SYRACUSE, NY NEW YORK, NY BROOKLYN, NY

Dear Friends of CCA:

The words of Charles Dickens in the opening

of A Tale of Two Cities—"It was the best of times and the worst of times"—seem particularly apropos to CCA and our work. It has been a year of exciting change but also deep worry in the struggle to achieve reintegrative justice. Reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws has created new opportunities for alternatives to imprisonment and the possibility for some who are currently serving lengthy, indeterminate sentences to be re-sentenced. We have joined with the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officials to undertake the first-ever national survey to assess barriers to higher education for people with criminal records. At the same time, the deep economic recession and draconian cuts in the state budget are making life even harder for CCA's clients and threatening the loss of programs and services that provide lifelines to their futures. What would the loss of these programs mean to our clients? To answer that question, we asked them to tell us in their own words how CCA has helped them to "live reintegrative justice." We have printed excerpts from their responses here, and hope you find them as inspiring and encouraging as we do.

Marcha Weigman Michell al

Marsha Weissman, Ph.D. MICNEIIE A. Henry



Marsha Weissman, Ph.D. Executive Director



Michelle A. Henry, President, Board of Directors

"I'M LIVING REINTEGRATIVE JUSTICE"

"I graduated from high school and had a job for a year but then my dad died and I went crazy. I had a conflict with my manager and got fired. I fell into drugs and got in trouble on a heavy charge. A CCA staff person came to see me when I was in jail and helped me get bailed out. They had a lot of programs at CCA. I picked the work readiness program because I wanted a job. I want to get out of my mom's and get my own place with my kids. I have a job at Payless now. When I complete the CCA program, my charge will be reduced to a misdemeanor. I want to get [education] financing, go back to school, get a degree, maybe in nursing. This is a really good program. It's definitely helped.

NIKKI LIVINGSTON PAYLESS SHOES EMPLOYEE SYRACUSE

I spent 25 years in prison for a terrible crime I committed in my youth. Appearing before the Parole Board was the biggest interview of my life. When I got the papers back, it was a beautiful day! I was in a cellblock but you can't believe how happy I was. When I got out, I went into residential treatment in Brooklyn. The adjustment was huge. I was like a sightseer in my own city. I didn't know how to use a Metrocard. I didn't know one car from another. I came to CCA on the advice of my parole officer. I became a peer educator and then I was hired as a counselor. They took a chance on me—they stood by their mission! I'm excited all the time now because I could be in prison. I feel like because of where I came from, I have an obligation to be the best person I can be. I was shown that if you do the right thing, good things will happen. I'm making a good salary now for someone who did 25 years. I'm 52 and a pretty happy guy.

ED QUICK CCA/BROOKLYN COUNSELOR

Staff Attorneys Work to Increase Impact of New Drug Law Reforms

Social justice advocates won an important victory in spring 2009, when the New York State Legislature finally passed meaningful reform of the infamous Rockefeller drug laws. While the reform stopped short of overturning the laws, it does expand opportunities for alternatives to imprisonment and for possible re-sentencing, under certain conditions, of some who are now serving indeterminate sentences.



Patricia Warth, Co-Director of Justice Strategies

CCA's Justice Strategies Division has taken a leading role

in assuring that these reforms have maximum impact. Staff attorneys are conducting trainings for lawyers across the state to help them understand the changes in the laws. They have made tools available for attorneys to use in helping clients obtain early release, re-sentencing, or sealing of their records.

Patricia Warth, CCA's Co-Director of Justice Strategies, explained, "The reformed statutes have introduced a new 'judicial diversion' statutory scheme allowing for court-supervised drug treatment, instead of prison, for many people convicted of drug offenses. The reform also creates opportunities for many people currently serving lengthy, indeterminate sentences for class B felony drug offenses to be sentenced to shorter, determinate sentences."

To explain these changes more fully to defense attorneys, CCA has undertaken a detailed analysis of how the reformed laws affect various early release programs and other prison-based programs and developed an "early release checklist" that attorneys can use to identify what programs are available to their clients. Other tools created by CCA include: a sample motion for sealing the record of a convicted person, so that it is no longer available for public inspection; another sample motion for re-sentencing for those who are serving time for B felony drug offenses; and two sample arguments responding to specific arguments that prosecutors have raised in opposition to re-sentencing.

