

# The Inside-Out Center NEWSLETTER

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

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## Illustrating the Breadth and Depth

We have lately been talking about breadth and depth in relation to Inside-Out. You will see both reflected in this newsletter. There are some very exciting developments – more than we could fit into this one issue. And what I am often reminded of is that, a few short years ago, we had just three Inside-Out instructors. That number has grown one-hundredfold since 2004 – actually, 310 instructors, at last count!

And, speaking of breadth, you will see that we have begun to refer to the program as international. We have several instructors from other countries who have taken the Inside-Out training, but the major reason for this shift at this time is that, as of the current semester, we have two solid programs developing in British Columbia and in Ontario, spanning Canada from west to east, which will see great expansion in upcoming semesters. Additionally, we are

expecting that some folks from Northern Ireland, who visited an Inside-Out class at the University of Oregon last spring, will be coming to one of the trainings this summer, with a plan to begin an Inside-Out program in Ireland.

In terms of depth, the focus of this newsletter is on the many Inside-Out think tanks across North America. The work in each area is unique and responsive to the interests and talents of the folks in that region. There are groups in prisons in Philadelphia, Oregon, Michigan, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Ohio, with new ones developing in Ontario, Indiana, and other places. These groups have all flowed out of Inside-Out classes taking place in those institutions. However, the think tanks represent only part of the involvements of Inside-Out alumni. There are short alumni updates in this issue, but deserving of more space and attention in future issues.

We celebrate the ongoing achievements of these groups, and hope that, through this highlight of their activities, other instructors and classes will be inspired to take their own work to another level, whenever possible. There's certainly a lot to be done!

Peace to you in this season.

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

### Editor's Note

Dear Inside-Out Community,

I'm glad you've found this: our fifth newsletter! In the past, the pages of our newsletters have been filled with insightful profiles and updates from many of Inside-Out's most visionary people. With good reason, these voices are also most familiar.

You'll note that this issue highlights the efforts of the think tanks that are organizing and deepening the engagement of Inside-Out's participants nationally. It also gives voice to efforts that, unlike think tank projects, have not yet been publicized within the national Inside-Out community. We sought submissions in order to answer for ourselves the following questions: What projects are being initiated? How are people and places changing as a result? This is a vast movement, and we all benefit from a richer understanding of its depth.

I think you'll be surprised and moved by these stories. We are excited to credit and share some of Inside-Out's proudest, previously unrecognized manifestations in the following pages.

– Alex Plattner  
Newsletter Editor  
Intern, Inside-Out at the University of Oregon Clark Honors College

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program® is an international 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.



## Planning the Work and Working the Plan

### Graterford Think Tank

The Graterford Think Tank is maintaining good stride toward the exit of 2011, still immersed in an eventful plan of action.

We entered this year focused on the funding and sustainability of Inside-Out International. As part of the fourth annual Inside-Out Steering Committee meeting held in January, we hosted a strategic planning session with Inside-Out instructors, staff, and the Enterprise Management Consultants (EMC) team from Temple's Fox School of Business. On the dissecting table was the EMC team's comprehensive 176-page report prepared for Inside-Out, entitled "Pathways to Sustainable Growth." Out of this critical meeting of minds rose a guiding theme: harnessing the power of the international network. To maximize this power, the Graterford Think Tank has been placing special focus on the continued development of what EMC identified as Inside-Out's core competencies (what has made Inside-Out successful, unique, hard to copy, and what will give Inside-Out an edge moving forward). They are: the Graterford Think Tank, the international network, and the instructor trainings.

Earlier this year, we had communication with the Michigan Theory Group, letting them know that we were proudly and confidently looking forward to them successfully completing their first instructor training, and to having continued dialogue with them about innovative ways to advance and enhance the international program. They responded with thoughts that were just as edifying and inspirational as they said ours were to them. We're excited about the Oregon Think Tank's first instructor training in June, and we hope to open lines of communication with them, as well. Think tanks connecting with each other is a seminal step in the cross-pollination of leadership, the creation of an International Think Tank, and thereby, harnessing the power of the international network.

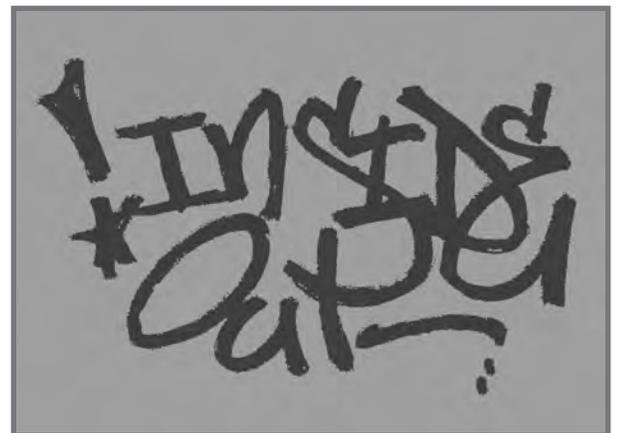
To further develop and harness this power, the Graterford Think Tank's Alumni Committee has begun to form focus groups to develop ways to keep Inside-Out alumni engaged with the program, either by continuing to develop class projects or pointing them towards organizations and programs inside and outside of prison in fields of their interest.

