

# The Inside-Out Center NEWSLETTER

The Inside-Out Center at Temple University  
International Headquarters of The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program®

Volume 3, Number 2

2012  
Summer

## Inside-Out Growth: Networking and Various Shifts

This is yet another jam-packed edition of the Inside-Out newsletter – because, as usual, there's quite a bit going on! Here's a thumbnail sketch of some of the happenings from the past few months.

We now have 374 Inside-Out instructors who have taken the training, 64 of whom took part over this summer, coming from schools across North America. The numbers just keep growing – and we've been hearing from so many of the instructors who took the training in 2011 who have already taught this past year. Their stories illustrate the excitement they feel in bringing this new teaching approach back to their schools.

You will see, in some of the articles in this edition, an interesting and exciting new approach to networking

Inside-Out across the continent. Outside members of Michigan's think tank, the Theory Group, took an 8-hour road trip to visit the Graterford Think Tank... and then, representatives of the Walls to Bridges Collective (the Canadian think tank) took a trip to visit Michigan's Theory Group... and then, Erin Howley, representing the Graterford Think Tank, took a trip to Canada to visit the Walls to Bridges Collective. That's a lot of miles that were covered – and a ton of spirit and good will that was shared. It's the beginning of a new dimension of our connecting that is making the network stronger and ever more vital, even as it expands geographically.

And there has been movement in our staff, as well. Simone Davis, who has been working with us on development, will be focusing her efforts now on building up Inside-Out in Canada. She has already tilled the soil there over the past two years, as evidenced by the growth already occurring. We are now welcoming Tricia Way, who will be stepping in to assist us in fundraising and grant writing.

Also, Erin Howley has moved from full-time to part-time status as our program coordinator. You will see, from the interview with Erin in this issue, the impact that she has had on our program – an impact that will be felt for many years to come.

### Flat Line to Vital Signs

It was over. Damn! No signs of life.  
No students. No readings.  
No exercises.  
No assignments. No professor.  
Back to hell. A nightmare.  
A mere number.  
Wait...  
An invitation. Wow!  
A new beginning.  
New students. New readings.  
New assignments.  
Professors. Conferences.  
Educate. Influence. Change.  
Time to be an Agent.  
A change agent.

– Eric (Michigan Theory Group)

Erin is astonishingly skilled in so many ways, and has helped us immeasurably in putting structure to much of what we do. We wouldn't have the level of organization that we have today without her, not to mention the understanding of how so many parts of our program are connected and subtly interwoven. We are lucky to still have Erin with us, even in a reduced capacity, for a little while longer.

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One of the working groups in Inside-Out Training #23, held in Michigan this past summer.

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program® promotes social change through transformative education. It is an initiative directed at deepening the conversation – and transforming ways of thinking – about crime, justice, and related social issues. Founded in 1997, and a national (now, international) program since 2004, Inside-Out brings college students and incarcerated individuals together as peers in a classroom setting that emphasizes dialogue, critical thinking, collaboration, and the creation of new ideas.



## Inside-Out Growth: Networking and Various Shifts *continued*

Finally, I'd like to draw your attention to an in-depth interview with Kay Harris, who just recently retired from the Criminal Justice Department at Temple. Kay and I have worked closely together for over 15 years and she has been involved in more dimensions of Inside-Out than anyone I can think of. Kay is one of the brightest, most capable – and most deeply humble – people I have ever known. She is inordinately (indeed, indefatigably) dedicated to Inside-Out – and has literally been there from the beginning. As department chair when Inside-Out began in 1997, she helped me to think through the many intricacies of making such a class happen.

Then, in 2002, when we decided in the Think Tank that it was time to make the program into a national model, it was Kay who suggested that I apply for a justice fellowship from the Soros Foundation. The rest, as they say, is history – and Kay has been part of that history ever since. Even though she's retired from teaching, Kay knows that there's no retiring from Inside-Out! I look forward to continuing to work with her for many years to come. She's a force of nature – not like a wave that would crash and overwhelm, but rather, like the subtle, powerful undertow that guides us where we need to go.

– Lori Pompa  
Founder and Director  
The Inside-Out  
Prison Exchange Program

## Erin Howley Moving On From Role at Inside-Out Center, But Remaining Involved

### **What is your role with Inside-Out?**

I've been the Program Coordinator with Inside-Out for the past four years. I took the Inside-Out training in March of 2007, and began as a part-time, work-study student at Temple. I was majoring in Adult Education and Organizational Development, so it was a perfect transition to work with the program upon graduating. I was very fortunate. My role with the program has really been built up through action, almost like building the walls of a house, then adding additions. My role has definitely grown with the program, and in turn, I've helped build the program. I'm very proud of the growth and development that I've had the opportunity to be part of and contribute towards.

My job has included coordination of the Inside-Out International Steering Committee and assistance with the International Research Committee, in addition to regional coordinating. I've also helped build the Inside-Out Center, bringing on and providing guidance for interns and staff. There have been so many initiatives and projects over this last number of years that have helped the program grow deeper and wider, it is a bit difficult to recall all of the work we've done. Most significantly, we've done some good work in building up credit and certificate-bearing options for inside students, building frameworks for alumni involvement, strategic planning for the financial and structural development of the program, and witnessing the expansion to 374 trained instructors, with classes now taking place in Canada.



### **What is your background, and how did it lead you to Inside-Out?**

My interest in getting involved in education in prison settings began years ago, and the story has a few twists and turns. I began my undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago, and though I was doing very well academically, I felt a real disconnect with the citadel of academia I found myself in. I picked up on a very stark disjunction between the culture of the university and life in the community, since there was a lot of gentrification and racial tension surrounding the university, and I also felt strangely ungrounded in these very elitist surroundings.

I took a leave of absence, moved to Texas, and began getting involved with direct action civil disobedience and learning first-hand about different social issues and social movements happening in the U.S. and beyond. That is how I got involved as a member of the Coalition to Free the Angola 3, an organization supporting Herman Wallace, Albert Woodfox, and Robert King Wilkerson, who had spent over 30 years in solitary confinement in Angola Penitentiary, Louisiana. After a number of years of doing political action work and some traveling, I decided it was time to return to school to learn the ropes of facilitation and organizational development, so that I could be a more effective organizer. I moved to Philadelphia to attend Temple, and the rest is her-story!

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## Erin Howley Moving On *continued*

After witnessing prison first-hand, I realized how much potential there is for change for individuals and society by bringing more education and opportunities for growth to the 'inside.' I decided to get involved with Inside-Out so that I could learn the skills for doing that work.

### **How did you discover Inside-Out? What were your first experiences with it like?**

I knew about Inside-Out when I applied to Temple, but I learned much more about it when I applied to take the instructor training. Honestly, my first experiences were kind of intense and overwhelming, because the instructor training can be that way! I found that meeting the Graterford Think Tank was one of the most important learning dynamics I have ever experienced, and it was really that group that had the biggest impact on me. Being involved with the Graterford Think Tank continues to be one of the most important choices of my life. After taking the training, I did a short assessment of the program for a class on organizational learning, and discovered the structural potential and complexity of the organization. I got interested in looking at the organizational structure, communication networks, and methodology of the program. It was very much in line with the kind of things I was studying, so the program was interesting for many reasons.

