and Corrections conference. Three girls from the program participated as panelists to standing-room only crowds. AMICUS also distributed many copies of its paper sharing learnings from the RADIUS programs, [From Corrections to Connections](#).
- **Provided training and consulting on working with girls.** RADIUS staff trained Ramsey County Juvenile Detention Center staff in gender-responsive philosophy, which ultimately helped lead to an expanded partnership with Ramsey County (see below). Even more exciting, AMICUS convened a group of juvenile justice staff and nonprofit agencies in fall 2005 to energize providers in the Arrowhead region around the needs of girls. As an outgrowth of these discussions, AMICUS provided extensive technical assistance to help Duluth-based nonprofit Men as Peacemakers develop a community-based program for girls (similar to the Ramsey County model). This replication of the RADIUS model launched

services for 8 girls in September 2006. RADIUS staff also met with Blue Earth County's new "Girls Task Force" in spring 2006 to share AMICUS' expertise with girls and help the task force address gaps.

The RADIUS program also continues to innovate and adapt at both of its established sites—the Ramsey County program and the "state girls" program based at the Woodland Hills residential facility in Duluth. The past two years saw tremendous innovation and growth in the RADIUS-Ramsey program. RADIUS-Ramsey served a total of 73 girls in 2005-2006, with seven "Girls Group" sessions, individual counseling for most girls, and one family restorative justice circle. Key accomplishments included:

- ┆ **Began new partnership with the Ramsey County Juvenile Detention Center (JDC).** A 2005 pilot project offered a weekly "Girl's Group" to over 100 additional girls staying at the JDC. JDC staff reported a dramatic change in the atmosphere on the unit, and evaluations from girls were extremely positive. Thanks to this success, girls at the JDC began receiving full RADIUS services through a new "JDC to Community" program in July 2006. This program begins during a short stay in the JDC and continues seamlessly when girls return to probation status. Especially with the recent loss of residential-based capacity for girls (closure of the St. Croix camps), Ramsey County staff are excited to have this option for girls who may need a little time out-of-home. The JDC program has a capacity of 8 girls at a time and is expected to serve up to 100 additional girls in 2006-2007 (more than doubling the size of the former probation-based program).
- ┆ **Added and sustained partnerships.** With the Ramsey County program now in its third year of operation, the high level of trust and partnership between RADIUS and JDC/probation staff has resulted in many opportunities for consultation and cooperation to better meet the needs of girls in Ramsey County. The RADIUS-Ramsey program director started a newsletter on girls' issues in 2005, developed a brochure to promote the RADIUS program in 2006, and attends weekly meetings with juvenile probation staff (with whom she shares an office). In 2006, RADIUS-Ramsey added new partnerships with Neighborhood House to provide volunteer opportunities for girls and continued to partner with Ramsey County Community Corrections and Birds and Bees.
- ┆ **Enriched program through creative technology projects.** Beginning in 2005 and continuing in 2006 with the support of Best Buy, girls RADIUS-Ramsey participated in a group projects to give voice to their experiences. Few of these girls have experience with technology, which limits their options. In 2005, girls produced a talent show, and in 2006, they are working on a film project. These experiences have bonded

girls together, increased program participation, helped girls learn to work with others of different backgrounds, and given girls valuable experience with technology. Purchases of computer workstations also created a center where girls could work on homework, search for jobs, and more.

Plans for RADIUS-Ramsey in the next year include adding a parent education group and a RADIUS graduates program as a more formalized ongoing support for girls.

2005 data suggest the RADIUS-Ramsey program continues to be extremely effective. Completion rates are high at 77%, and the girls who complete the program do extremely well. 94% of the girls who successfully completed the RADIUS-Ramsey program in 2005 had no new petitions in the first six months after discharge (in contrast, 60% of unsuccessful participants had no new petitions). The program has produced even sharper reductions in long-term out-of-home placement, with 100% of participants staying out of placement for one year after discharge (vs. 80% going to placement who did not complete the program).