The Graterford Think Tank hosted three more instructor trainings this summer (after a mini-training in the spring), bringing our totals to 21 instructor trainings completed, and nearly 300 instructors trained, at Graterford since 2004. The distinctness of each training is clearer than ever; no two groups are the same. This summer, 50 participants hailed from 32 different universities, some from as far away as Canada. It is truly inspiring to see the exponential growth in the number of instructors from Canada. After meeting Shoshana, Deena, Martha, and others, we are extremely confident that Canada is in good hands. Our July training was significant because, for the first time ever, the

two days of training at the prison were facilitated entirely by an 'inside' Think Tank member: our colleague, Phil.

We have also conducted multiple workshops with various groups: Temple students, families of 'outside' Graterford Think Tank members, politicians and judges, and Philadelphia Community College students.

We appreciated Norm Conti visiting Graterford once again to consult with us about his project to facilitate an Inside-Out class of incarcerated students and police officers. We believe this idea teems with possibility. It was also great to have Dan Stageman of John Jay College (New York) consult with us about his research project on how and why the Inside-Out experience affects the lives and thinking of students, both 'inside' and 'out.'



Perhaps the greatest success of the year for the Graterford Think Tank was the commutation of Tyrone Werts after his having served 36+ years of a life sentence without parole. Tyrone was an original Inside-Out student and alumni, as well as an original Think Tank member. Almost since his very first day back in the free world, he has been one of the hardest-working staff members at the Inside-Out Center. He is a strong case for hope and second chances.

Wednesday evenings continue to be the weekly highlight for Graterford Think Tank members.

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## Graterford Think Tank Planning the Work and Working the Plan

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These are the precious, fleeting minutes for us to convene to carry out the indispensable work of charting the course of Inside-Out's future. We leave each meeting nourished, fortified, and energized to carry on the marathon work of expanding the Inside-Out circle. We are focused on recognizing our strengths and weaknesses, and augmenting and remedying them, respectively, so as to fine-tune our group processes for optimal efficacy. 'Inside' Think Tank members have also started holding meetings among themselves, in addition to the Wednesday meetings, to make full use of every available opportunity to move into 2012 with strength and focus.

May we all, together as an international network, stride into next year with our best foot forward. May our successes this year buoy our stride and our spirit. Let our guideposts be those themes that keep us moving Inside-Out along the road to real change in 2012. Harnessing the power of our network, funding and sustainability of the program, cross-pollination of leadership, group dynamics, personal and professional development, raising consciousness, movement/community building, and deepening – not just expanding – the program... these are just some of the themes that may help us to continue moving in the right direction.

Stay healthy, hardy, and high-spirited.  
Straight ahead!

– Ghani  
'Inside' Graterford Think Tank Member

## Hearing the Call to Challenge Ourselves Graterford Think Tank

On the night of October 19, 2011, Michelle Alexander, author of the dynamic and compelling book *The New Jim Crow*, graced our presence here at Graterford by attending a workshop centered around her call for racial justice and the theme of her book: the truth behind mass incarceration. In attendance were members of the Graterford Inside-Out Think Tank, the Public Safety Initiative, and professors from Villanova and Temple Universities. The atmosphere was just as electric as her book. The workshop began with each participant introducing him/herself, and quickly segued to an introduction of Michelle. With much anticipation, Michelle was handed a microphone and began to use the power of storytelling. She shared with us (and now, with all of you) the moment of her "awakening" and the indelible impact it made on her.

As a young lawyer working for the ACLU, she met, unexpectedly, a young African-American man who had been accused of selling drugs. Due to his appearance and eloquence, the ACLU immediately identified him as a perfect candidate to fight for, which is in conformity with the usual practice of representing ideal prospects less susceptible to *ad hominem* attacks. He shared with her a detailed



Michelle Alexander is the author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

account of all his encounters with the police who had planted evidence on him. She was excited to represent an innocent man. However, he was denied legal assistance when Michelle's office learned of his more extensive criminal record. As the man stormed out of her office, he told Michelle that she was no different from the police who framed him. Michelle expected that she would never see him again.

Some time later, the young man came to her office with some flowers that he picked from his grandmother's garden. He apologized and acknowledged her work in the community (he had seen her at a rally). Even more striking, Michelle discovered the news of the officer's involvement and eventual arrest for planting evidence in numerous other cases involving young men not unlike the one standing before her. This encounter awakened her to a grim reality and moved Michelle to re-examine her fight for racial justice, challenging those entrusted with the responsibility of protecting those rights won by the Civil Rights Movement.

After Michelle shared her story and some of the main points from her book, the group was asked to form six small groups to discuss questions such as: "How can we best make use of the information Michelle has shared with us?" "Are there other issues that also may need to be highlighted as we think about what leads to mass incarceration?" and "What roles can informed people play in building this work?" Michelle visited and listened to each group's discussion, which were inspired by the energy generated by her presence.