### **What, to you, is most essential about Inside-Out?**

The most essential thing about this work is that it brings people together. Over the years, having seen many different facets of the program, I've felt the need to step back and think about it in a historical context. Back in the days of slavery, there were abolitionists; back in the days of Jim Crow, there were Freedom Riders. Inside-Out is an educational organization, not an activist organization, so in that way it is not the same. However, I think the program has emerged as a way for people to come together across cultural, economic, and racial divides to learn how to dialogue and learn together. At a fundamental level, I see the program as grounds for people to learn from each other with sincerity and integrity, people who wouldn't usually have met because of the unfortunate continuation and reality of stark social divides. I think there is a very deep underlying need for connection and understanding that brings people into the circle. It can be a very powerful thing.

### **What is your proudest personal or group achievement with Inside-Out?**

My proudest personal achievement was actually facilitating an Instructor Training Institute. Through the successes and challenges of that, I learned more about what it means to facilitate and to lead a group. Hands-on learning is the most valuable and most rewarding, though it isn't always easy. That experience really has led me to advocate for training alumni and think tank members to become expert facilitators in this model of dialogue and education. I've used these skills in many ways, and I hope that others can too.

The biggest group achievement is working with the Inside-Out Center staff and with the Graterford Think Tank. Just being part of the team and working on the ground from day to day has been rewarding, because we have done so much and come so far. The best thing is watching others grow before my eyes.

### **Where are you headed when you leave Inside-Out? How will you carry Inside-Out with you into your new position?**

Well, I'm not exactly sure what the future holds, but it will include developing my career as a community artist and educator, grad school, and hopefully some travels. Inside-Out has contributed to my growth in a holistic way, so all I can say is that I will bring myself and my experiences and the impact from the people I've met to whatever is next. But I'll surely still be a part of Inside-Out, and I hope to watch the program and the people involved continue to grow in new ways.

– Alex Plattner, Editor  
Inside-Out Newsletter

## Inside-Out Supporters

- The After Prison Initiative of the Open Society Institute (Soros Foundation)
- The Brook J. Lenfest Foundation
- The Chace Granting Group
- The Douty Foundation
- The Gulati Family Foundation
- The Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- The Phoebus Criminal Justice Initiative (Bread and Roses Community Fund)
- The Threshold Foundation (Restorative Justice Funding Circle)
- The Vital Projects Fund
- An Anonymous Foundation
- An Anonymous Major Donor

### How to Donate to Inside-Out

Your gift to Inside-Out means that our exciting new initiatives will continue to take shape and bring an unforgettable, life-changing experience to inside and outside students involved in the program across North America and abroad.

*See last page*

## Kay Harris, Unsung Hero: A Career of Commitment and Service

### *What is your background and how did it lead you to Inside-Out?*

When I was in graduate school in social work at the University of Chicago, I was asked where I wanted to do a field placement. I thought, "Gee. Of all of our social problems, it seems to me like prisons are most in the dark ages. There will be plenty to work on in that field." So I arranged a placement with the Illinois Department of Corrections as a liaison with the legislature. I found that I had been correct in my assessment and I have been trying to make a difference in correctional policies and programs ever since.

When I finished school, I moved to Washington, D.C., thinking I could best change the world from the seat of the federal government. I started work with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and, shortly thereafter, they loaned me to work on the Corrections Task Force Report of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. From there, I moved to what is now the National Institute of Justice, then to the Office of the Attorney General and next to the public interest sector to work for the American Bar Association's Resource Center on Correctional Law and Legal Services. When I finished a research study there on what happened after judges handed down their decrees in some of the landmark prison reform litigation cases, I began working with citizen-based organizations in the private, non-profit world – with the National Moratorium on Prison Construction and later, the Washington Office of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. In the latter two positions, I had a chance to do a lot of advocacy, consultation and technical assistance around the country with reform groups, legislative bodies and state and local agencies interested in reducing prison and jail populations and developing and implementing a broader range of alternatives to incarceration.

Unfortunately, despite what at times seemed like progress, my efforts to help policymakers embrace more promising approaches to crime prevention and greater social harmony, rather than concentrating so heavily on locking up more people, were spectacularly unsuccessful in the larger view. When I started working in the field, there were about 300,000 people in prisons and jails across the United States and about 7,000 people in Pennsylvania's eight state prisons. Today there are about 2.4 million people in U.S. prisons and jails, and the total population in Pennsylvania's 27 state prisons at the end of 2011 was 51,638.

At a certain point, I began to question how much I could accomplish as an individual and moved to Philadelphia to

take a job teaching Criminal Justice at Temple University. My thinking was that, while I could continue doing research and policy work myself, I also could try to engage students in doing some hard thinking about existing justice policies, philosophies and paradigms. Over the years, I have become increasingly convinced that the most effective way to enhance creative and critical thinking among students is through experiential learning, in which they are exposed to people, programs and problems that challenge and interest them on a human as well as a more theoretical level. The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program does that better and more deeply than any other approach I've found.

### *How did you become involved with Inside-Out?*

As it happened, I was chair of Temple's Criminal Justice Department when Lori Pompa first piloted an Inside-Out class. She sought my counsel on such issues as arranging for books for 'inside' students, getting clearance from University Counsel and the like. I already was teaching in the corrections area and Lori had been team teaching with me on a volunteer basis in another course she had developed, entitled 'Rehabilitation of the Offender.' So Lori had gotten me involved in experiential learning before Inside-Out and I had come to realize its value. Therefore, I embraced the new model as soon as she brought it up. I later encouraged Lori to apply for a Soros Justice Fellowship in the interest of expanding the program. When she was selected for that award, she used the funds to develop the Inside-Out National Training Institute and I was a participant in the first training, held in 2004.

### *What is your role with Inside-Out?*

I am such a believer in the program that I spend a lot of my time and energy on various aspects of it. First and foremost, I have been teaching Inside-Out classes regularly. I've had the opportunity to teach classes in one of the local jail facilities here in Philadelphia, as well as in the Pennsylvania State Correctional Institutions at Graterford and at Chester. Second, I became a member of the Inside-Out Think Tank at Graterford even before I taught for the first time in the program. As people associated with the program know, the Think Tank plays an integral part in the Inside-Out trainings, of which two days are held at the prison in collaboration with Think Tank members. I also serve as a member of the National (now International) Program Committee of the Think Tank, which deliberates on various policy issues related to the larger network and organization. In addition, I've been a member of the Inside-Out Program's Advisory Board at Temple University and of its International

## Kay Harris, Unsung Hero:

*continued*

Steering Committee, since each of those bodies was established. Right now I am serving on the Executive Committee of the Steering Committee, as well as on a committee developing plans for an international conference. I also have made several presentations on various aspects of the Inside-Out form of pedagogy at professional conferences and am currently working on an article about it. In general, I try to provide support and assistance in any way I can.

### **What has kept you involved with Inside-Out?**

Inside-Out sometimes is described as transformative education and I stay involved with it because it gives me the opportunity to see and participate in helping to bring that about. I get to witness a process in which two groups of strangers, who typically feel that they have little or nothing in common with each other, discover their commonalities and begin to work as a cohesive whole. I get to see stereotypes and prejudices exposed and shattered, without the people involved being shattered or exposed in a shameful way. I get to experience how powerful a safe, respectful, open and egalitarian process of dialogue and engagement can be, even – or maybe especially – inside a prison. I get to facilitate a type of learning experience that goes much deeper than what can take place in a standard classroom because the facts, figures and philosophies take on a human form and significance. I get to see and hear individuals and groups resolve to be part of the solution.

