



Case Document

Problem Statement

Last year, criminal courts in Chattanooga sentenced 523 residents under its jurisdiction to serve time in Tennessee prisons – and Tennessee prisons released approximately the same number to the Chattanooga area. Although this is a relatively small segment of the total offender population, it has a disproportionate effect on public safety. In fact, according to a recent Bureau of Justice Statistics report, 5 in 6 prisoners will be arrested within 9 years of their release. They are arrested an average of 5 times each. And more than half of these arrests happen after most recidivism studies end (i.e., years 4 through 9). This pattern of failure accounts for an estimated 2,615 arrests in the Chattanooga area every year, significantly undermining public safety and well-being.

Except for a small release center for incarcerated women operated by The Next Door and several private providers of sex-offender treatment, there are no specialized services for released prisoners in the Chattanooga area – no halfway houses (not a single one), no community resource centers, and no day reporting centers. By comparison, there are 7 halfway houses in Knoxville, 15 in Memphis, and 25 in Nashville, where there are also numerous nonprofit organizations dedicated to prison reentry as well as state-funded community resource centers and day reporting centers.

In a city that is internationally known for collaboration and transformation, the absence of prisoner reentry services is a distinct reality that does not reflect the sense of place that is Chattanooga. It is unnecessary. And with your help, we can correct it.

Mission

Everyone deserves a second chance. However, second chances can be hard to find for former offenders and their loved ones. Through grassroots efforts and community initiatives that are restorative in nature and that provide realistic hope for those who have been affected by the criminal justice system, Chattanooga Endeavors creates true second chances for men, women, and their loved ones to overcome the stigma of incarceration, to regain purpose in their lives, and to build a better tomorrow for all.

Goals

Federal funding for our work-readiness program in Chattanooga stopped in 2011 – effectively ending the only reentry resource for state prisoners returning to the area. Although we have continued our mission through a community outreach program to area residents who are serving time in state prison; the simple truth is, without our work-readiness program, most are left to their own devices when they return home.

In achieving our mission of second chances, therefore, our most pressing goal is to close the wide gap in reentry services for released prisoners – in a way that is both informed by credible research about what works and guided by Christian principles of social justice. The lasting impact we hope to see for our community is a higher standard of public safety and well-being in Chattanooga as measured by a 40 percent reduction in the number of times former offenders are arrested during the nine years following their release from Tennessee prisons.

To achieve this overarching goal, we are committed to the following:

- Universal access. We will contact every Tennessee state prisoner from the Chattanooga area within three months of their entering prison and invite them to stay in touch with us through letter writing and visitation with a trained volunteer in our Stephen's Table program. (525 a year)
- Full enrollment. Of the 525 who we invite to participate in Stephen's Table each year, we will enroll everyone who replies, regardless of the nature of their conviction. (210 a year)
- Release planning & preparation. Of the 210 who enroll in Stephen's Table each year, we will develop reentry plans for 90% during their final three months of incarceration. (189 a year)
- Transitional services. Of the 189 release plans we develop each year, we will assist at least 80% with community-based reentry services when they return to the Chattanooga area. (151 a year)
- Additional Served. In addition to those who entered the program through Stephen's Table at the beginning of their incarceration, we will provide reentry planning and community-based reentry services to at least 100 more who are returning to the Chattanooga area from Tennessee prisons with a combined goal of serving 250 a year.

Current State

The present Case is based on our successful development and operation of a nationally recognized work-readiness training program (2000-2011). The program cost \$759,994 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007. Almost 80% of this amount (\$605,775) was income from contracts through an alternative staffing program. During the same 12-month period, we provided work-readiness training to 305 former offenders, placed 260 in fulltime employment, and provided remunerative work training through our alternative staffing program to 130. Despite our achievements, the program was not sufficiently mature to survive the economic downturn during subsequent years. Therefore, employment services were reduced and eventually terminated in 2011. However, the need for employment and other reentry services has not gone away. In fact, with a steady stream of people returning to the Chattanooga area from prison, the need has become more acute.

In reimagining our services for current realities, we have capitalized on our 30 years of experience putting former offenders to work – adding to our previous model specific programming that addresses other factors that are known to foster repeat crime. (See “Framework” below.)

Our pipeline of participants from prison is in place with Stephen's Table operating at approximately 25% capacity – and we are raising funds now through our Alliance Campaign to complete a comprehensive planning and implementation process for the concepts summarized in this Case Document.