The New York State Defenders Association has published some of CCA's tools in its quarterly publication, *The Reporter*, and has sent others to chief defense attorneys across the state. Requests for assistance from CCA's staff attorneys have continued to grow steadily since the reforms were passed. Jonathan Gradess, Executive Director of the NYS Defenders Association, said, "The tools that CCA has created are extremely helpful aids for attorneys seeking the best outcomes for their clients. No matter how tough the case or how long the odds, CCA's work can make a real difference in whether a defendant gets a chance at an alternative sentence and an opportunity to become a productive citizen."

2009 ROCKEFELLER DRUG LAW REFORM SENTENCING CHART (www.communityalternatives.org)

						,				0/
Class Felory	Determinate Sentence Term	Post-Release Bupervision	Probation Permitted	Alternative Definite Sentence Permitted	Y.D. Permitted	Parole Bupervision Sentence	Shock Permitted ⁴	Judicially Ordered Bheeh	CASAT Sentence Permitted	Judicial Diversion ^{4, 1}
A-LEint Offense	8 - 20	5	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	190
A-I Hajor Trafficker	1525-LM ³	5'	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
A-I Prior Non-Violent	12 - 24	5	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
A-I Prior Violent	15 - 30	5	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
A-8 First Offense	3 - 10	5	Yes/de*	No	No	No	Yes	Yes?	Yes	No
A-8 Prior Non-Violent	6 - 14	5	Yes/Me ⁴	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
A-E Price Violent	8 - 17	5	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	No
B First Offense	1.9	1-2	Yes/5	Yes 1 yr. or less	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	Yes ¹
D Sale Near School	2-9	1-2	Yes/8	Yes 1 yr. or less	Yes	Yes?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes"
B Sale to a Ghild	2.9	1-2	Yes/25 ¹	No	NA	No	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	Yes ¹
B Prior Non-Violent	2 - 12	114-3	Yes/Me ¹	No	No	No	Yes	Yes3	Yes?	Yes ¹
B Prior Molent	6.55	136.3	No	Mo	Bio.	No.	204	No.	West	Max

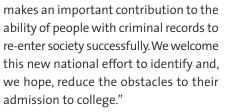
National Survey Will Assess College Barriers for Persons with Criminal Records

Responding to an appeal from CCA, the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) has begun a national survey of its members to assess whether current admissions procedures are hindering the college enrollment of persons with criminal records. The survey instrument, prepared in collaboration with CCA, was sent out to college registrars and admissions officials across the U.S. in September and results will be compiled and analyzed in the near future.

Alan Rosenthal, CCA's Co-Director of Justice Strategies, said, "Higher education

the criminal justice system—and an even higher disproportion go into and come out of prison. So any policy that deters the admission of people with criminal records is clearly contrary to the goal of promoting diversity on campuses."

When CCA staff asked some college officials how the question had come to be included on application forms, the answer was that it was prompted by rising concerns for campus safety. CCA found this explanation odd, because crimes on campuses have mostly been committed by people *without* prior records. Furthermore, when college offi-



CCA's concern about barriers to college admission dates began two years ago, when CCA clients reported questions about past criminal convictions were starting to appear on applications to state colleges and universities. CCA's clients were concerned that if they answered the question truthfully, they would automatically be denied admission, even though they qualified in every other respect.

Marsha Weissman, Executive Director, said, "A disproportionately high number of people of color are processed through cials were asked how they used the information in making admissions decisions, they gave a wide variety of responses, suggesting a lack of consensus about the purpose of collecting this information and how it could be constructively used.

Alan Rosenthal said, "The Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officials has been an excellent partner in putting the survey together and helping to disseminate it. They recognize the need to think clearly and carefully about whether and how applicants should be screened for criminal records and how the information should be used. We look forward to the completion of the survey and being able to use the results to increase understanding of this important issue."