### **What do you hope that Inside-Out will accomplish in the future?**

For me, that's a big topic because I have large hopes for the future of Inside-Out. In terms of classes, I would like to see that, wherever there is a college student or incarcerated person who would like to participate in an Inside-Out class, one would be readily available. Of course, many potential students, both 'inside' and 'outside,' don't now know that they are missing this opportunity, so I also would like to see expanded awareness of the program within colleges and universities, prisons, jails and Departments of Corrections, as well as in the larger community.

And my hopes go beyond expanding the number of classes. I look forward to the development of better avenues for facilitating spin-off initiatives that grow out of classes and other aspects of the program. The classes generate so much energy and willingness to make a contribution that we need to find good ways to make use of those gifts. This could involve undertakings carried out by alumni of Inside-Out classes, by Think Tanks, by instructors, and by

people from the organizations and institutions that sponsor the classes.

I also want to see more done to capitalize on the kinds of learning that come from Inside-Out about effective pedagogy, group process and intergroup dialogue. Teaching in Inside-Out has made it impossible for me to go back to some of the old ways I used to conduct classes. I can't run all of my courses using this approach, but I can look for other ways to draw on some of what I have learned about effective teaching. I look forward to seeing the collective impact that comes at the hands of instructors trained in the Inside-Out model back on their home campuses. Of course, that type of development can be advanced by further documentation and evaluation of the Inside-Out brand of pedagogy.

Similarly, I would like to see Departments of Corrections and other homes for Inside-Out courses developing ways to draw on many of the strengths of this form of learning. A number of former 'inside' students have commented to me about how they find it difficult to stay engaged with other in-prison classes and programs that do not use key elements of the Inside-Out approach. And it's not simply that they are not kept as engaged; they say they don't get nearly as much benefit from the more traditional types of delivery of material. In short, I think both colleges and prisons could take a few leads from Inside-Out in thinking about how to craft more effective offerings. Indeed, I think what is learned from an analysis of Inside-Out could well improve education and training in many other settings.

I would also like to see Inside-Out begin to offer second-level or advanced trainings of various kinds. This could be on specialized topics, dealing with overcoming common problems or focusing on enriching skills. For example, there is a lot of demand for specialized training related to dealing with race and diversity. I've also heard a lot of interest expressed in building skills related to such things as designing effective small group exercises and handling conflict in the classroom.

– Alex Plattner, Editor  
Inside-Out Newsletter

## In Memoriam

John Goldkamp, nationally recognized in the field of criminal justice and former chair of Temple's Criminal Justice Department for several years, passed away on August 26, 2012. John was a creative and visionary force in his own work, which included such areas as bail, discretion in decision-making, and parole policies. As department chair, he was very supportive of the Inside-Out program and its development over the years. He will be deeply missed throughout the criminal justice community.

## “I Get It”: What Inside-Out Instructor Jeri Kirby Brings to Her Work

Most of Jeri Kirby’s story is the story of many fantastic Inside-Out instructors: Jeri is an Instructor of Criminology in Sociology at West Virginia University, where she is finishing up her Ph.D. She has taught Inside-Out courses in two different correctional facilities, and will soon add another to the list. She has facilitated the engagement with social justice of her alumni in a way that well exceeds the expectations of her courses: internships for ‘outside’ students, and facilitator roles for students ‘inside,’ roles that extend far beyond the traditional cutoff of a university’s ‘finals week.’

Jeri’s work as an educator is driven by compassion for the situation of ‘inside’ students, an appreciation of, as she says, the “openness” of the “forum” that is Inside-Out pedagogy, and a strong conviction that Inside-Out pedagogy transforms the perspectives and the lives of students ‘inside’ and ‘out.’

Jeri was also drawn to Inside-Out because she was incarcerated in the Federal system from 1992 to 1994. Her twenty-first birthday came and went in prison. She describes her imprisonment as “a blur.” Jeri struggled to make sense of how she had ended up spending her early twenties not free: “You know you committed a crime, but you don’t know why you’re going through that in your life,” she says. It wasn’t until halfway through her sentence that Jeri sought out education within the prison where she was incarcerated. The Pell grants had been done away with by that time, but Jeri received a UNICOR Industries scholarship.

She doesn’t recall much about that first course, but her participation in

a drug education class is more vivid. Jeri remembers it as “a joke, because [the instructor was] telling people who [were] in prison for drugs what [the drugs] are made out of.” Jeri laughs as she remembers thinking that, based on her experiences on the street, she “could probably teach the class better than the teacher.” For Jeri, educational opportunities behind bars were first invisible and, then, when existent, woefully inadequate.

Not long after her release in 1994, Jeri enrolled at West Virginia University to complete her undergraduate degree. She was teaching by 2004. Her first experiences with Inside-Out were facilitated by Jim Nolan (Professor of Sociology at WVU), a longtime mentor of Jeri’s who invited her to sit in on his Inside-Out course in the Spring of 2010. Jeri completed the Inside-Out Instructor Training over the Summer of 2010, and taught her first Inside-Out course at Hazelton Secure Female Facility that Fall.

Of course, Jeri’s involvement with education in prison invites her to reflect on how a program like Inside-Out would have affected her during her own incarceration. Her understanding of Inside-Out’s impact begins with an assessment of prison’s extreme isolating effect: “Prison has a tendency to take on its own life, and that life is very separate from the outside world. I wrapped myself up in that,” Jeri says, “and let go of the outside world.” Inside-Out, Jeri is convinced, would have been impactful upon her experience because, in fact, “the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ are not separate, and connecting them is one thing that Inside-Out does really well.”

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### Theory Group Is . . .

Theory Group is motion where stagnation resides. Small room, broad visions, where tangled thoughts collide. Character-enhancing, humbling, dissipating fear... Closed minds and facades are never welcome here. Theory Group is family, necessary space, Love, consideration, liberation, grace.

– Rock (Michigan Theory Group)



Small group activity from the Michigan training in May 2012.

### Becoming

A respite, a place of self-reflection within an assembly of like minds. Supported in safety by unexpected family profoundly humbling and simultaneously liberating. An inexplicable community where thought and theory balance. Through the fusion of hope, purpose and action flourishing in the most inhospitable environment. Insight and authenticity, shape us with precision. Our questions dissect, then reshape, the structures of the world.

– Kyle (Michigan Theory Group)

## “I Get It”:

### What Inside-Out Instructor Jeri Kirby Brings to Her Work *continued*

Jeri’s personal experience uniquely benefits both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ students. She explains that, for ‘outside’ students, who begin her Inside-Out course with minimal prior exposure to the criminal justice system, learning about her background “breaks the mold” for them, the preconception “of what they’ve been taught the average incarcerated person looks like.” Her ‘inside’ students recognize that “if Jeri can get out and make it, and not go back,” they “see that people who were incarcerated can be anybody . . . they can stand in front of a classroom and teach you!” If Jeri’s experience “gives an everyday face to incarceration for the ‘outside’ students,” it also asserts “a not-so everyday face to the ‘inside’ student.”

The first Inside-Out class that Jeri taught was, in her words, “special.” Their final project consisted of designing a 12-month residential re-entry program. “We designed the program around the nine areas that the Bureau [of Prisons] already uses.” Jeri and her students presented their program proposal to the Warden at the United States Penitentiary at Hazelton, Terry O’Brien. It was so well thought out and presented that Warden O’Brien agreed to give it a shot. That any corrections institution would implement a program designed by ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ students is remarkable, and Jeri credits Tammy Salinka, a counselor at Hazelton, who has stood by the program, and who was particularly “instrumental” to its residential aspect.