Alliance Campaign

Donations to our Alliance Campaign will be applied to the planning, design, documentation, and implementation of a comprehensive prisoner reentry strategy for the Chattanooga area that is based on our 30 years of experience in the field and the accomplishments of our work-readiness training program. This project will include strategic collaborations among community service providers and outside decision-makers — as well as a Coordinating Council to guide the project, a Citizens League to oversee the outreach to participants, and formal partnerships with Tennessee Department of Correction, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, Chattanooga Police Department, Social Work Office of Research and Public Service at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, and Chattanooga State Technical Community College.

The goal for our Alliance Campaign is \$72,000.

Comprehensive Services

To many people, the relationship between crime and employment is a matter of common sense. However, research tells a more complicated story. Those who remain crime free after prison, in general, have more positive attitudes about employment, get along better with their coworkers, and are more receptive to supervision than their re-offending peers. Not only do these characteristics contribute to success on the job, they are deeply rooted in dispositions that are known to reduce criminal behavior. Punchy slogans like “better off working” and “nothing stops a bullet like a job” are quick to engage the popular imagination – however, evidence about what really works points in a different direction. If they don't already possess characteristics that distance them from crime, it is unlikely that former offenders will develop them on the job.

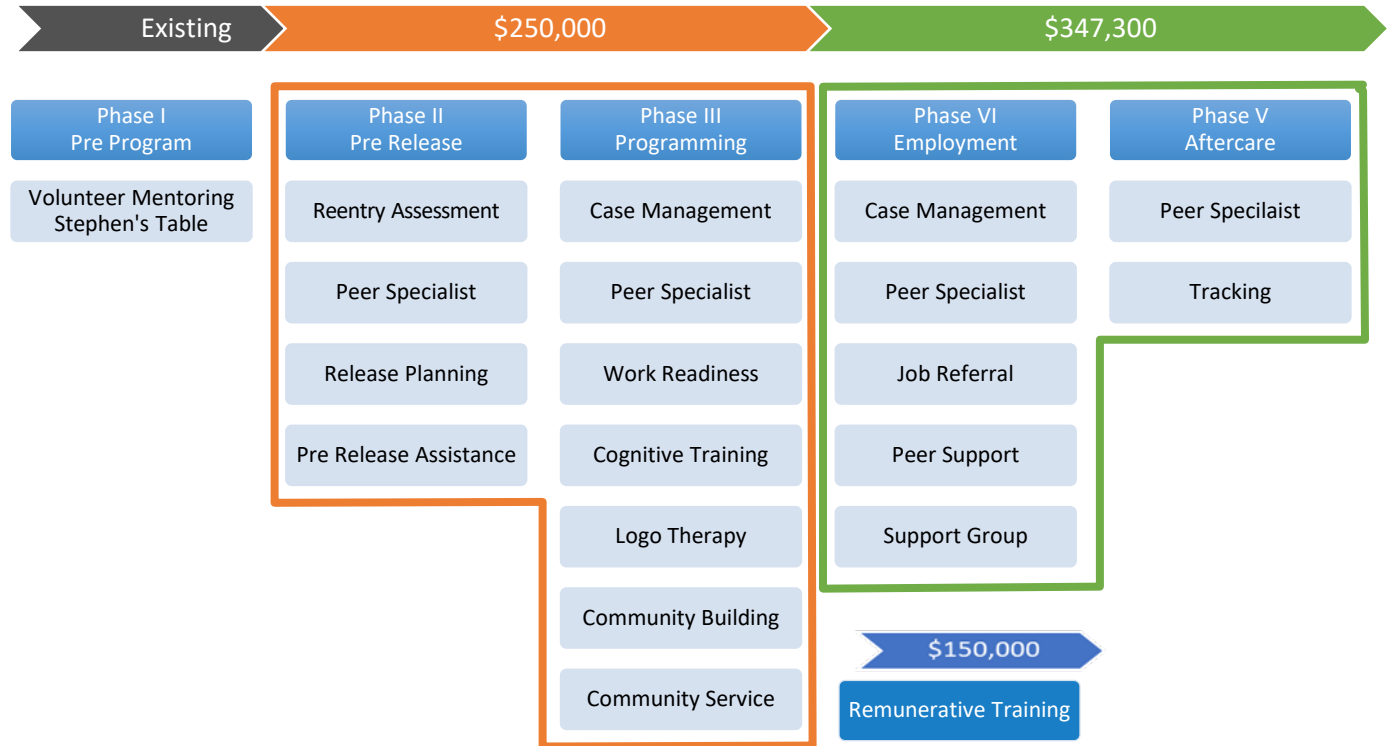
The propositions that will form the training model to be developed for the present project are based on Chattanooga Endeavors' thirty years of experience assisting former offenders to enter the workforce, mounting evidence about what drives crime, and nearly a century of research on the common factors impacting change efforts in counseling and training programs (see “Framework” below).