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## Leading the Way in the Northwest Greetings from Oregon!

Inside-Out alumni activity continues to surge here in Oregon. Six 'outside' alumni are driving the Book Club at the Serbu Juvenile Justice Center of Lane County to unprecedented heights. Facilitation and general leadership responsibilities are gradually being shifted from the college students to the youth. This project has generated more truly shared ownership of the process and empowered the youth to see themselves as effective leaders of their peers (and of the college students!), more capable of directing positive activities, 'inside' or 'out.'

In other news, Sister Helen Prejean, leading death penalty opponent and author of *Dead Man Walking*, visited Oregon in the third week of October. She spent most of October 20th inside Oregon State Penitentiary, where she spoke with 25 of OSP's incarcerated men, in an event organized by the prison's Religious Services department. In her talk, Sister Helen discussed what it is to lead a life of grace and forgiveness, and asked the group to share their own stories of grace.



Participants of the writing workshop facilitated by Lori Pompa and Sister Helen Prejean at Oregon State Penitentiary.

Then, from 9 am to 1 pm, Sister Helen co-facilitated a writing workshop that had at its heart the experience of witnessing harm. The writing generated in the workshop was deeply personal, and Sister Helen offered support and suggestions for improvement to every participant who shared his or her writing. Sister Helen also read from her published work, which many workshop participants called a highlight of the session. Sister Helen says that "...the writing workshop at the Oregon State Penitentiary brought the college students together with the inmates and everyone worked so hard to be creative and support each other in the writing process. It's rare to see that much comfort and sharing in any space. Those folks wrote some really beautiful stories, and they helped each other grow at the same time."

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## Hearing the Call to Challenge Ourselves Graterford Think Tank

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Once discussions ended, the group was asked to form a large circle and share one or two major themes that emerged from their small group discussion. Suggestions addressing our approach in discussing mass incarceration included the use of creative language, reframing labels and introducing into the conversation 'over-term offenders' (people incarcerated too long, e.g. those serving life without parole). Comments about the potential contained within these walls resonated with the group, and also with Michelle. She shared her view that the idea of change springing forth from a sea of people is misplaced, and that, in actuality, ideas for change have historically flowed from a fountain of a few committed people. Further details were unnecessary; everyone understood her words.

The call to challenge ourselves and think of new ways of tackling what seems to be an insurmountable mountain echoed with us well beyond her departure. *The New Jim Crow* has generated a new discussion about mass incarceration that many behind these walls want to be a part of. Michelle Alexander's workshop was one step toward that inclusion and another step toward inspiring fountains to spring forth in the unlikeliest of places. It was once shared in a Graterford Think Tank meeting that "life is a series of composed vignettes loosely tied together by a string of characters and time" (Seraji, Mahbod: *Rooftops of Tehran*). By all accounts, characters and time witnessed a beautifully composed vignette on this night spent with Michelle Alexander.

– Mu

'Inside' Graterford Think Tank Member

## Leading the Way in the Northwest Greetings from Oregon!

*continued*

There is other exciting news in terms of regional development, too. February of 2011 saw the initiation of Inside-Out's first think tank in Oregon, at Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem. ACE, or Another Chance at Education, meets twice every month to work toward "...providing training to educators who wish to participate in a unique educational experience that includes building community based upon shared learning between 'inside' and 'outside' students" (excerpted from mission statement). Francisco, an 'inside' ACE member, says: "My experience in the Think Tank has greatly affected me. It has opened my eyes to my ability to change some things about our prison system that I see as unjust, namely, the lack of educational opportunity."

In June 2012, Inside-Out will hold a week-long instructor training in Oregon for the first time. The 'inside' portion of the training will be held at Oregon State Penitentiary, and be, in part, facilitated by ACE. Lori Pompa, Inside-Out's Founder and Director, travelled to Oregon last month to help prepare ACE's 'inside' members to train instructors in June. ACE gathered at OSP on Saturday and Sunday to familiarize ourselves with the Inside-Out curriculum and pedagogy, as well as brainstorm best practices for support of instructors-in-training. Just as the instructors-in-training will do in June, ACE's 'inside' members were charged with presenting sections of the 15-week curriculum to the group, and are currently working in small groups to generate a course theme, syllabus, reading list, and facilitated activity.

Excitement about the June training is high. Kosal, another 'inside' ACE member, says he hopes to "...influence instructors to develop a less conventional way..." of teaching. "Why should the experience of school be one of tedium?" he asks. Francisco hopes "...to give the instructors the confidence and skills to give an effective Inside-Out class..." and "...to make them feel at home and that they are a part of a community here at Oregon State Penitentiary." Bring on June!

Sister Helen said something about her recent visit that has all of us feeling proud and energized about the work ahead: "What's happening out in Oregon is changing the way students and the community think about prisons. The Inside-Out Program is creating a safe space to talk about real issues, and makes it possible for folks to learn together. So much learning takes place on both sides, and I think this is creating better understanding and dialogue on the serious issues of crime and punishment in this country. Oregon is leading the way in making these conversations happen."