The “most transformative piece,” Jeri says, “was that when that class ended, I had many ‘outside’ students move into internships, and many ‘inside’ students become facilitators.” The program, designed as an Inside-Out final project, just graduated its first cohort from the program in May, and “it was literally all Inside-Out alumni.” Today, the project stands as a six-month program at the Hazelton Men’s Camp facility. Involvements at Morgantown FCI aren’t far behind; administration officials have warmly met plans for a think tank there.

Jeri’s experience allows her to connect with students on what we might call a ‘real’ level: “I can look at the ‘inside’ students, and I can say, ‘I know, I’ve been there. I get it,’” she explains. But, ultimately, it isn’t so much Jeri’s ability to empathize with her ‘inside’ students’ incarceration, as it is the high expectations she holds for all her students, both ‘inside’ and ‘out.’ In class, students are encouraged not to talk about their crimes. “When you’re here” in class, Jeri reminds them, “you’re a college student.” It follows that Jeri’s students have collectively achieved much more than many people would have expected them to.

Jeri would like to thank all of the people who have supported her work as an Inside-Out instructor: Terry O’Brien, Tammy Salinka, Dave Lemaster, Jim Nolan, Susan Folk, the Sociology Department at West Virginia University, and many others.

– Alex Plattner, Editor  
Inside-Out Newsletter



Class held in the Allegheny County Jail in Pennsylvania, in collaboration with Duquesne University. Norm Conti, instructor.

## Welcome

Taste it.  
Experience it.  
Enjoy it.  
See what the TG moment has to offer.  
Come sup at our table of learning  
Digest the morsels of wisdom and knowledge  
Prepared by the TG chefs for TG epicureans.  
Relax.  
Sate your mental palate with freshly prepared thoughts.  
Now, imbibe from our cup of eternal familial oneness  
and savor the moment.  
Ahhhhhhh!

– Raheem (Michigan Theory Group)

## Starting a Trend: The Michigan Theory Group Visits the Graterford Think Tank

We were invited to visit the Graterford Think Tank at our second annual Inside-Out Regional Instructor training in May. After visiting Toledo's People for Change, we found the experience of sharing what we do in our respective groups and then reporting back to our Theory Group rewarding.

### Family

This loving family  
 Profound and full of life  
 Striving for brighter days,  
 Standing for what we know is right.  
 Driven by our intellects  
 and motivated by our curious minds.  
 Dynamic and understanding  
 A space I never thought I'd find.  
 A place where I can shed these walls  
 and remove this mask I wear,  
 lose the shame of these prison blues  
 and show the world I care.

– Lloyd (Michigan Theory Group)

Our visit to Graterford was unique in that we understood the gravity of being at what some might call "The Birthplace" of Inside-Out. We met the Think Tank, discussed how we got involved with the program, and later joined the group for a workshop. The workshop posed the question: Can a society without prisons exist? Beyond the fruitful discussions with invited community guests and being challenged to think outside of our political bubbles, the exercise ignited a peculiar light bulb. We saw the potential every think tank can reach. On a rudimentary level, there are parallels between our group and Graterford: each group has the jokers, the meticulous note takers, the deep thinkers, the planners, etc. In action, however, Graterford made the workshop look effortless and that helped the attendees focus on the task at hand. The attendees were not hand-selected

### Education

Thanks to the power of education  
 Our diversity gives us new insights  
 Causing labels to disappear.  
 In a circle of collaboration  
 We see ourselves in a new light  
 Learning, laughing, shedding tears,  
 Sharing hopes and expectations.  
 Education might help us to persevere  
 in our quests for transformation.

– Mario (Michigan Theory Group)

politicians, judges and legislators. They were hand-selected neighbors, family members and friends. They are the people who will leave and speak to their friends and families about what they did and who they met that night.

From an analytical perspective, the question posed at the workshop may seem idealistic because the current outcome is often the same. During this experience, some part of your brain is squeezed in an unconscious way. You voice your views and listen to the perspectives of others, you challenge your positions and doubt those of others, and suddenly you realize the complexity of the understanding that you thought you had a firm stance on. Through all of this, no one judges you and everyone listens.

### Theory Group

This Theory Group is  
 elevated grace, lost purpose found,  
 illuminated darkness,  
 a magnetic flowing sound.

Extended expressions deepen,  
 As joyful souls cry out,  
 Where timeless moments are cultivated  
 Both inside and out.

–Steve (Michigan Theory Group)

We witnessed what we call "Inside-Out Hospitality." It is the warm greeting from every think tank member that makes us look forward to going into a prison. That same warmth was carried to the outside, when we were invited to spend a day with Tyrone, an original Graterford Think Tank member. He did not show us around Philly so we could go home and tell everyone we saw the Liberty Bell and the Rocky steps. He helped us experience Philly. We felt as if we had known him forever and we were simply reconnecting with him on our visit to Philadelphia. Part of the tour was a visit to the Inside-Out International Headquarters, where we learned what the office is responsible for, as well as the history of the developmental stages of the program and its plans for the future.

### Theory Group Is...

What my past classes weren't.  
 Where my teachers just didn't.  
 Who, when asked, just wouldn't.  
 When? Formative years, now days  
 forgotten.  
 Why? They thought they couldn't.  
 Because it was easier if they didn't.  
 Now, like a fledgling at the edge of  
 a nest,  
 Primed, fluffed, and perched,  
 Leaps, struggles, and takes flight for  
 the first time.  
 A feeling of total freedom, my  
 thoughts soar.

– Matt (Michigan Theory Group)

We recommend this visit to all think tanks. You will learn much about the groups you visit, but you will learn even more about how you see yourselves, how you want to move forward, and what goals you want to accomplish.

– Michigan Theory Group

## Graterford Connects With Walls to Bridges, a 'Feminist, Vibrant and Strong' Collective

The Walls to Bridges Collective in Kitchener, Ontario has really marked a place on the map. I was very glad to travel to Canada from Philadelphia, carrying greetings from the Graterford Think Tank. We talked about what it was like for the Graterford members to do their first training and the opportunities for growth and professional development that comes along with hosting trainings. We also talked about how to keep group dynamics open, from the heart, and liberating, especially in terms of how a think tank can address conflict when it arises, and how we bring so much of ourselves to the think tank work. We also talked about the support and idea sharing the group would like to see from the newly developing network of think tanks.

Though I have been part of the Graterford Think Tank for four years, meeting with the Walls to Bridges Collective was a different and new experience for me. Being a majority woman-identified group, the Walls to Bridges Collective has a feminist approach and is a really vibrant and strong cohort. There was a big contrast with the stark gender norms of a male prison, and it helped me see how much gender plays a role in Inside-Out classes, trainings, and working groups. The Walls to Bridges Collective is a young group, just started in Fall 2011, and is gaining new members, building guidelines for group participation, and discovering its identity as a collective. (The Walls to Bridges logo is soon to come!) From my vantage point, this group has so much to offer the international Inside-Out program, both in its feminist approach and its Canadian context. We welcome you, sisters!