Through our Stephen's Table program, volunteers establish early contact with Tennessee prisoners from Hamilton County – both developing the pipeline of participants and acting on research that demonstrates that preserving social bonds between prisoners and their hometown reduces recidivism (Phase I). As prisoners enter their final 6 months of incarceration, the relationship established by volunteers is transferred to a professional team which includes a case manager, peer specialist, and parole or probation officer to develop a release plan (Phase II). Participants are released to a combination of case management services to address external influences and training programs which directly address five criminogenic factors – namely, antisocial cognition, antisocial companions, substance abuse, lack of employment, and antisocial recreation (Phase III). When they are work-ready, participants are either referred to unsubsidized employment opportunities with participating employers or they begin remunerative work training assignments with Chattanooga Endeavors. Alternatively, they may enroll in college. Remunerative work training assignments are managed to match the level of services with the level of risk in order to transition participants to the traditional job market in the safest and most efficient way possible (Phase VI). After participants either obtain full time employment or opt for full time education,



services are reduced to periodic tracking by case managers and informal support by peer specialists (Phase V).

In the diagram below, remunerative work training is treated outside the start-up costs of \$347,300 and anticipated in the budget as a second-year cost. The \$150,000 needed funds cashflow for 75 remunerative work training assignments. On average, each assignment requires on-time access to \$2,000 and contributes \$2,500 a year to the organization.



Collaborations

The Tennessee Department of Correction, Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office, and Chattanooga Police Department – along with a research partner at the University of Tennessee and more than a dozen community service providers – have agreed to collaborate with Chattanooga Endeavors to establish the comprehensive reentry services summarized in this case. In addition, we will collaborate with (a) Chattanooga State for manufacturing and OSHA certifications, (b) a close network of employers for remunerative work training, (c) Homeless Coalition for case management, (d) New Horizon Church for donated office and program space, and (e) a business services firm (TBD) for bookkeeping and payroll administration. Service referrals will be made as needed to various providers including Volunteer Behavioral Health, CADAS, Chattanooga Housing Authority, The Partnership, Educational Opportunities, Signal Centers, and Community Kitchen.



Framework

The training model developed is based on the experience of Chattanooga Endeavors assisting former offenders enter the workforce, compelling evidence-based practices which recommend focusing interventions on at least three of the eight most serious criminogenic factors, and nearly a century of research on the four common factors impacting effective helping services.

Contemporary research on recidivism has focused on eight factors that facilitate repeat crime. Gone are the days when reentry programs provided a single intervention. We know now that effective programs address at least one of the top four “criminogenic” factors (antisocial personality, antisocial cognition, antisocial peers, and family or marital stress) and at least two more (substance abuse, unemployment, lack of education, and antisocial leisure or recreation).

Nearly a century of research has demonstrated that the effectiveness of change programs has little to do with what distinguishes one approach from another. Instead, what makes them effective is almost all about what they have in common: (a) They address external factors in the life and environment of their participants, which contributes approximately 40% to the variance in outcomes; (b) they build strong helping alliance, which contributes approximately 30%; (c) the technique or model used achieves its stated goal, which contributes approximately 15%, and (d) they create hope or expectancy with their participants, which also contributes approximately 15%. Both our model and the way we allocate funding aligns with these “common factors.”



Budget

Our budget shows startup costs and three full years of income and expense estimates based on our previous experience managing a similar program. During the startup period, all personnel are contracted, services are established as funds are raised, and the principle focus is on creating the foundation to establish the comprehensive reentry services outlined in this case. During subsequent years, personnel costs are converted to salaries as services are implemented in stages and grant funding is partially offset by revenue from our alternative staffing program. The net income from this program is \$426,410 the third year and is the cornerstone of our sustainability plan.