"I'M LIVING REINTEGRATIVE JUSTICE"

"I went to intensive residential drug treatment while I was serving a fiveyear sentence. It was my choice to do that: I'm 50 years old and I was tired. I couldn't live like this any more. The counselors made me face my fears. They helped me judge myself, set goals, not be just a 'people pleaser. After treatment, I got out on work release and was given six weeks to find a job. CCA staff showed me how to complete a resume. They took me everywhere. It came down to the wire, to the last week, when Mama Nancy, the restaurant owner, called. She let me prove myself. I've been there nine months now. I have the highest respect for the CCA staff. They didn't give up on me. They took me right through to the end. The people here overcame obstacles. They're role models for me. Now I think I can do the same for others. CCA—it's all good.

MIKE PETTY

(On left in above photo, with his supervisor) MAMA NANCY'S RESTAURANT EMPLOYEE, SYRACUSE

"In April 2006, I had a stroke due to my addiction and not taking care of myself. I was put on probation and had to complete an outpatient drug program. I made up my mind not to get high. I was living at the mission, an adult male facility for homeless men. At the mission, you have to leave at 7 am be back at 5 pm. I needed a place to go, a focal point. I came to CCA and took a group training. Whatever they offered, I took! I was willing, open. I always wanted to drive a truck. But I had lost my driver's license and had tickets I had to pay off. The employment program at CCA helped me. I took a job as a cook at the state fair and earned enough money to pay off the tickets. Then I took the written test for my driver's license. I couldn't get my friends to show up with a car for my road test but the CCA staff came.

The school where I wanted to study for my commercial driver's license said I needed a pre-employment letter. I got a letter through a friend of a friend at CCA. I passed my commercial driver's license test in July 2009 and will be released from probation early. I'm getting tutoring to pass my GED. CCA helped me become involved in something other than running the streets.

TIM SMITH CCA/SYRACUSE PEER EDUCATOR

Campaign Against Discrimination in Recruitment of Youth Mentors

CCA's Justice Strategies Division and Youth Mentoring Program worked together during the 2008-9 school year to persuade the Syracuse City School District to change a policy that had barred persons with criminal convictions from serving as volunteer youth mentors. CCA suggested to the School District that the applicants' overall gualifications and evidence of rehabilitation should be weighed in the decision, following the model of New York's Corrections Law regarding employment decisions. CCA also pointed out that a policy of automatic exclusion undercut much-needed diversity in the pool of qualified youth mentors, since the people whose applications were rejected were all persons of color. The School District agreed and conducted a second review of mentoring applicants, together with CCA staff. This second review led to the determination that 11 of 20 previously rejected volunteer applicants were in fact qualified to be mentors. Following this successful collaboration with the School District, CCA wrote a letter to Senator Charles Schumer, who has proposed federal legislation encouraging organizations to screen volunteer applicants for their criminal records and deny opportunities to people with records. The letter urges Senator Schumer instead to enact legislation that encourages making volunteer opportunities available to all and uses the model of New York's Correction Law to guide organizations in their decision-making.

Onondaga CASA Volunteers Help Children

CCA's Onondaga CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) program marked its 12th year of giving a voice to children in family court at its annual Light of Hope Breakfast on September 22, 2009. April Stone and her company, CNY Infusion Services, were awarded this year's "Hero" award, recognizing six years of financial support of the program. The Honorable Minna Buck was recognized as the 2009 Light of Hope Award recipient. Judge Buck has served on CCA's Onondaga CASA advisory committee since its inception in 1997. The mission of CCA's Onondaga CASA program is to train volunteers to speak up in court for the best interests of children who are abused and neglected. To date, it has had 126 volunteers who have served 380 children.



April Stone (I) receives the "Hero" award from CASA Coordinator Betty Carroll



Judge Minna Buck (I), Light of Hope awardee, with Marsha Weissman

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007

ASSETS

	2008	2007
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 74,486	\$ 43,197
Grants and contracts receivable	2,286,535	1,898,791
Client specific planning receivables	79,769	108,196
Prepaid expenses	6,088	3,508
Total current assets	2,446,878	2,053,692
PROPERTY:		
Furniture and equipment	161,076	156,176
Less accumulated depreciation	154,923	151,858
Property—net	6,153	4,318
SECURITY DEPOSITS	112,954	110,551
TOTAL	\$ 2,565,985	\$2,168,561