– Erin Howley  
Program Coordinator  
The Inside-Out Center



The first Inside-Out graduation class at the Ohio Reformatory for Women. 13 'inside' and nine 'outside' students from The Ohio State University at Marion participated in the class, led by Brenda Chaney.

## Extending the Family: An Experience of the Oregon Training

Being a part of the Michigan training and meeting the Theory Group has transformed and inspired my life drastically. Going into the training, I felt nervous, as I was being trained by the Theory Group and not by my Graterford [Think Tank] family. As the week went on, my nerves decreased and I began to feel the amazing energy of the group and the beautiful vibes. The Theory Group opened up to me and made me feel welcomed. I learned so many things and learned a lot about myself. The experience overall was inspirational and unforgettable.

The little time that we, both trainees and Theory Group, spent together, I feel like we formed a little family in the middle of Ryan Correctional Facility, Detroit, MI. When I think about it, this little family is actually a part of a much larger family, the Inside-Out family. The Inside-Out family has grown over time and, as more people become trained, our family grows a little more. As our family grows bigger, each of us becomes an asset to this family. In order for our family to grow, we must always stick together and continue to fight for change and never give up hope or faith. We all need to be the change we wish to see in this world. The first step is starting with ourselves and Inside-Out is one way to begin.

– Leah  
Graterford Think Tank Member

## On the Move!

### Walls to Bridges meets the Theory Group

What a neat new chapter in Inside-Out's evolution: outside participants in think tanks taking the time to visit other think tanks – building community, making new friends, and sharing best practices. Kitchener, Ontario (where the Walls to Bridges Collective convenes) and Detroit, Michigan (site for the Theory Group's meetings) aren't really too far apart: four-and-a-half hours on the open road. So, when Lora Lempert graciously gave the green light, outside Walls to Bridges member Randell and I hit the road. On July 5th, we met with some of the outside TG members at Buddy's Pizza (a Detroit treasure), then made our way to the Ryan Correctional Facility to meet the group in full.

Wow. It seems like every think tank shares a common commitment, in keeping with Inside-Out's mission and vision, yet there's a culture and a personality distinct to each one. The Theory Group is gracious, generous and well-organized. Upon arrival, each person present shook our hands and gave us a warm introduction. The excitement was palpable. The Theory Group comes by its name honestly: shared study is an ongoing commitment, and we discussed two essays from *Convict Criminology*. Then, Theory Group members answered our questions. We'll be co-facilitating our first Instructor Training in 2013; since they're now old veterans, with two trainings under their belts, we were eager for ideas and encouragement! Here's a sampling of their wisdom, helpful for anyone diving into a group facilitation process:

- Assign greeters!
- Be yourselves! If you don't know something, feel comfortable saying you don't know it.
- Remember that the participants will be moving toward their own ideas – be careful not to “feed” them too much. Be patient.
- Remember how your first Inside-Out class felt to you – even experienced professors will be new at this, trying on skills that may feel challenging and building community with a group of new people.
- Remember that everyone in your think tank has particular strengths. Discover how to use those strengths in collaboration.
- At the same time, get ready to get good at things you never knew you were capable of.
- People step up for each other: if one of us gets scared or off-track with something, someone else can help out!
- There is often some emotion as a training week comes to an end – sorrow about leave-taking and general intensity: be prepared!
- Debrief a lot afterward!

Final comment: we hope to show our gratitude by hosting some visits from other think tankers soon. A case in point: Erin Howley, from the Inside-Out Center office and the Graterford Think Tank, has come to visit Ontario and joined Walls to Bridges for an evening session! This is a powerful new trend.

– Simone Davis  
International Steering Committee

### What Does Change Look Like? Graterford Think Tank Update

What a year so far for the Graterford Think Tank! It kicked off with an International Steering and Research Committee meeting in March. Then, the Think Tank hosted six workshops over the next several months, including funders, college students, and community members, ranging in topics that included neuroscience and crime, communication, and justice. On June 27th, we received a welcome visit from members of the Michigan Theory Group, who participated in a workshop on justice, which was facilitated by two Think Tank members. Finally, this summer, in late July and early August, we completed our 25th and 26th instructor trainings, respectively. Three days total of the two seven-day trainings took place right here behind the walls of Graterford Prison.

The July training was my first, as a new member of the Think Tank, so I had no clue what to expect. As I stepped into the auditorium, stale air assaulting my nostrils. I walked down the dusty, cracked aisle of half-broken seats, thinking about the many times I'd been in this familiar ‘pit’ of a space. Movies, art projects, meeting up with friends – these were the activities I was used to in the auditorium. That was all about to change.

I never could have imagined such a comfortable, open, non-judgmental place of growth, which awaited me at the bottom of the aisle. As the men and women from the outside made their way down the aisle to us, we stood in a haphazard line and shook each individual's hand, instantly shaking away ‘you’ and ‘us,’ becoming only ‘us.’ And so the community building

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## What Does Change Look Like? Graterford Think Tank Update *continued*

began! Tanja, one of the training participants, described it this way: "This experience has reaffirmed for me that beauty and love can be found in the least expected and most adverse [of] spaces."

"This day..." Jami (another participant) stated, "instantly humanized the 'inside' students we met." Early in the first (inside) day of both trainings, I felt the labels of 'inside' and 'outside' melt away. For those brief hours, there were no 'insiders' and 'outsiders,' only people, human beings, men and women who collaboratively created a safe environment. Together we all created a community – not just one that remains in that space – but one that remains in our hearts. We truly did a magnificent thing. Lori (Inside-Out founder and director) said it best when she described it as a "soul connection in a place that usually robs the soul of its vitality."

This space I thought I knew so well looks entirely different now; it has new meaning for me. Now, when I enter the auditorium, I smile; this is our space. Here, my heart and soul now feel at home – in a space where new bonds were, and will be, created; a place where I've been rejuvenated, where I've relearned to love the humanity in all.

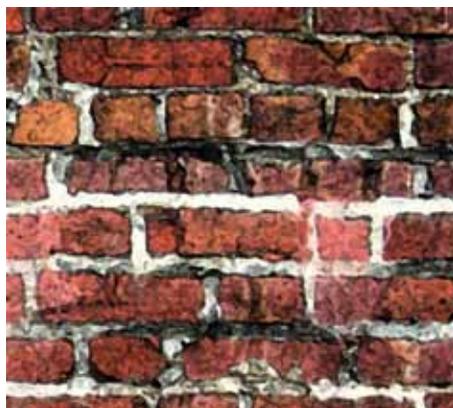
Some of the best wisdom, compassion, and love imaginable has happened behind the walls of one of the worst places imaginable. Take a good look at what we as a community, we as human beings can do. As Phill (Graterford inside Think Tank member) has said to me on numerous occasions: "This is what change looks like!"

– Razzaaq  
Graterford Think Tank Member

## A.C.E. Moving Forward: Oregon Think Tank Update

Hello everybody, and greetings from A.C.E. here in Oregon. It is our pleasure to be a part of this newsletter, but ultimately our excitement stems from the growth of the Inside-Out community that has traversed the nation and has taken root behind the walls of the Oregon State Penitentiary. As you probably already know, A.C.E. is relatively new to the scene. We are walking in the footsteps of the think tanks that have come before us in Philadelphia, Michigan, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Ohio, but like any developing program, we have struggled for periods of time, as we have strived to find our identity, amidst our own personalities and interests. We are happy to finally report that we have had great breakthroughs in the last six to nine months.