RADIUS' "state girls" program, sited at the Woodland Hills residential facility in Duluth, has also seen some changes in the past two years. In response to the high risk and need levels among these girls, RADIUS-State has a very strong emphasis on trauma, restorative justice, and the needs of victims. The number of official "state girls" who have been committed to the Commissioner is fairly small, generally only two or three girls at any one time. However, RADIUS has also served many county girls residing at Woodland Hills (and the occasional boy), for a total of 61 girls served by the RADIUS –State program over the course of the year.

Increases in the numbers of girls served led to the creation of two separate group formats for girls in spring of 2006, a Trauma group which all girls attend, and a smaller, closed Survivors group that deals intensively with sexual violence. Both groups teach girls better coping and day-to-day survival skills and bring them toward an understanding of the trauma they have caused to their victims. Individual trauma counseling also remains a cornerstone of the program. In both 2005 and 2006, RADIUS coordinated a Silent Walkthrough in coordination with Duluth's Take Back the Night event, during which all the girls (and some boys) at Woodland Hills posted artwork, poems and stories of how violence and sexual violence has affected them.

RADIUS-State also places considerable emphasis on restorative justice circles. Beginning in 2005, AMICUS began recruiting and training a pool of "Circle Keepers" across the state to cover the wide geographical area served and spread the intensive work of family contact, and this setup has worked well. RADIUS-State provided seven Circles in FY 2005-2006, including one celebratory circle

for a girl's completion of the program, four family circles to discuss transition and ongoing issues, and two internal victim-offender circles arising from violent incidents at the facility. Two external victim-offender circles (in high-profile cases involving a fatality) are currently in process. Though many more Circles are explored than actually convened, the Circle process is transformational for those who do participate and effective in helping these high-need, high-risk girls and families make progress.

Overall, 2005 was an exciting year for the RADIUS programs. AMICUS is developing a reputation for expertise and excellence in services to girls, and many more girls are getting the services they both need and deserve. AMICUS is committed to continuing its model programs, as well as to providing statewide education, consulting and technical assistance to help more communities meet the needs of girls.

reconnect

AMICUS helped me with everything. Ruth helped with housing, made sure I had furniture for my home, found me money to help me move into my home. Being incarcerated before, people didn't want to rent to me, so I had to pay a lot of money just to get in and AMICUS helped me get the money AMICUS will support you and stand by your side no matter what. They call people to help you--get you housing, get you medical care, get you food, get you everything. I love them. If it wasn't for them, my ass would be completely out. There is nothing they don't do well.

--Former offender H.B., 2006

RECONNECT

Record numbers of offenders seek help with transition

Now in its 20th year, RECONNECT provides offenders with much needed referrals to help them secure ID, employment, housing, relapse prevention, family services, clothing, and much more. The most notable development over the past two years was once again skyrocketing growth: 92 in September 2002; 209 in September 2003; 349 in September 2004; 471 in September 2005. RECONNECT had 4,147 walk-ins in fiscal 2004-2005—and that doesn't even include the others who phoned or wrote. For the fiscal year just completed in June 2006, RECONNECT had over 7,600 contacts from approximately 5,100 clients (for purposes of scale, the total number of inmates released from Minnesota state prisons was 6,857 in 2005.) The volume is truly unbelievable. Record numbers of offenders are being released, and more and more offenders are turning to RECONNECT for help.

The past two years have also seen an increase in the number of barriers faced by RECONNECT clients. About 1 in 10 inmates in Minnesota's state prison system today is a sex offender. These clients face even more difficulty finding job and housing than murderers. RECONNECT staff continue to work with the sex offender treatment program at MCF-Lino Lakes to make sure sex offenders who are released to the community have all the resources possible to build stable, productive lives.

RECONNECT outreach efforts in 2005-2006 included:

- **Participated in challenge seminar** in spring 2006 to discuss employment and housing. 35 sex offenders involved in community-based treatment attended.
- **Visited sex offender program at MCF-Lino Lakes quarterly** to promote RECONNECT services and share guidelines for finding housing and employment.
- **Took part in Transitions Fairs** at MCF-Moose Lake, MCF-Faribault, and MCF-Lino Lakes.
- **Participated in monthly transition task force meetings** with DOC staff and other community providers.
- **Took part in holiday toy distribution** of about 300 handmade wooden toys, dolls, and knitted outfits from TLC, many of which were made in correctional facilities. In fact, some clients who picked up toys

said, "Hey, I helped make these!" It is always nice when efforts like that come full circle.