Income	STARTUP	TOTAL YEAR 1	TOTAL YEAR 2	TOTAL YEAR 3
Gifts	\$ 107,300	\$ 28,250	\$ 73,000	\$ 94,900
Events	\$ 15,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 80,000
Grants	\$ 225,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 300,000
Venture	\$ -	\$ 609,117	\$ 2,001,767	\$ 2,302,032
Total Income	\$ 347,300	\$ 1,367,367	\$ 2,549,767	\$ 2,776,932
Expenses				
Salaries	\$ -	\$ 425,583	\$ 586,000	\$ 574,000
Benefits and taxes for regular employees	\$ -	\$ 56,812	\$ 83,724	\$ 83,724
Remunerative work training payroll	\$ -	\$ 611,616	\$ 1,630,976	\$ 1,875,622
Contract & Professional	\$ 223,800	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
Payroll and grant administration	\$ -	\$ 50,228	\$ 51,118	\$ 51,118
Program expenses	\$ 65,000	\$ 28,455	\$ 32,340	\$ 32,340
Office	\$ 7,100	\$ 21,556	\$ 3,440	\$ 3,440
Telephone	\$ 3,600	\$ 4,260	\$ 3,360	\$ 3,360
IT	\$ 3,250	\$ 18,159	\$ 26,098	\$ 26,098
Postage and shipping		\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Occupancy	\$ 6,500	\$ 16,050	\$ 16,050	\$ 16,050
Public relations	\$ 8,900	\$ 52,081	\$ 14,400	\$ 14,400
Travel	\$ 11,200	\$ 23,673	\$ 20,566	\$ 20,566
Training and conferences	\$ 5,200	\$ 22,151	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Insurance	\$ 3,550	\$ 12,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
Equipment	\$ 9,200	\$ 8,900	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 347,300	\$ 1,364,724	\$ 2,525,271	\$ 2,757,918
Net income minus expenses	\$ -	\$ 2,643	\$ 24,495	\$ 19,014
Cash position	\$ -	\$ 2,643	\$ 27,138	\$ 46,152
New participants served in work readiness training		130	200	200
New participants served in remunerative work training only		64	96	96



Governance

Chattanooga Endeavors is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization with operations exclusive to Chattanooga, Tennessee. The organization is governed by a self-perpetuating, volunteer Board of Trustees with reserved powers assigned to a class of members called the Fellows. The Fellows consist of an equal number of ordained clergy members and ex-prisoners and structurally protect and preserve the organization's essential character and original identity as both Christian and as grassroots. With an emphasis on principles of social justice, the organization engages a highly qualified staff to deliver credible services to eligible beneficiaries regardless of their religious affiliation and in keeping with its long-standing policy of non-discrimination.

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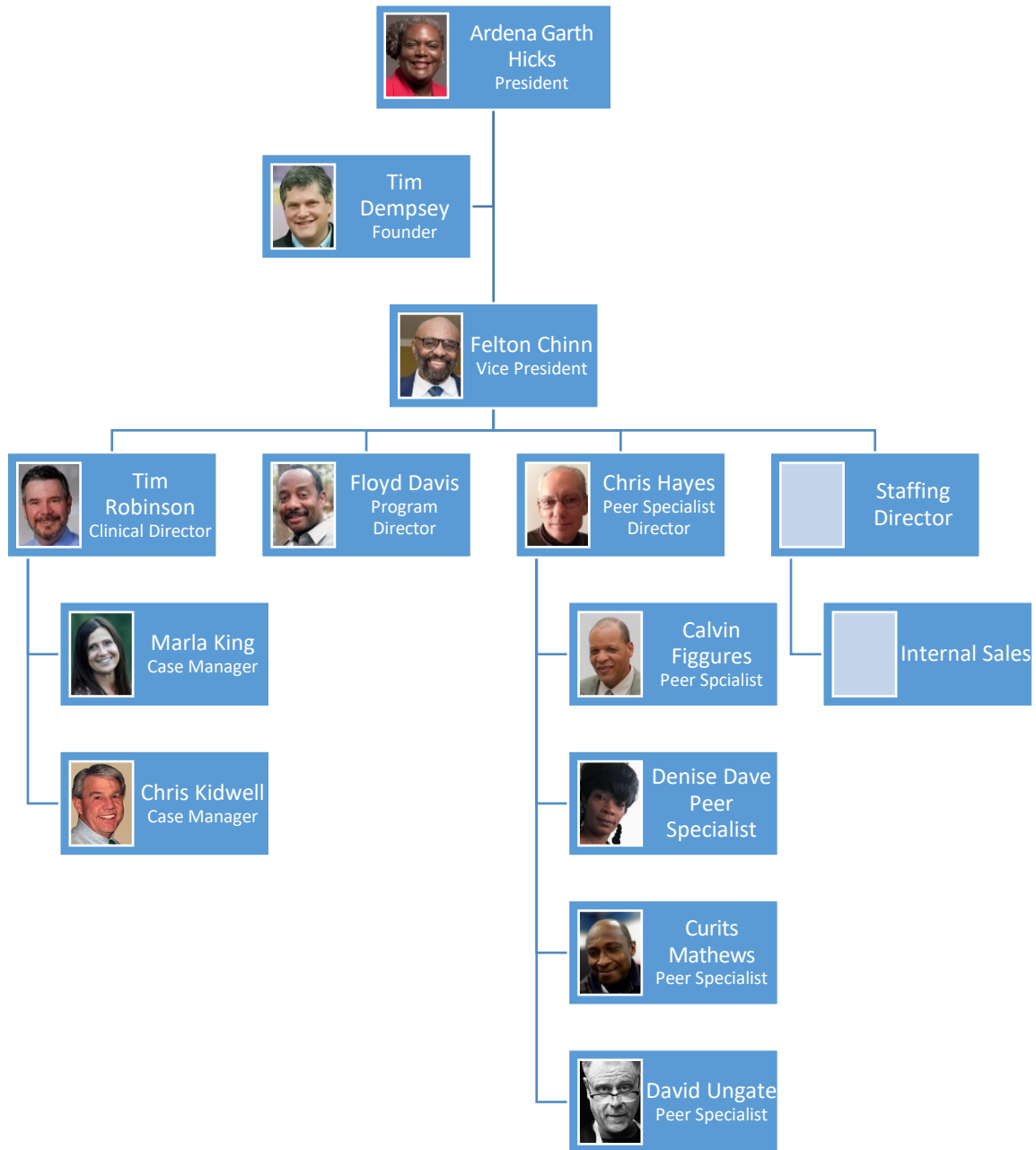
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Staff