In June, we hosted the first Inside-Out training on the West Coast and it went off without a hitch. Originally, the inside part of the training was going to take place over a two-day period, but due to our annual car show, we had to split it up throughout the week on four different days. Using the model that was begun in the Philly trainings, we were able to reach, teach, and educate a group of professors who were willing and ready to learn and reconfigure



the ways and methods they used to teach. The time that we spent in the training was priceless. In total, we spent twenty hours together, sharing, laughing, and shedding tears. At the end of the training, the instructors walked away with a sense of purpose, knowing that the next time they step into a classroom, they are speaking life into their students, by using the power of education.

What was unique to this training was the structure and how the days were broken up into smaller segmented sessions. Initially, Melissa and Lori were worried about this schedule, because they had never done it before, but we reassured them that we could handle it. For those of us who worked or had other conflicts, we made the sacrifice in order to participate in the training. We feel that the success of the training came from the experience of the inside students. We've been fortunate enough to be continuously involved in Inside-Out, which has allowed us to have more insight and experience to pass on.

One really interesting change that happened, due to the schedule crunch, was that the closing ceremony was held inside of the prison, which is usually not the case. The ceremony ended up being one of the most powerful moments of the training. We all had our chance to share our thoughts and feelings about the whole week. We were all able to say our goodbyes and end on a high note. We look forward to hosting trainings in the near future.

As A.C.E. moves forward, we are looking for new ways to benefit others

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## A.C.E. Moving Forward: Oregon Think Tank Update *continued*

who are incarcerated and reach out to the community. Now that we have completed our first training, we want to focus on some solid service projects. We realize that here in Oregon, we have something unique: inside students have the opportunity to experience the power of an Inside-Out class multiple times and that opportunity is due to increase. Inside-Out is projected to operate in each of the three institutions located in Salem, Oregon three times a year.

Classes from the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and Chemeketa Community College will be offered. Inside-Out is also at two additional institutions outside of the Salem region. Going forward, we hope to take the positive impact that is occurring in the classrooms across this state to those communities, both inside and out. We can all remember that our paths began with someone reaching out to us and showing us the way and it is our responsibility to give back to those in need.

In other news, we would like to congratulate the four A.C.E. members who graduated from Chemeketa Community College and received their Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree. To recognize this great feat, we had a graduation ceremony (with caps and gowns) that lasted all day long. Graduates were able to invite seven visitors to share this momentous occasion with them. After the graduates received their degrees, they spent time eating barbecued burgers and hot dogs fresh off the grill. We took hundreds of pictures and, for five hours, we felt like we were living life outside of these prison walls, and just hanging with friends and family. All day long, the guests laughed, joked, told stories, and met the friends and families of the other students. There was a huge sense of pride and accomplishment among all who attended. We are confident that those who graduated will continue on in enhancing their education.

Coming off of such an amazing first training, A.C.E. just wants to keep up the momentum of accomplishing goals and we will keep you all, our Inside-Out family, updated on the happenings of our movement. We received two personal letters from the Graterford and the Michigan think tanks following our training and we here in Oregon hope to continue correspondence, not only with these two, but with all of the other think tanks, as well. Again, we want to thank the Inside-Out community for opening the doors and paving a road for us to follow.

– The A.C.E. (Another Chance at Education) Think Tank  
Salem, Oregon



## A Summer of Refiguring Growth: Putnamville Think Tank Update

The Putnamville Inside-Out Think Tank has been hard at work this summer. Members spent time reading and discussing the Supreme Court case *Missouri vs. Frye*, concerning plea bargaining. We also watched the 1997 documentary *The Last Graduation: The Rise & Fall of College Programs in Prison*, which traces the history of college programs in New York prisons and advocates for the reinstatement of college programs. Members have engaged in discussions about the differences between abolitionist reform and other kinds of reform. We have theorized classical ideas of 'tragedy' and made art based on this theme. Several members have continued the planning of re-entry programs that include advocacy, community networking, and support.

New working groups have been formed, which include Art, Education/Lecture Series/Teaching, Theory, Poetry/Performance/Creative Expression, Research, and SBACS. These groups have distributed reading materials and lead discussions each week. Perhaps the most significant development is that the Think Tank has become a group of peers 'inside' and 'out' that has begun to feel more normalized. As spring semester ended, many members of the Think Tank were missed by their peers as they graduated and moved away or left for the summer. Since these departures, the group has had to integrate new members into the Think Tank and reconfigure working groups. Procedures based on a consensus model and shared responsibility have become more incorporated into meetings to make members' time more productive.

– Samantha  
Putnamville Inside-Out Think Tank

## Lots of Energy at DeBerry: Western Kentucky Think Tank Update

Our think tank at the DeBerry Special Needs Facility has been working on so much this summer! The DeBerry facility serves incarcerated men who are gravely physically ill, and men who have psychiatric disorders. It is also the place the Tennessee DOC sends its dying people to spend their final days on this earth, alone and frightened. The 'inside' members in the DeBerry Think Tank brought this to the attention of the entire group, and as a group, we decided to contact the Hospice office in Nashville, TN. We urged Hospice to come to our facility to train both 'inside' and 'outside' members in Hospice policies and procedures. We are working on this presently and soon hope to host the Hospice folks at DeBerry Special Needs Facility, where a joint training of 'inside' and 'outside' think tank members will occur. With the permission of Warden Steele, once trained, 'inside' think tank members can sit with men in the facility who are dying and give them solace and care in their dying hours.

Another project has been the writing and performing of a play written by two 'inside' students, John B. and Mauro H. This play, entitled "Last Chance," explores the obstacles and pressures facing newly paroled individuals. The lead character is a former drug dealer who tries to go straight upon release, but finds rejection from employers, scrutiny from his parole officer, and the expectations of his family too stressful to handle. His struggle is the heart of the play, which the DeBerry Special Needs Facility Think Tank performed before 130 incarcerated men in April, 2012. 'Inside' and 'outside' students played major roles, and one 'inside' student, Rick M., wrote and played original music for the performance. The group received a standing ovation and invitations to

return with new plays, which are being written as you read this.

An 'outside' student conducted a conflict resolution workshop during a think tank meeting. 'Insiders' had great insight about the situations in which these conflict resolution techniques might work, but also discussed the reality of prison life and when conflict resolution techniques might not be helpful. This led to an outstanding conversation about real dangers in prison and what can be done to ameliorate difficult situations.

We are working toward a literacy program, a mentoring program, and a 'teach the teachers' workshop, which will highlight for young student teachers the importance of never giving up on a kid. 'Inside' guys will tell their own stories of early encounters with schoolteachers and, with considerable hindsight, perhaps give helpful tips to those learning about teaching.

Another project the DeBerry Think Tank members are working on relates to writing essays on prison life to be submitted to the Yale Law Journal for inclusion in its upcoming special issue written only by those who are or have been incarcerated in American prisons. 'Outside' students assist with editing and essay structure.

The Think Tank at DeBerry Special Needs Facility is excited to do meaningful things, to help in tangible ways, and to matter in the community. The group is an energetic bunch of brilliant thinkers and marvelous human beings.

– Kate King, Instructor  
DeBerry Think Tank

## The Spectrum of Human Possibility: A Reflection on the Inside-Out Training

I had the pleasure of participating in Inside-Out's 25th International Training Institute, the inaugural training hosted by Oregon State Penitentiary's ACE (Another Chance at Education) Think Tank. It was a remarkably inspiring experience. I was struck by the program's thoroughgoing actualization of the values of restorative justice, participatory action research, and transformative education. Inside-Out exercises its commitment to these values at every level of the organization, from the Steering Committee, Regional Think Tanks, and Summer Training Institutes, to the Inside-Out courses and alumni organizations.