AMICUS has responded to RECONNECTS huge increase in volume by getting creative with free staffing. Veteran RECONNECT volunteer Mary Maas (winner of the 2004 Virginia McKnight Binger Award in Human Service) provides outstanding support to clients. AMICUS has also assigned interns both to assist clients directly through RECONNECT and to assist with administrative tasks, freeing up staff time. Additional volume may require further creativity or the hiring of additional RECONNECT staff.

men of rafiki

The AMICUS program has been a big help in terms of finding jobs. They always have good work leads. Ruth looks it up on the computer and sends me leads. She does the hard work for you. They also helped getting bus cards, clothing, and personal hygiene.

I've worked with Eugene for the last three years, and I'm still working with him. He has helped me keep a level head, he's always willing to help out, he's always available. He referred me to Ruth Johnson to get furniture. Eugene has been a great mentor for me. He even helped me with getting a driver's license. I used his car to go take the test and I took the test in his car. This was one of the most personal things anyone has ever done for me. Every time I call AMICUS, they've always been willing to help me the best way they can. I've never had a bad experience with them.

--Former offender M.J., 2006

MEN OF RAFIKI

Mature program model helps offenders create stability and success

MEN OF RAFIKI was founded in 1995 in partnership with the Minneapolis Urban League. The goal was to develop a transition program specifically for African-American men that would address their unique needs. Over the years, the program has expanded to include a 13-week prerelease class addressing identity as an African-American man, what it means to be part of a community, and life skills; individual transition planning and post-release support from the program coordinator; a post-release support group; and volunteer re-entry mentors. The program model has stabilized and delivers excellent results, year after year.

June 2006 marked the graduation of the 28th MEN OF RAFIKI class. Three classes graduated in 2006 for a total of 92 men served. Highlights of the year include the continuing strength of the pre-release class. The level of honesty, openness, and hunger for change are remarkable in a prison environment. The bonding of the inmates and their relationships with each other as "MEN OF RAFIKI" is important to the program's success. The spirit of RAFIKI even permeates onto the prison yard, where program members use positive confrontation to maintain the spirit of RAFIKI and hold each other immediately accountable. Men look forward to coming to RAFIKI to talk about themselves as more than just their crime.

Many alumni of the program who have been released also give back to the new guys coming out by serving as informal mentors (they sometimes call themselves the "police") and attending the community support group. A change in venue for the support group has revitalized it, with solid attendance and some guys bringing along friends from the community. It is usually a small gathering, but those who attend are invariably successful, securing good jobs, forming healthy personal relationships, and getting off paper.

Another strength this year was in the quality and effectiveness of the mentors. Many have "re-upped" and show remarkable commitment. In particular, the mentor network has really helped the men hook up with jobs. More mentors are needed because every participant wants one.

sisters helping sisters

I maintained contact with Gwen at least once a week since September of 2004. AMICUS helped with clothing, bus cards, household stuff when I moved – they've been an all-round great support. I can call Gwen pretty much any hour of day or night if I need someone to talk to. There have been some crises in my family life and Gwen has been there – she's been wonderful. I have participated in some of AMICUS' call-to-action forums. There is a panel of us, mostly ex-offenders, who will go and speak to different programs in the community.

All the staff at AMICUS, and I've had the opportunity to work with all of them at one point or another, are real supportive of us coming out of prison. Above and beyond the call of duty. Transportation-wise, Gwen has been good in this area – for groceries or job seeking or appointments. They were good – AMICUS was always supportive of me.