– ACE Think Tank and Inside-Out alumni of Oregon



In small groups, participants in the writing workshop share their personal stories of causing, witnessing, and responding to harm.

## 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)
- 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 the country and abroad.

*See last page*

## Michigan: Keeping Things Moving

After a month off in August, the Michigan Theory Group was busy again this fall. We have been working toward two of our main objectives: expanding Inside-Out to institutions around the state and the application of restorative justice principles throughout the state. Thus far, we have had successes in both arenas.

The new year brought a new governor and his staff, including the current Director of the Michigan Department of Corrections, Daniel Heyns. Director Heyns has stated that he is "...enthusiastic about continuing to work in collaboration with...colleges and universities to ensure the continuation of the Inside-Out program in our state." He noted the benefits of Inside-Out to all of the students, the institutions which offer the program, the state of Michigan, and its citizens. The support of Director Heyns will help us get Inside-Out operating in more facilities, in turn expanding educational opportunities for people who are incarcerated. "The state of Michigan and its citizens benefit enormously from the Inside-Out Program as we know that higher education reduces recidivism," Director Heyns commented. We couldn't agree more!

The Theory Group also worked on putting together a HUB meeting and Restorative Justice Conference. The MIIO (meow) HUB meeting was held Thursday, November 3, and welcomed Inside-Out trained instructors from Michigan, Northern Indiana, Northern Illinois, and Ohio. The instructors combined forces with the Theory Group for a discussion

about the HUB's function and direction. We decided collectively to continue meeting; the next meeting will be held at the University of Toledo in the spring. Thus far, our purpose is to provide support for instructors while trying to grow the program in new locations. Rather than predetermining the way the group should function, we decided to allow it to grow organically, in order to best meet the needs of its members.



The Theory Group at Ryan Correctional Facility, Michigan's Think Tank.

The HUB meeting was followed by a two-day conference entitled "Restorative Justice: Working Together for a Safer Michigan." Attendees included religious and community leaders, legislators, MDOC personnel, educators, and Theory Group members. On Friday, the conference convened at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and served as an informational segment about restorative justice practices. The day's events began with Robert Johnson (former President of the National District Attorney's Association from Minnesota) who presented "A Prosecutor's View of Restorative Justice." This talk was followed by a dynamic panel discussion entitled "Making it Happen in Michigan: Obstacles and Opportunities."

Participants in the panel included Patricia Caruso (former Director of the Michigan Department of Corrections), David LaGrand (former Kent County Prosecutor and Grand Rapids City Council Commissioner), and Henry McClendon Jr. (Program Officer at the Skillman Foundation and Michigan Regional Coordinator for the International Institute of Restorative Practices). After a lunch break, the group returned to "Dead Man Walking: The Journey Continues," a presentation by Sister Helen Prejean (leading death penalty opponent and author of *Dead Man Walking*). Susan Sharpe (Restorative Justice Advisor at Notre Dame Law School) wrapped up the day's events with thoughts on "Learning to See through New Lenses."

Saturday's events took place inside of Ryan Correctional Facility with Theory Group members directing the activities. The day was spent

challenging the group to think about ways to apply restorative justice and making commitments to do so. The opening activity was a vignette called "Moment of Truth," designed by inside members of the Theory Group to display the way restorative justice can have an impact within prisons. This activity was followed by breakout sessions led by theory group members entitled: "The Role of Faith Communities in RJ," "Possibilities of RJ in Corrections," "Legislative Possibilities for RJ," and "Advancing RJ for Juvenile Justice." Theory Group member LaShel sang us into lunch with her rendition of "Be a Lion." After lunch, we gathered in a circle, shared what happened in the

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## Ohio: People for Change Pushing to Change the Culture

The "People for Change" Inside-Out alumni group was formed to develop an ongoing overview of what is needed and what is expected of individuals who have completed the program. We are organized to encourage others to apply for the Inside-Out program and to awaken the consciousness of those individuals who have not had a place to exercise their thinking and share their ideas.

Since the first Inside-Out class ended and an alumni group was formed, many different ideas about positive change have been discussed. First, People for Change hosted a financial seminar given by the staff of Directions Credit Union in Toledo, Ohio. The classes lasted eight weeks; every Tuesday we held two one-hour sessions. The topics ranged from "How to Apply for Loans," to "Repairing Credit," to "Starting Your Own Business." Unlike most programming in the Toledo prison, our classes were open to all individuals, no matter the time they had left inside. All individuals who attended received letters of completion.

People for Change has initiated a quarterly newsletter within the Toledo Correctional Institution. This newsletter will provide residents of the institution a place to express themselves on topics that are relevant to the community inside and outside of the prison.