One restorative principle at the core of Inside-Out that was potently perceptible to me during the training is the program's deep-seated attunement to the spectrum of human possibility. Restorative vision discerns that the greediest among us also has an inclination toward generosity; the most violent, a gentle side. Of course, the self-same spectrum of human possibility also entails that even the gentlest of people tilt in certain contexts toward violence; that the most ethically upright are not free of transgression, even against those people or causes to which they are most committed. As French existential philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty summarizes this feature of human existence: "No one is fully saved, and no one is fully lost."

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## The Spectrum of Human Possibility: A Reflection on the Inside-Out Training *continued*

Having devoted much of my life to teaching and facilitating group reflection on the subject of ethics, I would be the last to argue that the act of delivering judgments about others has no proper place in the world. Indisputably, there are ethical and legal situations where such judgments must be made. But too often, as American philosopher Judith Butler reminds us, we confuse the ethical stance with that of the one who judges, relying on judgments of guilt or innocence, good or evil, to summarize another's life or encapsulate their being. "Condemnation, denunciation, and exorciation work as quick ways to posit an ontological difference between judge and judged, even to purge oneself of another. Condemnation becomes the way in which we establish the other as non-recognizable or jettison some aspect of ourselves that we lodge in the other, whom we then condemn."<sup>1</sup> In this sense, condemnation assumes a moral posture by disavowing commonality with the judged, by repressing and projecting onto them those aspects of ourselves that we wish (often unconsciously) not to confront. Judgment can thus be a way of failing to own one's limitations.

But as The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program helps us realize, not all ethical relations are reducible to acts of judgment. Indeed, "it may be that only through an experience of the other under conditions of suspended judgment do we finally become capable of an ethical reflection on the humanity of the other, even when that other has sought to annihilate humanity."<sup>2</sup> We can annihilate humanity through acts of physical violence or through the less readily recognizable violence of reducing another to a confining label that arrogates to encompass the entire scope of that person's life and being, obstructing us from recognizing our commonality and shared vulnerability.

Inside-Out constructs spaces for intergroup dialogue that foreground the necessity of being mindful of that spectrum of human possibility – that active capacity for both honorable and blameworthy action – which each of us essentially is. And in those spaces, we are encouraged to commune with and put forward our best selves. Success in this endeavor goes hand in hand with owning our own capacity for transgression – acknowledging the destructive, harmful histories and impulses native to us all. For it is only through such ownership that we are able to more scrupulously deactivate such intentions in our relations with others. This is part of the process of becoming an ethical subject. As I've learned first-hand, Inside-Out circles of engagement facilitate that process for all involved, both inside and out.

– Brady Heiner, Assistant Professor of Philosophy  
California State University, Fullerton

<sup>1</sup> Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (Fordham University Press, 2005), 46.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 45.

## Chicago Loves Inside-Out

People succumb to a lot of propaganda. For example, some say that Chicago is one of the most corrupt cities in the U.S. What a joke. I find it comical when I hear "Al Capone" uttered as someone's first association with the town. Yet, Chicago is not problem-free. Hardly. It is a big city, incarceration rates are extremely high (and, by the way, include a couple governors of the state). Moreover, many of our area prisons have considerable reputations for being incredibly tough.

In fact, last summer at the Inside-Out Training Institute, I remember thinking how difficult it would be to bring the Inside-Out program to the Chicago area, in particular, to Stateville Correction Center near Joliet, a place without much programming and a notorious status. It is the maximum-security prison where Leopold and Loeb were incarcerated and Richard Speck and the infamous Speck videotapes are still widely talked about. It is the only place where you will still find a panopticon in the U.S., or anywhere else in the world, for that matter. Still, although Stateville Correctional Center has an ominous presence, I thought maybe I could try to bring in an Inside-Out course.

When I got home from the training in Philadelphia, I started making calls to everyone I knew: educators, activists, community members, anyone I could think of connected to Stateville. They all cautioned me with stories about how difficult it is to get anything accomplished inside an area prison. Then, one morning, without thinking, I just called the prison directly. I was immediately connected with the Chaplain in charge of

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Training participants and Theory Group members from the Michigan Training, held at Ryan Correctional Facility.

## “Confined Only to My Mind”

By Bryan (Inside Student, Ryerson University, Toronto)  
– written in response to Sartre’s *Existentialism is a Humanism*

On and On

These walls close in  
Mouthing thy native tongue of daggers to its soul  
This flower’s bud in a situation where circumstances is circulatin’  
Suffocating the room to grow  
Yet only in the mind it is confined  
So this once crouched flower  
Bent over because of the low ceiling  
Withering because of the malnourishment  
Bestowed within each hour is a gradually acquired answer  
Although solely erected through the reflection of a rusted mirror  
Is deciphered within its element  
And is lonely as is erected  
Ergo, found the route within  
And adamant, to the freedom enlarged by the deeper it goes  
Thus providing the room for the rest of the flower bed to grow  
Regardless the size of the garden  
This beauteous flower in blossom  
Has found the evident, although miniscule, thing to do  
To simply accept that  
The only way out  
Is the way through.



The “The Rose That Grew in Concrete,”  
by Bryan, ‘Inside’ Student, Toronto, Canada

## Chicago Loves Inside-Out *continued*

programming who said ‘yes’ to the course before I could finish explaining it to him. As it turned out, when I let go of the ‘talk,’ I found the task quite straightforward. Now it was time for me to laugh...at myself.

Here, in Chicago, we have just finished our first Inside-Out course at Stateville Correctional Center in conjunction with DePaul University, on June 8, 2012. And, as Chaplain Adamson (who was instrumental in making the course come into being) will tell you: “The course was simply perfect”. I must concur, and will add: it was awe-inspiring. This is entirely due to the Inside-Out model and all its training resources, which I followed to a T. Let me join the growing number of people in saying that it is a truly miraculous program and offer my deep gratitude for the possibility of participating in it, and of lending a hand to others to live through it.

The Inside-Out Final Awards Ceremony that we held in early June for the DePaul/Stateville course sparked some attention and talk about developing more programs at Stateville in the future. To my surprise, the Director of the Illinois Department of Corrections, S.A. Godinez, as well as Warden Marcus Hardy and the Assistant Warden in charge of programming, Darrel Edwards, all attended the ceremony, and were delighted with the results. In addition, Gladys Taylor, assistant Director of IDOC, was in attendance and seemed particularly enthusiastic. She talked about changing some of the policies at the prison, for example, reversing the rule against incarcerated people teaching others who are incarcerated.

There are so many surprises involved in working through Inside-Out, so very many.

– Kimberley Moe  
Instructor, DePaul University  
Chicago, IL

## Growth In (and Ambitions for) Western Massachusetts Inside-Out

Inside-Out in Western Massachusetts has been strong since the inception of Inside-Out's Training Institute (and was home of the innovating efforts of the now Canada-based Simone Davis). Working exclusively in Houses of Correction and Jails has turned out to be an asset in the region. Inside-Out programs came into local facilities that already emphasized re-entry and we have been able to encourage higher education as a viable option in these programs. The biggest strength of our region is the existing and potential collaborations between universities, liberal arts colleges, professional schools, and community colleges – and the enormous interest of instructors already teaching (Barry O'Connell, Martha Saxton, Kristin Bumiller at Amherst College; Lucas Wilson at Mt. Holyoke College; Ellen Kaplan at Smith College; Revan Schendler at Greenfield Community College; and Giovanna Shay at Western New England College School of Law), with many more trained instructors planning to teach in the area soon.