--Former offender C.S., 2006

SISTERS HELPING SISTERS

Personal empowerment plus mentoring and staff support lead to change

Founded in 1996, SISTERS HELPING SISTERS assists women offenders at MCF-Shakopee, supporting them both before and after release as they develop a new outlook, new confidence, and a positive, healthy lifestyle. This program, too, grew in 2005 and 2006. Seventy-four women were active in the SISTERS HELPING SISTERS program in 2005. Its 10-week pre-release class, Personal Empowerment, proved so popular that participants repeatedly asked for "Personal Empowerment II." AMICUS responded to this need by adding an additional class this year, "Sisters Helping Sisters Connect." The Personal Empowerment class lays the foundation for change by working on self-value, self-esteem, identity, relationships, and self-care. Sisters Helping Sisters Connect follows up as a work group for women to set goals, make plans, and prepare for release. Satisfaction rates are consistently close to 100% for both groups, and classes are full. The program also provides one-on-one support from staff both before and after release to plan and implement a successful transition to the community, as well as matching women with re-entry mentors. The program struggled with finding enough mentors in both 2005 and 2006.

SISTERS HELPING SISTERS also restarted a community-based support group in 2006. Though attendance is light, the group is very valued by those who attend. One participant takes a two-hour bus ride from St. Paul to get there.

2005 was an exciting year for Men of Rafiki and Sisters Helping Sisters because we got the chance to take another close look at their outcomes. Because of reporting requirements for a grant, outcomes for SISTERS HELPING SISTERS and MEN OF RAFIKI were tracked together. The programs' outcomes are similar for several key indicators of successful re-entry. Of the active participants in 2005, 67% of those eligible to work were employed or in school, with an additional 16% confirmed by staff to be actively looking for work. 77% had stable housing in a transitional or treatment facility, with family, or in their own house or apartment. Of all program participants, including those who dropped out or were inactive, 71% remained in the community with no new charges or parole violations. An additional 10% had a minor parole violation, but are still in the community and moving forward with the program. With the successful of recent mentor recruitment and training efforts, we expect success rates to continue to grow.

one to one

I've been visiting with my volunteer, Jack Jarpe, for almost five years now. AMICUS' matching system is right on. I couldn't hand-make a better friend. It took a couple of years to be assigned a volunteer but the wait was well worth it.

After many years of incarceration most of my family has moved away. It can be very easy to get lost inside when there is little outside communication. AMICUS has given me the opportunity for that not to happen.

The advice I received from my volunteer has made me a much better person. I can't even begin to list the numerous ways the AMICUS program has helped me. I can tell you that without AMICUS, I would not be the person I've become.

--ONE-TO-ONE participant T.K., 2006

ONE TO ONE

Still changing lives after almost 40 years

AMICUS' founding initiative, the ONE TO ONE program, has matched trained volunteers with motivated inmates for 39 years. This unique program was born in a conversation between a judge, Neil Riley, a former offender, Ted Herman, and a successful businessman, Ben Berger, all of whom believed there must be a better way to help offenders build new lives. ONE TO ONE stays true to that vision today, with inmates and volunteers matched for visits and exchanges of phone calls, letters, support, and friendship.

The past two years were good ones for ONE TO ONE. AMICUS continues to have a great need for more male volunteers, and some offenders continue to be difficult to match (notably sex offenders). However, 30 new matches were made in 2005 and 20 in 2006 for a total of 137 active volunteers. This is compared to 38 matches in 2004 when the Call to Action events started increasing recruitment. The program director reports that this year's matches were of very strong quality, with solid, committed volunteers and offenders who are really sincere about their desire to change. There has been more attention to the criminal justice system in the press so that has also helped raise awareness. In addition to faith community connections and Call to Action Events, AMICUS continues to advertise for volunteers in four newspapers, and also gets many volunteers through word of mouth.

For those inmates who do not have a match with an AMICUS friend, ONE TO ONE provides other opportunities in the same spirit of open friendship. Seasoned ONE TO ONE volunteers continue to visit gravely ill offenders in the infirmary at MCF-Oak Park Heights and offenders in the segregation unit at MCF-Stillwater. Their visits bring a bit of human warmth to some cold and lonely places. The ONE TO ONE program director also continues a monthly support group at MCF-Stillwater, Stillwater Connections. With between 12-28 inmates attending each session, the program has grown quite a bit in the past two years. It provides much-needed positive contact with the outside world for inmates who are on ONE TO ONE's wait list—or who just want all the positive influence they can get.