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES:		
Short-term bank borrowings	\$ 917,717	\$ 767,628
Accounts payable	152,093	110,656
Accrued payroll and payroll taxes	295,251	260,009
Deferred revenue	66,896	186,469
Total current liabilities	1,431,957	1,324,762
NET ASSETS—UNRESTRICTED	1,134,028	843,799
TOTAL	\$ 2,565,985	\$2,168,561

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
	2008	2007
GRANT AND CONTRACT:		
City of New York	\$ 2,234,379	\$ 1,653,548
Onondaga County Bar Association	—	53,012
New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives	389,720	212,299
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance		
Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	2,567,001	1,937,741
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services	755,810	618,664
New York State Department of Health	348,995	291,489
New York State Department of Correctional Services	134,015	105,634
City of Syracuse	7,525	7,500
Syracuse City School District (SCSD)	162,592	35,200
National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (CASA)	36,638	33,356
Public Health Solutions (PHS)/MHRA, Inc.	252,249	393,116
New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)	86,671	108,729
New York State Office of Children and Family Services	254,753	269,049
Onondaga County Department of Health	19,926	20,408
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES	77,672	70,223
New York State Department of Education—21st Century	207,457	216,356
Onondaga County Office of the District Attorney	_	22,146
Bronx Defenders Association		2,261
Total grant and contract support	\$ 7,535,403	\$ 6,050,731
FOUNDATION:		
Robin Hood Foundation	133,947	116,053
Public Interest Project—Fullfilling the Dream	49,606	85,880
Public Interest Project—U.S. Human Rights Fund	27,222	48,649
U.S. Conference of Mayors Foundation	_	52,615
Annie E. Casey Foundation	4,282	3,184
HIV Mac Global	255	719
New York Community Trust—Crossroads	11,211	34,622
Pinkerton Foundation	22,722	_
Central New York Community Foundation	27,801	—
Total foundation	\$ 277,046	\$ 341,722
TOTAL SUPPORT	\$ 7,812,449	\$ 6,392,453

	2008	2007
REVENUE:	105 222	146750
Client specific planning	185,223	146,758
United Way of Central New York	109,175	108,629
Frank H. Hiscock Legal Aid Society Rental income	15,123	12 275
		12,375 14,886
Miscellaneous revenue Contributions	38,480	
Interest income	31,786 936	24,672 1,807
Total revenue	380,723	309,127
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$ 8,193,172	\$6,701,580
EXPENDITURES		
PROGRAM SERVICES:		
New York State Demonstration/Client Specific Planning	156,852	128,793
Onondaga County ACER and PROUD Programs	—	63,364
Crossroads	750,407	689,517
SAMHSA Programs	2,243,289	1,659,355
Youth Advocacy Program–Syracuse	99,558	111,370
Strategies for Success	122,148	125,742
SCSD Connections	160,807	27,799
After School Alternatives–Syracuse	154,661	155,506
Youth Advocacy Program–New York City	762,082	495,115
Robin Hood Foundation	113,363	98,267
New York City–After School–Community Monitoring	604,425	270,753
Office of Children and Family Services	88,219	92,259
New York State Department of Health–CHOICES	310,570	317,026
Family Court Client Specific Planning	238,157	187,855
NYC Common Council Adult Specific Planning	49,476	52,424
CASA	99,160	106,959
PHS/MHRA/Choices-1A and Precise-A/Co-Factors	112,636	101,026
PHS/MHRA/Buddies/Women's Choices/Positive Choices	211,831	353,249
21st Century Community Learning Center	201,209	214,354
HIV Mac Global	255	819
Parent Success Initiative	66,882	60,677
NYS OASAS/Medicaid	17,880	—
Re-entry Related Services	6,561	
Total program services	6,570,428	5,312,229
Management and general	1,332,515	1,317,274
Total expenditures	7,902,943	6,629,503
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	290,229	72,077
NET ASSETS—BEGINNING OF YEAR	843,799	771,722
NET ASSETS—END OF YEAR	\$ 1,134,028	\$ 843,799

"I worked 20 years at an excellent job. I had my own house, a nice vehicle. Then one summer, I made a bad decision. I assisted a friend of mine in a bank robbery. It landed me in jail for four and a half years. I heard about CCAs re-entry program when I was close to being released. It sounded like help I would need once I returned to society. I went through the CCA job readiness program and got a certificate. I can't say how much help the staff gave me! It took me a year to find work. I was on public assistance, living with my cousin. Finally I was hired as a baker at a Tim Hortons Restaurant. I've been there eight months now. I've decided to become a social worker and I've started part-time at Syracuse University. I have my own apartment again. My life is on the upswing. I'm getting good grades. I made one bad decision and I'm glad I had CCA to get my life back together. I look forward to doing something good.