Chattanooga Endeavors is a collaboration between people who have made a successful transition from prison to society and ordinary citizens. The organization uses a model of team effectiveness that centers on principles of subsidiarity, restorative justice, stewardship, and community building. Guided by action research, employees with complementary professional, clinical, and lived experience concentrate their efforts on high value outputs that promote a common purpose. The leadership consists of Ardena Garth, Hamilton County Public Defender, 1989-2014; Tim Dempsey, Chattanooga Endeavors Founding Director, 1988-2017; and Felton Chinn, US Navy, Operation Department Chief, 1974-2000.



Fundraising

For fundraising purposes, Chattanooga Endeavors is referred to as a “Policy Innovator.” The assumption is that we provide a significant new solution to a problem that is not currently viewed as a core government responsibility. Funding for programs like ours usually comes from legislative appropriations and are championed by high-level government officials. In fact, this was how we were able to convert a small half-way house in Chattanooga into a nationally recognized model for prisoner reentry.

The clear advantage of being a Policy Innovator is that adequate funding can be gained through a single grant or contract. The clear disadvantage is that funding priorities are subject to change with every election.

Although pursuing government funding may be necessary to establish the level of programming needed in Chattanooga, we have no interest in becoming dependent on the public purse. Instead, we will use a related business income strategy to reduce our need for government funding in the short term and build an endowment to become fully independent in the long term. A related income strategy for a nonprofit simply means that the organization runs a business that is related to its mission – such as using a staffing model to assist former offenders attain gainful employment, in our case.

We will continue to pursue government and private grants and contracts even after we are able to operate independently. However, these will be for projects and not for overhead or core services.

History

The premise for most of our work is that helping former offenders obtain employment that leads to a liveable wage is a simple and cost-effective way to prevent repeat crime and reincarceration – provided that the negative influences in their lives are adequately addressed.

- 1988 Establishes Dismas House as the first reentry program in Chattanooga
- 1997 Launches Endeavors for work readiness training with Private Industry Council
- 1998 Initiatives Community Building Workshops with new Orleans’s Project Return
- 1999 Incorporates as Chattanooga Endeavors
- 2000 Receives first BJA grant
- 2001 Closes Dismas House
- 2005 Launches CEI Works as an alternative staffing program
- 2008 Launches Stephen’s Table as a volunteer outreach to prisoners
- 2011 Ends services except for Stephen’s Table
- 2016 Reconfigures board to relaunch work readiness and staffing programs



Organization Information

Chattanooga Endeavors is a charitable organization recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. To the extent allowable by law, donations are tax-deductible and will help us to continue our work to provide second chances to former offenders and their families.

For more information, contact Tim Dempsey at tdempsey@chattanoogaendeavors.org or (423) 902-6695

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