As an alumni of the Inside-Out program, and a current member of the People for Change group, I encourage individuals everywhere who have participated in an Inside-Out class and those who wish to in the future, to use their resources and understanding to bring about a change in the culture we find ourselves in at this moment, in our individual lives and our history. If we can change how we think, then we can change how we act, which will change how we respond to adversity in our future.

– Jamil

On behalf of the Inside-Out alumni group,  
People for Change, Toledo Correctional Institution

## Michigan Keeping Things Moving

*continued*

breakout sessions, and brainstormed ways to move RJ forward in the state. Before making our personal commitments to action, the group was treated by Theory Group member Raheem's reenactment of a speech that Malcolm X made upon returning from Mecca. Saturday's guest evaluations noted that the program was "inspiring," "opened my eyes to new possibilities," and that "having the opportunity to engage with the men inside also brought the whole issue to life." It's time for Michigan to take this momentum and put the wheels in motion!

– Sara

Ryan Correctional / University of  
Michigan-Dearborn  
Theory Group

*Dear Family,*

*Nearly a decade has passed since I was a student in an Inside-Out classroom. I recall coming face to face each week with my own humanity and that of others in a way I had never imagined possible. Each week I was given the opportunity to view some of the complexities of our criminal justice system through the lens of others. With the sharing of different perspectives, myths were shattered, barriers broken, self-esteem elevated, and consciousness awakened, giving rise to the empowerment which continues to serve as a catalyst for social change.*

*Inside-Out is high up on my list of priorities because it has helped me to think more critically, to be more tolerant of others, to appreciate diversity, and to see myself as part of a greater whole. In Inside-Out, lives are often transformed as students, professors, and those coming from all walks of life are engaged in the art of thinking, being, and living more authentically.*

*The reason I donate to Inside-Out is because I know what it has done for me personally. I would give almost anything to see this work continue because I wholeheartedly believe that, as lives are transformed one classroom at a time, the world at large is also being transformed.*

*In closing, thank you for your time... and I pray that peace and love will be your constant guide.*

*Gratefully yours,  
Charles, 'Inside' Graterford Think Tank Member*

We hope that you will consider making a gift to Inside-Out this year. Please see last page for instructions. Thank you!

## West Virginia Making Unprecedented Inroads into the Federal System

Since our last update in December 2010, the West Virginia Justice Roundtable (our “think tank”) has continued to meet to discuss local issues related to crime and justice. The Justice Roundtable is held at Pruntytown Correctional Center in North Central West Virginia. In Spring 2011, a group of ‘inside’ students from the Justice Roundtable were escorted to the main campus of West Virginia University in Morgantown to talk with more than 100 sociology and criminology students about their experiences with illegal drugs and with the criminal justice system. We received many favorable written comments from the students and faculty who attended. Sarah Trickett, the Associate Warden for Programs, has been incredibly supportive of the Justice Roundtable and a key advocate of the Inside-Out program in West Virginia. We plan to continue activities into 2012 and beyond.

In addition, during the past year, Jeri Kirby, a lecturer in the department of Sociology and Anthropology, began conducting Inside-Out classes at a federal penitentiary in WV and has made incredible inroads into the federal system. The final project of her first Inside-Out class was the development of a year-long residential re-entry program for women. Her students developed a program that would have incarcerated women living together, learning together, and transitioning out of prison and into their communities together. The program has women taking approximately 52 classes over a 12-month period. They will participate in community meetings and in community projects that they design and implement together.

The warden and staff of the federal prison have shown tremendous support for the program and have assisted in many ways. Over the past year, three women from the ‘inside’ and multiple interns from the ‘outside’ have

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worked tirelessly to bring this program to fruition. We are presently in the fourth month of this re-entry program with the first cohort of students, and there are two more cohorts of incarcerated women finishing the 90-day pre-requisite program who will be ready to move into the unit in January 2012. We have high hopes for the success of women who complete this program and for the continuation and expansion of the Inside-Out Program in the federal correctional system.

– Jeri Kirby and Jim Nolan  
Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology  
West Virginia University



The Fall 2011 closing ceremony for Charlie Johnson’s Inside-Out class, offered through Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis with community partners RecycleForce, the Progress House, and the Dove House.

## Tennessee Perseverance and Bold Reimagining in Nashville

News from Nashville is mixed. At the pre-release prison, where Inside-Out instructors Glenda Lingo and Janet Wolf first started Inside-Out courses in 2005, we had one of our largest classes ever, with a long waiting list. About 2/3 of the way through the semester, the Commissioner suddenly removed several of our ‘inside’ students and think tank members from the course, arguing that they had too much time left to serve to be involved in an Inside-Out course. That was traumatic, but we persisted. Then, two weeks ago, the Commissioner closed the entire pre-release facility, ending our class, the work of our ‘inside’ teaching team, and jobs for those on work release. ‘Inside’ leaders of TRIO: Transformation from the Inside Out, our think tank at the facility, were shipped across the state. We are still struggling to find out where everyone is and identify ways to reconnect.