MIKE JONES TIM HORTONS RESTAURANT EMPLOYEE, SYRACUSE

Youth ages 13–17 come to CCA for help at very difficult times in their lives—most often, because a judge has ordered them to partic-

judge has ordered them to participate in our programs under penalty of going to jail or prison. Our dedicated staff do everything possible to make them feel appreciated and valued, while helping them stay out of further trouble. At CCA, they find opportunities for healthy recreation, trips, making new friends, and learning teamwork and leadership skills. The success of our program in helping youth get on a better track is evident in the data: Only 15.2% of CCA youth are re-arrested while they are with us, compared to 61% of youth in a comparable program in New York State.





CCA Brooklyn youth were the happy recipients of free, refurbished home desktop computers, thanks to a collaboration with Per Scholas, Inc. and Comp2Kids.



CCA Syracuse youth dressed up for Mardi Gras.



Youth in CCA's Brooklyn After-School Program played their hardest in an all-day basketball tournament on August 26 against youth from other city alternatives-to-detention programs. CCA youth won the tournament.



CCA Syracuse youth celebrate their completion of the Self Development program, consisting of job readiness training and summer work apprenticeships in cooperation with local employers.

"I came to CCA for the first time while I was on work release from prison. I worked at an organic health food store in midtown from 9–5 and came to CCA from 6–7 for the substance abuse treatment program. Then I got violated and had to go back upstate to finish my sentence. When I was paroled, I wanted to go to back to CCA. But by then, I was living in Queens with my mother where my parole officer didn't know about CCA. She wanted to send me to a hospital, but I kept insisting and she finally called. I'm happy about that because now CCA is on her list and other women will find out about it. I like it here. There's such a variety of programs: housing, job readiness, family reunification, arts and crafts, yoga, acupuncture. I've put in my housing application and I'm doing the job readiness program. I'm going to graduate from the substance abuse treatment program. I'm in no danger of going back to prison. CCA helps me deal with my problems. There are people here who have it so much worse than me. The next step for me is a place of my own to live, and then one day, I want to be a counselor.

MINERVA MUNIZ CCA/MANHATTAN CLIENT

"I'M LIVING REINTEGRA

"I love being a parent and I'm real good with my kids. I see them all the time! But I had trouble paying child support. I was receiving public assistance. I needed help getting a job. My CCA case manager put me in a job readiness class. I paid \$245 to get my license so I could work as a security guard. Then [the state] denied my license because of my rap sheet. I brought the denial to the CCA staff. They said 'It's not OK, and asked for a hearing. The CCA lawyer represented me. My CCA case manager was the witness. I had to explain all my past charges to the lady from the state licensing bureau. I had to give details. It was hard because now I'm clean. The tears came up. And the lady said, 'You're done with that now? That will never happen again?' A week later, the CCA staff came to me and said, 'You got your license. Now I'm back in school. I have a job as a resident manager at a shelter for runaway and homeless kids. I talk to youth. I make sure they follow the rules, take them on outings. Sometimes the parents call up and they're crying. I don't understand how a kid becomes homeless, but I listen. I'm right there. CCA helped me and so did my own experience of my childhood. That, and living clean— hearing other people's

WILLIE KEMP YOUTH COUNSELOR **SYRACUSE**

CCA youth client Alejandro Torres, age 15, was featured in a July 9, 2009 article in Hora Hispana, a Spanish-language daily newspaper in New York City. A Park Slope high school student, Alejandro was arrested on a robbery charge. Released to CCA's youth program while awaiting trial, Alejandro praised CCA to the reporter, while also maintaining his innocence. One week after the article appeared, his charges were dismissed.

A letter from Marsha Weissman appeared in the March 2, 2009 edition of the New York Daily News, responding to an editorial that opposed reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws. Marsha wrote, "The call for reform is not outdated, but what is obsolete is the perception that prison terms for people with drug addiction problems are the way to public safety."