In the Fall of 2011, Revan Schendler began an Inside-Out class in sociology (Crime & Punishment in the US) at the Franklin County House of Correction, a men's jail, through Greenfield Community College. Like other Inside-Out courses, there have been those mysterious pockets of joy, but there aren't the usual geographic and class divisions between 'inside' and 'outside' students. Most are from this small, largely working-class rural county; GCC is its only college. A number of 'outside' students have had family members or friends in jail, or have been incarcerated themselves. 'Inside' students are enrolled and receiving credit at the college; as residents of a jail (rather than a federal or state prison), some are eligible for federal

Pell grants, and there is support for them to continue their education when they are released. At Kristin Bumiller's suggestion, and with encouragement from Janet Wolf in Nashville, Revan launched a facilitation group of Inside-Out alumni: in the second semester, three 'inside' and one 'outside' student who had served time returned to the class, encouraging and challenging the new students, and setting up talking groups 'inside.' They met one evening a week to evaluate and plan, and have continued through the summer.

We have strong support from community-based engagement programs in our colleges and are in the process of creating a more formal structure and staffing. The number of Inside-Out classes in the jails is expanding, as are our efforts to have 'inside' students earn credits towards an undergraduate degree or certificate. 'Inside' students who take Amherst College courses, for example, receive credits that transfer easily to local community colleges and the University of Massachusetts. In Western Massachusetts, our ambition is to create an 'outside' program that will coordinate a support system for post-incarceration entry into higher education.

– Inside-Out  
of Western Massachusetts



## Coming Together for Supplementary Learning at Amherst College, MA

This June, about 14 'inside' students and five Amherst students met with me to work on their writing in our Writing Cooperative. My hope for the workshop was to learn some techniques that our student tutors could use when they work with 'inside' students on their papers during the school year. Thanks to Amherst's IT staff, we also created a website where 'inside' and 'outside' student writing is being posted, so Amherst students who have not met their 'inside' colleagues can read some of their work. The Center for Community Engagement at Amherst made this all possible with a grant, allowing us to buy books and notebooks, take a van over and back, and cover other kinds of minor costs.

In the past years, we have had one or two 'outside' students, who are alumni of an Inside-Out course, work with the wonderful but overworked teachers at the Northampton Jail on student writing. 'Inside' students often call on their teachers to help with their course papers. The tutors are extremely capable writers themselves, and have been particularly useful in sounding out students about what they wish to express and the best ways to go about it. But I wanted to find out first-hand the most effective ways to help struggling writers, and steady feedback and concentration on a few issues that can improve logic and readability seem to be having some results.

Each week, we read essays, and students write a weekly theme of

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## Coming Together for Supplementary Learning at Amherst College, MA *continued*

one-and-a-half to three pages. The readings demonstrate good writing and good argumentation, and they range from discussions of our country's struggles over who should be citizens (Eric Foner) to the question of whether lobsters suffer when you boil them alive (David Foster Wallace). First in small groups, then as a whole, we look at the structure of the essay and its language and logic. In student essays, we particularly work on organization, the use of small connective words that guide the logic of paragraphs and essays, and on choosing active and precise verbs to give writing vitality. We regularly look at individual sentences from student essays that present problems of the kind we are discussing: logical connections that may not forward the paper's purpose, long, passive constructions that can be shortened and made more energetic with active verbs. Students work together in small groups to identify problems and correct them. Most students did witness improvement over two months, and all participants became a bit more self-aware when sitting down to write.

We have had some lively and hilarious discussions. As the course is voluntary, we have had uneven attendance, but the enthusiasm on the 'inside,' particularly, has been high. Although we lost three students for disciplinary reasons, one returned, and we added two others. Since the most marked inequality, in my experience, between 'inside' and 'outside' students is in writing skills and reading comprehension, this kind of supplementary learning has real value and has been great fun as well.

– Martha Saxton  
Amherst College  
Northampton, Massachusetts

## It All Adds Up!

I'd like to tell you about one of my former Inside-Out students who came up with a novel, simple approach to lending ongoing support to the program. Johannah Bennett, who took the class in 2005, works at Temple and set up a plan by which she makes a \$5 donation each month, like clockwork. Over a two-year period, Johannah will have donated \$120. You know, one of the nicest parts of this story is that Johannah didn't get in touch with us ahead of time – she just did it, in her own humble, unassuming way.

Think of the possibilities. We have more than 12,000 Inside-Out alumni so far across North America. If every person gave even \$1 a month, a good portion of our budget would be covered each year! It's something to think about. We hope that you'll be inspired by what Johannah has done and think about some sort of ongoing donation plan of your own. We have reinstated our online giving option; please see the final page of this newsletter for more information.

And thanks for thinking about this idea. Change comes – one idea, one person, one brick, and yes, even one dollar (or more) at a time!



– Lori Pompa  
Founder and Director  
The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program

## 2013 Calendar (tentative dates)

January	7–13	Specialized Baltimore Training (#27)*
March	10–15	Steering and Research Committee Meetings
May	19–25	Training #28 (in Michigan)*
June	10–16	Training #29 (in Oregon)*
July	15–21	Training #30 (in Canada)*
August	21–18	Training #31 (in Philadelphia)*

\* Check website soon ([www.insideoutcenter.org](http://www.insideoutcenter.org)) for finalized training dates.

### THE INSIDE-OUT CENTER

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# The Inside-Out Center

Promoting Transformative Education and Social Change

*While some dream of doing big things, others stay awake and do them!*

– Inside participant and Think Tank member

## How to Contribute to The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program®

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, founded in 1997 and a national (now, international) program since 2004, is an initiative directed at deepening the conversation and transforming ways of thinking about crime, justice, and related social issues.

**Your gift to Inside-Out will make a profound difference in the lives of incarcerated students and the outside students who join them in classrooms across North America.**

- A \$500 gift underwrites one scholarship to our Instructor Training Institute
- A \$400 gift helps us to convene an Inside-Out Center staff retreat
- A \$300 gift brings our Steering Committee into Graterford Prison to work with Inside-Out’s Think Tank
- A \$200 gift funds the work of a staff member for one week
- A \$100 gift underwrites one week of programmatic support from one of our remarkable alumni interns

***Your support will allow this unique model of community education to flourish!***

### To Contribute

**You can make a secure online donation.**

Follow the directions on the website page at: <http://www.insideoutcenter.org/supporters.html>

Or you can donate by sending a check made out to **Temple University** (with Inside-Out in the note section) to the full address below. Your donation is tax deductible; we will provide you with a receipt and letter of thanks for your files.

**Thank you** from Lori and the Inside-Out Team

Please clip on the dotted line and enclose the form below with your check.

**I want to support The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program. I enclose a tax deductible gift of:**

\$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ \$300 \_\_\_\_\_ \$400 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Whatever I can do to help: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to: Temple University** (with Inside-Out in the note section).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City and State/Province \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code and Country \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Inside-Out \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** The Inside-Out Center  
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