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## Tennessee Perseverance and Bold Reimagining in Nashville

*continued*

In the meantime, our 'outside' think tank, composed of former students, outsiders and insiders who have been released, has become more creative, energetic and resourceful in reimagining how we will continue our work. We have already been invited by several Nashville prisons to relocate our courses, and we plan to offer classes next semester. We opened a new class at the Special Needs prison through an invitation to Western Kentucky Inside-Out instructor Kate King, and the resulting learning community around victimology has been transformative. They are hoping to create a think tank during this next semester and have already written training materials dealing with the course topics.

SALT: Schools for Alternative Learning and Transformation, a think tank that we created at Riverbend Maximum Security Prison before our partnership with Inside-Out, has been wonderfully creative. We continue the graduate theology classes but have added an undergraduate English class this semester, "Reading Against the Walls," with Inside-Out instructors Sarah Passino and Janet Wolf. Colin Dayan, author of *The Law is a White Dog*, joined us for conversation and was so enthused that she offered to become a part of SALT.

In addition, we have received approval to start a reading group on death row and are working with American Baptist College to sponsor a visit from Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow*, in March. Those in leadership and most in the class have already read Alexander's book and are preparing community workshops to provide education on the issues before she arrives in Nashville.

– Janet Wolf  
American Baptist College

## Canada The First Inside-Out Women's Think Tank Is Formed

This fall, one of the first two Inside-Out courses to run in Canada is unfolding at Grand Valley Institution, a women's federal prison in Kitchener, Ontario. The 17 students in this Wilfrid Laurier University course in Social Work, "Diversity, Marginalization and Oppression," are extremely excited to announce that their group project is the development of the first Canadian Think Tank, which is also the first women's Inside-Out Think Tank. As an Omnibus Crime Bill threatens a huge prison boom in Canada, and the rate of women's incarceration here especially escalates, our passion and commitment to social justice has a clear direction.

As a reflection of our collaborative process, we offer the following comments from the collective voice of our Inside-Out class:

This program is a gift to all those who strive for social justice from very real places in their hearts. Each woman in Inside-Out brings a lifetime of



Image developed for the Ontario Think Tank by Tia, one of the 'inside' students from the GVI/WLU Inside-Out class.

experience and understanding into the classroom. We read about theories in preparation for the class, and then we deconstruct them together, bringing our individuality into every interpretation. We learn about systems and structures that create marginalization and oppression and how we are affected. We learn how different forms of oppression intersect and the paramount importance of self-definition. We have had the profound experience of learning about one another and of understanding how important we each are, as individuals and as a collective, in this world. We often laugh and cry in class.

Our final class project has begun; it is a collaborative effort to unite our personalities, perspectives and passions. Our group is still realizing the power we are creating here, and the excitement is visible. The fact that our voices can be unified – the prison and the community's – is paving the way for unimaginable opportunity (opportunity that we may not fully comprehend until we are reflecting on our accomplishments). Whatever we do – this is still a work in progress – we will surely accomplish a lot! We will put our Inside-Out inspiration to work and add fuel to the social justice causes that lie at the heart of this international program.

– GVI/WLU Inside-Out class (Fall 2011)  
– Shoshana Pollack, Instructor;  
Simone Davis, Inside-Out Canada Coordinator

## 'Inside' Stories Going Global

Don and Rich, two 'inside' students of my history class in Northampton, Massachusetts in the fall of 2010, had their essays presented at the Second Global Conference: "Experiencing Prison" in Warsaw, Poland in May of 2011. My class and I learned about the conference in the fall of 2010 from Simone Davis, who circulated a call for papers from both academics and people who were or had been incarcerated. Don and Rich both expressed interest in submitting proposals, and they both developed one-paragraph descriptions of what they planned to enlarge on.

Don's working title, "Pieces of a Man," suggested the ways in which he had experienced his life, splintered by childhood abuse, drugs, and frequent stints inside. A gifted illustrator, accomplished carpenter and mechanic, Don's proposal reflected the tremendous importance work had for him and the disappointments he'd suffered in trying unsuccessfully to integrate satisfying work into a life marred by early violence and drugs. Rich's story focused on his chaotic childhood, raised by drug-addicted parents on the run from the law, and his early and traumatic introduction to life in state institutions where violence and sexual abuse were the rule.



A class of students from UMass Dartmouth and the Bristol County HOC, studying Crime, Justice, & Policy.

The conference organizers responded quickly that they liked the proposals very much and wanted the men to submit 8-page papers to be delivered for them at the May program in Poland. Don and Rich were thrilled and a bit apprehensive. The hard work of drafting and redrafting began, as they tried to select the anecdotes and details that would give shape and life to their powerful stories. For both men, the work was not only a writing challenge, but also a sometimes painful, yet deeply enlightening, process of self-discovery, in which they dug up long-buried memories that helped them make sense of the forces acting on them and the direction their lives had taken.

Their work was well-rewarded. A conference organizer, Diana Medlicott, read their papers and wrote later that they "...went down in a storm; we were all moved by their accounts. ... We talked about issues of identity and how people change over time in prison, and time and again, people came back to a remark in one of the papers about how hard...it is to change and make it on the outside. And then there would be a little silence in which you could tell that everyone was thinking of Don and Rich. ... The two papers will go into our e-book volume."

