



# INSIDE OUT REENTRY COMMUNITY

FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

## HOMECOMING: REENTRY SUMMIT

**Homecoming: Reentry Summit is on October 17th and 18th** at St Andrew Presbyterian Church, 140 Gathering Place Lane, Iowa City. The goals of this summit are to raise awareness about the barriers returning citizens face and to build a supportive community through education about criminal justice, collateral consequences, and reentry.

**All events are free.** On the 18th, attendees can bring their own lunch or purchase a box lunch with their registration.

**Thursday, Oct. 17th, 6 pm - 8:30 pm** will include: an overview on reentry in Iowa from the Director of the Department of Corrections, Beth Skinner; a presentation from Sean Pica, Executive Director of Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison; and a voting rights panel including the legal counsel from the Governor's office.

**Friday, Oct. 18th, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm**  
Award-winning author **Mitchell S. Jackson** will make **our keynote address.** His debut novel *The Residue Years* received wide critical praise.



Mitchell S. Jackson

Jackson is the winner of a Whiting Award and the Ernest R. Gaines Prize for Literary Excellence. His nonfiction book *Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family* was published in the spring of 2019. Formerly incarcerated himself, Jackson is also a social and criminal justice advocate who, as part of his outreach, visits prisons and youth facilities in the United States and abroad.

## IOWA CITY HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

Inside Out is honored to receive the Bill Reagan Community Award for contributions to human rights by an organization from the City of Iowa City Human Rights Commission. We were nominated for the award by volunteer Polly Nichols Marshall.

The award will be presented at the 36th Annual Human Rights Awards Breakfast on Wednesday, October 23rd at 7:15 a.m at the Hilton Garden Inn Iowa City.

Other Friday events will include-- presentations on higher education in prison and its impacts on reentry; combating discrimination in housing for returning citizens; racial and gender based inequities that individuals face when returning to the community; as well as a panel about restorative justice, behavioral health, and healing.

This summit is made possible through funding from the City of Iowa City Social Justice and Racial Equity Grant and partnerships with the University of Iowa College of Law and University of Iowa Liberal Arts Beyond Bars.

## NEW GROUP: COFFEE AND CONNECTIONS

In July, Inside Out started offering a peer led support group for those in all stages of recovery. The weekly group is called Coffee and Connections, and is facilitated by IO staff Rich Mathias.

Inspired by Johann Hari's famous TED Talk, the group is based on the idea that the opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection. The group meets weekly to share successes, discuss challenges and show peer support for others in the group.

Various topics we've discussed include the criminalization of drug use, how trauma impacts addiction, the impact of substances on the developing mind, and relapse planning.



Group meets on Friday mornings  
from 10:30 - 11:30 am

## PAROLE/ REENTRY SIMULATIONS



On Friday, Sept. 20th we held a simulation at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. The program was sponsored by the City of Iowa City's Social Justice and Racial Equity Grant. Developed by the US Attorney's Office, this simulation aims to help community members gain greater understanding of what it is like to return home after incarceration. We received great feedback from attendees. Thank you to IO volunteers, Richard Grugin, the UI College of Law and UI Labb for volunteering at the event.

On November 18th, the City of North Liberty is hosting our next simulation at the North Liberty Recreation Center. If you have not attended a simulation yet, be sure to sign up to experience first hand the difficult challenges returning citizens in our community face when they come home.

## INSIDE OUT SPOTLIGHT: RICH MATHIAS

We'd like to introduce Rich Mathias, the newest team member at Inside Out. Rich joined us in June and is our full time case manager directly serving the Inside Out community.



Rich is a Returning Citizen and a Peer Support Specialist who has also worked as a Peer Recovery Coach and a Parent Partner with DHS' Parent Partner Program. He is passionate about supporting parents and families, and giving individuals hope after incarceration. Stop by the office and say hello!

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Inside Out is seeking dedicated volunteers, mentors and board members. If you're passionate about reentry and criminal justice reform and would like to donate your time email us at: [insideoutreentry@gmail.com](mailto:insideoutreentry@gmail.com).