ONE TO ONE was also involved in some special initiatives in the past two years. AMICUS participated in the "Walk for Justice," a fundraising and community awareness event organized by the Headwaters Foundation. Several former program participants walked for AMICUS, along with volunteers. Together with numerous other social justice groups, the walkers helped promote justice and opportunity for all. ONE TO ONE also got involved with the Community Restoration Collaborative, a group of several agencies and faith groups working toward the goal of restorative justice. In 2005, the Collaborative sponsored a "Get Out the Vote" effort, which helped over 800 former offenders who were "off

paper” restore their voting rights. Two were former MEN OF RAFIKI participants who were able to vote for the first time. AMICUS also hosted a volunteer recognition event, a viewing of the play “Rollin on the T.O.B.A. at the Penumbra Theater in May 28, 2005, attracting 180 people.

ONE TO ONE continues to thrive because of its dedicated volunteers, many of whom take on new matches once their friend is released and doing well. AMICUS continues to have a wait list of 117 offenders. Through our new partnership efforts, we hope to build a growing volunteer pool so all waiting inmates can be matched with an AMICUS friend.

volunteers and interns

I visited Candi in Shakopee for 2 years and found it to be a wonderful experience. I looked forward to going every other Friday and hearing about her experiences in life, kids and hopes for her future. Watching her grow from her mistakes and wanting to make a better life for herself and her kids was inspiring to me. She has been out of prison for over a year and we still stay in touch.

--ONE TO ONE volunteer J.W.

My experience at AMICUS has completely evolved my thinking. I didn't really know much about the transition process. There should be more for prisoners to be able to make a second chance at life. Even though they have done their time, they continue to suffer from stigma by employers and landlords checking their backgrounds and denying them because of what they have done in their past. They don't get to become good citizens by having a good job and good place to live. They are just pushed out into society, pretty much set up for failure. Instead of a revolving door we should have an electric door with a handicapped button on it--because that is how much help these people need.

--AMICUS intern C.D.

Volunteers and Interns Numbers are up, more still needed

One of AMICUS' board-directed outcomes is to increase the number of volunteers working with offenders in transition. The past two years have shown an increase in the number and the training level of such volunteers. AMICUS' new partnership with the Greater Minneapolis and St. Paul Councils of Churches, the Call to Action events, and relationships with individual faith communities have increased the number of people interested in becoming a ONE TO ONE volunteer as well as those willing to be re-entry mentors. 97 people were active as ONE TO ONE volunteers in 2006, and 41 were active as re-entry mentors. AMICUS could easily have used 50 ONE-TO-ONEs and 100 mentors, and an even larger volunteer pool would be useful to promote good matches. AMICUS' excellent three-session re-entry mentor training program (developed in 2004 and 2005) is probably one reason for the increased popularity and effectiveness of the re-entry mentors. AMICUS will continue its successful networking with faith-based organizations and continue to seek out new partnerships. Many of our volunteer referrals still come through word of mouth.

AMICUS' attempts to recruit more interns, however, were spectacularly successful in 2005-2006. Prior to 2005, AMICUS had perhaps one intern every two years. This year, AMICUS hosted 13. Interns came to AMICUS from Metro State, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Argosy, and Macalester, stayed for a semester or a year, and did invaluable work for AMICUS. Interns helped offenders connect with services through RECONNECT and spoke to community groups.

One of the most exciting things about AMICUS' 2006 interns is how many of them were ex-offenders themselves. Their journey from offending to attending college was an inspiration, and some of these interns could well develop into talented AMICUS leaders some day. AMICUS is very excited about the work interns have done in 2006 and pleased at the chance to influence the thinking of so many young people training for jobs in corrections, social service, counseling, and the business community. AMICUS will continue recruiting interns from colleges next year.

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