Rich and Don were overjoyed with the success of their papers. These essays earned them public respect and recognition for hard work, thoughtful and honest introspection, and for making unique and moving contributions to a vital and expanding conversation about incarceration. It was inspiring to work with them.

– Martha Saxton  
Professor of History and Women's and Gender Studies  
Elizabeth W. Bruss Reader, Amherst College

## Philadelphia Alumni Updates

'The Inside-Out Alumni Association: Philadelphia' has developed a number of exciting initiatives with the purpose of continuing and expanding involvement in Inside-Out. Moving forward with a strong infrastructure and committed participants, both 'inside' and 'out,' Philly Alumni plan to reach out to more of its stakeholders with hopes of laying a sustainable framework. We just finished our second alumni-led workshop series with the current cohort of the Cambria College Program, coordinated by the Re-entry Support Project at the Community College of Philadelphia, which offers credit-bearing pre-college and college level courses to qualified individuals incarcerated in the Philadelphia Prison System.

The Alumni Association's Aftermath Think Tank has been hard at work and dedicated to its mission of community outreach and public education. Throughout our group's first six months of brick-laying, we have hosted community workshops, developed our mission and vision, hosted team-building activities, fostered organizational partnerships, and much more. The Aftermath Think Tank is comprised of a diverse group of college students, graduates, and community members who are dedicated to incorporating members of the Cambria College Program and Inside-Out courses into our work once they are paroled. This coming December, we will begin partnering with the Mural Arts Program on a special project related to families of men and women who are incarcerated.

– Francesco Campanell  
For the Philadelphia  
Alumni Association

## Natalie Sokoloff Lifetime Achievement

Inside-Out is proud to announce that Natalie Sokoloff, who took our first training in 2004 and who recently retired after 40 years of teaching at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from The American Society of Criminology's Division on Women and Crime. This is an exceptional achievement in that the award is not given every year; it is only awarded to those whose work epitomizes the best in teaching, research, and activism around issues of women, crime, and justice. Natalie has consistently taught in the following areas: women, crime, and justice; race, class, gender and incarceration; imprisonment and empowerment; domestic violence.

Although she has not yet taught an Inside-Out class, Natalie says that "...Inside-Out informed my teaching, as I would develop class activities, discussions, and actions, over the years." She adds that her "...teaching style has always lent itself to an Inside-Out framework, and that is why I have felt so committed to it over the years." She plans to teach her first Inside-Out course in the near future. We eagerly await it!

Congratulations, Natalie!

## Seattle Conference Transformative Education Behind Bars

This wonderfully-named conference at the University of Washington and the Monroe Correctional Center, November 4-6, 2011, brought together interested parties from at least ten programs that offer higher education or arts programming in prisons. Hosted and organized by Gillian Harkins, Miriam Bartha and Annie Dwyer, this marked the second 'solidarity gathering' for North American programs doing such work, in a conversation that is guaranteed to continue. (Education Justice Project at University of Illinois Urbana Champaign debuted the first conference in Fall 2010; Sean Pica from HudsonLink will host next year's.) We shared vital conversation about best practices, covering terrain like prison pedagogies, approaches to funding, and program assessment. We also talked about how we can work in solidarity to help move the national conversation about prison and education substantially forward, and how we can complement each other's efforts in the work we're doing.

At least seven Inside-Out staff and instructors attended. Looking forward, people from Washington's diverse programs offering education behind bars expressed an interest in attending an Inside-Out training, with University of Washington funding three people to attend the training this coming year. It is our hope that part of what may emerge from their participation is one model of how different education programs may complement each other in a way that creates a whole that is larger than the sum of the parts.

The weekend's highlight was the visit to WSR Monroe Correctional Facility, where we got to speak with the Advisory Board, a group of incarcerated advisor-student-instructors. This board plays a multi-faceted leadership role in University Beyond Bars (check out <http://www.universitybeyondbars.org/about-ubb/prisoners-advisory-committee/>). With UBB founder Carol Estes and Superintendent Scott Frakes, the Advisory Committee members introduced us to their program and fielded questions. We also got to visit a Spanish class and a Math class, both college prep, that were facilitated by men from this board. They were engaging in some lively, collaborative, extremely productive teaching. It was remarkable!

In fact, several conversations came up during the weekend about how to invite, train, not exploit and fully support inside alumni who are interested in offering instruction. A few more topics worth thinking about: digital access and digital literacy, accommodating different learning styles, heritage speakers, and Spanish and other language classes.

A larger question provoked, troubled and inspired us all throughout the weekend, so we will leave you with it, as well. It is a deceptively simple question: What is education for?