The July 6, 2009 Chronicle of Philanthropy published a piece by Alan Rosenthal describing how he came to the decision to co-found and work as current Co-Director of CCA's Justice Strategies Division.

Alan and Patricia Warth, Co-Director of Justice Strategies, wrote a feature editorial on the benefits of the Temporary Release Program for the February 2009 edition of the New



York Non-Profit Press. Also in February, Patricia spoke about temporary release, together with Max Lindeman, CCA/NYC Director of Adult Services, on Eddie Ellis's weekly show, "On the Count" on WBAI-FM in New York City. She was also interviewed by a Central New York NPR radio station, WRVO. In April, she was interviewed together with Mike Pasquale, Project Director of Reintegration Services, for an article about employing people with criminal records in the Central New York Business Journal. The July 6 Syracuse Post-Standard published Patricia's op ed piece in support of New York State's new "conditional

sealing" statute. Finally, she appeared with Ernie Bullock, CCA Job Developer, on "Central Issues" on WCNY, a PBS-TV station, on September 15.

Alternativas para rehabilitar a jóvenes en situaciones conflictivas con la justicia

Comunidad

chicos ara trabajar com comunidad

Una oportunidad más

CCA is grateful for the support of private donors. Your generosity is a vital part of the struggle for reintegrative justice.

Over \$100,000

Public Health Solutions (PHS/MHRA) Robin Hood Foundation United Way of Central New York

\$50,000-\$99,999 Public Interest Project— Fulfilling the Dream

\$25,000-\$49,999

Public Interest Project -Human Rights Fund The Central New York Community Foundation The Pinkerton Foundation

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> [§]CASA Only ‡ CASA and CCA *Board Member

This Honor Roll acknowledges all contributions received by CCA from January 1–December 31, 2008.







When I came out of drug rehab, I had nothing, no apartment. My mom had my children. Now I go to two meetings a day here. I'm getting help with job searches, with my resume. I've got my kids back. This is my volunteer site for Jobs Plus, the welfare-to-work program. Also, I got a certificate of relief, signed by a judge, that clears my record for employment purposes. I did the 'Sisters Strong' program at CCA with my older daughters. We went through a session on women in incarcera tion. They cried. For my 13- and 9-year old, I'm mom again. I'm going to their school functions, I'm involved. I'm the link that holds us all together. When I'm messed up, everyone's messed up. I have to come here, it helps me get grounded. Now I'm going to go to college! CCA helped me fill out the forms so I can start in January. I've got my LPN, maybe I'll get my RN or go into human services. CCA is amazing I love it!"

TEMPEST SALDIVAR, LPN CCA/SYRACUSE SENIOR PEER LEADER "I came to CCA as a walk-in, while I was living in a halfway house after serving a 14-year prison term. Right away, I felt a closeness here. It didn't feel clinical. After my appointments, I d walk back down to the subway feeling empowered. I had always wanted to grow and improve but I lacked places and tools. Once I felt confident, it just burst open. I went back to school to study Information Technology. I took training in Autocad. I obtained employment as a telephone marketer. When CCA asked me to be a peer educator, I couldn't believe it! It's a wonderful feeling to lead a group. I've always had a passion to talk to people and empathize. Now I want to get my license in counseling and go back to college for engineering. I am a much better person than I was.

REGINALD COLEMAN CCA/BROOKLYN PEER EDUCATOR "The hardest thing about my three years in prison was not hearing the word, 'Ma.' In the last year of my sentence, I was allowed trailer visits with my kids. We had three days and two nights together. I could smell them, hear them breathe! I was happy. In prison, I got a certificate in 'money addiction. I led groups for 160 women. I facilitated AIDS prevention programs. I went to Jewish services and learned Hebrew. I'm 37—I'm not tired of life but I'm tired of where I've been. I know I can go back to my old hustle. But the lump in my throat is not going to go away like that. I got my first paycheck as a CCA counselor last week. It wasn't much. But it's going to take me farther. I'm looking for a second job. I want a home with both my children—my license as a substance abuse counselor-a career I can love. I want to make a network for women that need help. I've got a lot of determination and I'm not giving up.

KIMBLEE ROBINSON CCA/MANHATTAN PEER EDUCATOR



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