– Melissa Crabbe, Assistant Director, Inside-Out  
Simone Davis, Professor, Trinity College, The University of Toronto



## Inside-Out 'Outside' Alumni and Program Assistant Katie Dwyer Awarded Prestigious Scholarship

If you've had any communications with Inside-Out in Oregon, odds are you've had the pleasure of getting to know Katie Dwyer, a second-year student in the University of Oregon's Conflict and Dispute Resolution graduate program, and Program Assistant for Inside-Out. It is with the utmost pride that we announce to the Inside-Out community that Katie has been selected to be one of 12 George J. Mitchell Scholars, who will pursue a year of post-graduate study at universities in Ireland during 2012-2013. The 12 Scholars were selected from a pool of 300 applicants. Katie will study for an LL.M in Cross Border Studies at Queen's University Belfast, for half of the academic year, before spending the second half at National University of Ireland, Galway.

Congratulations to Katie, who we know will be as transformative and inspirational to others as she has been during her time with Inside-Out at the University of Oregon!

"Katie is a talented, committed, and passionate young woman who has helped to take the Inside-Out program to the next level in the Pacific Northwest Region. She will now have the opportunity to expand her involvement in issues of social justice in some very significant ways through this opportunity," says Lori Pompa, Inside-Out Founder and Director.

Visit the following link for an in-depth description of the Mitchell Scholarship, a summary of Katie's achievements, and a number of photos of the award reception: <http://www.us-irelandalliance.org/content/334/en/Scholarships/ProgramNews/Classof2013MitchellScholarsSelected.html>

- Alex Plattner, University of Oregon

## 2012 calendar

|          |       |   |
|----------|-------|---|
| January  | 12-15 | Inside-Out Strategic Planning Meeting #2                        |
| February | 3-5   | Train-the-Trainers Session with Michigan Theory Group           |
| February | 24-26 | Train-the-Trainers Session with Oregon Think Tank ("ACE")       |
| March    | 2-7   | Steering Committee and Research Committee Overlapping Meetings  |
| March    | 13-17 | Annual Meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (NY) |
| May      | 21-27 | International Training Institute #24 (Michigan)                 |
| June     | 18-24 | International Training Institute #25 (Oregon)                   |
| July     | 22-29 | International Training Institute #26 (Philadelphia)             |
| August   | TBD   | International Training Institute #27 (Maryland)                 |



### THE INSIDE-OUT CENTER

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## The Last Word

Pre-conceived notions. We are all guilty of harbouring them. Notions of what we think things are supposed to be. Things like prison, and education. Of what and who the student is, and what and who the convict is.

These notions have many aliases. They can be called assumptions. Generalizations. Stereotypes. Archetypes. Call them what we may; they are dangerous, for they draw the deep lines, framing the societal and cultural confines which keep us all apart. Which keep us all oppressed.

Today, those lines are blurred. No, today they don't exist. Today there is no distinction between student and convict and education and prison.... because today, right here, we are all students. Learning. Evolving. Erasing. Celebrating.

The lesson? Invaluable.

Tearing free from our pre-conceived notions. Breaking down the walls.

Building bridges, building communities. Linking education to rehabilitation. And growing internally all the while.

This is the lesson I have taken from the Inside-Out program. And what a great program it is.

When I first applied, I suspected something very special was beginning here - but I had no idea. And how could anyone understand what a profound experience this is?

This class has a lot to offer.

The voices of the class have a lot to offer.

Each person has given me inspiration. Given me the confidence to do things like this. And hope. The whole class - from its structure, to every person in it - has given me hope. From learning the content, to listening to all your stories and ideas, fears and dreams, I have realized that I am not as alone as I thought I was. That you are all strong and brave people, and that this world isn't an easy place for any of us.

I have realized something else too. And it's that we have got to hold onto programs like this. We have got to embrace them, as we most certainly have here. For this class has let us be strong and brave together. It has become a text from which we can reference as we go along our individual endeavours. A tool which we can use together to mend what is broken. And a beginning from which something awesome is blossoming.

And standing here today, I understand more than oppression, marginalization and diversity; I understand liberation too. Because today, I am free. Not in body, but in mind and heart. And that's because of this class, because of all of you. Thank you.

- Nikki, student in "Diversity, Marginalization and Oppression",  
Fall 2011,  
Faculty of Social Work,  
Wilfrid Laurier University  
and Grand Valley Institution  
for Women

"If you don't already know about the Inside-Out program, check it out and get involved! It's so important that we end the separation between 'us' and 'them' - the 'prisoners,' the 'criminals,' those labeled 'felons.' It is this separation and demonization of the 'others' - and our failure to truly see, hear, and engage with those who have been locked up and locked out - that makes it easy for us to remain in deep denial about what we, as a nation, have done."

- Michelle Alexander  
Author of *The New Jim Crow:  
Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

"The Inside-Out Program is creating a safe space to talk about real issues, and makes it possible for folks to learn together. So much learning takes place on both sides, and I think this is creating better understanding and dialogue on the serious issues of crime and punishment in this country."

- Sister Helen Prejean  
Author of *Dead Man Walking*



# 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 allows us to convene a Degrees of Freedom stakeholder meeting
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

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