



UPAN Newsletter Volume 2 Number 10 | **OCTOBER 2015**

“Empowerment and Growth Through Knowledge and Unity”

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NEXT UPAN MEETING : MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2015 6:30-8:30 PM

Location: Millcreek Library 2266 East Evergreen Avenue, SLC UT 84109, (Evergreen Ave is 3435 South)

NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO MEETING HELD IN DECEMBER

Next FOCUS Meeting: Monday, November 2, 2015 Topic is IPP

Location: Adult Probation and Parole Office, 36 W. Fremont Avenue, Salt Lake City UT 84101
(FOCUS meetings are held every other month on the first Monday of the month)

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CHRISTMAS / HOLIDAY CARDS

Call For Volunteers To Send Cards To Inmates

The past two years, UPAN families and volunteers have sent Christmas or Holiday Cards to inmates who would not otherwise receive them. We currently have several volunteers who already print and mail the newsletters to inmates who don’t have their own family or friend support to do so. We are seeking volunteers to send holiday cards to inmates. If you are willing to do this, please email us at utahprisoneradvocate@gmail.com and let us know how many inmates you are interested in sending cards to. We will provide you with names as soon as we get them collected.

If you already send newsletters to inmates and wish to send holiday cards to those same individuals, please let us know that you will do so. If you cannot send cards to the inmates you already send newsletters to, please let us know and we will be happy to assign them to another volunteer who is willing to send cards alone. We are hoping to have a list of volunteers in place by mid-November to assign inmates to.

Gathering of Names of Inmates

If you know of incarcerated individuals who have no one who sends them cards or letters, and you would like to offer their name for the UPAN Holiday Card program, please submit their Name, Offender #, housing unit, and facility (Draper, Gunnison, a county jail, etc.). If you have the address and zip code of the county jail that would be helpful, (as we don’t have those memorized the way we do Draper and CUCF). You may email the information to utahprisoneradvocate@gmail.com or mail the information to UPAN P.O. Box 464 Draper, UT 84020. Please submit names before November 10.

The mail rooms in the prisons, particularly Draper, become backlogged and overwhelmed during the holidays. We are hoping UPAN families / volunteers can be assigned their inmates by mid-November which will allow them to get their cards mailed by the first part of December, to assure the recipients receive them before Christmas.

**SUMMARY OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2015 UPAN MEETING –
Implementation of HB 348 By Molly Prince**

We had a full room of approximately 50 attendees at the September 14, 2015 UPAN meeting. Our guest speakers were Greg Johnson, Administrative Coordinator for the Utah Board of Pardons and Parole; Craig Burr, Director of Programming for Utah Department of Corrections; and Steve Gehrke, Director of Transition for the Utah Department of Corrections.

UPAN appreciates the willingness of each of these men to come and present at our meeting, on a Monday evening, on their own time. Each of our guests expressed their desire to improve the system and help incarcerated individuals improve their lives.

UPAN had provided our guests with questions from UPAN families prior to the meeting, so they could be prepared to address the areas of most concern and interest regarding the implementation of HB 348 in their respective areas of expertise.

HB 348 has presented the Dept. of Corrections and the Board of Pardons and Parole with unique challenges in how to implement some of the requirements. Accompanying this article is a link to Q & A and summary of the areas HB348 provides for. Some of these areas require the BOPP to revise the way they make decisions, including areas such

as credit for time served, parole violations, earned time programs (time cuts) and compliance credit on parole.

Time cuts of at least 4 months off an inmate's release date can be earned by an individual who successfully completes the highest ranked Case Action Plan Priority. An additional 4 months time cut can be granted for completed a second CAP program, for a total possible of 8 months. These time cuts may be lost for a major disciplinary infraction. Also, this law is not retroactive, so applies to offenders who reach the requirements on or after October 1, 2015. There are a few exceptions, such as individuals who graduated in June 2015 will be eligible for a special attention hearing.

The following are questions posed to the panel and answers provided. Please note that while we are reporting the answers to the questions as given by the guest speakers, it does not mean that we as UPAN necessarily agree with how everything is being implemented. This article is simply reporting. We understand that in theory, things may be as these administrators report them to be, while in actual practice many of us have experienced things to be different than policy requires or how the UDC administration or Board administrative coordinator believes things happen in actual practice. Please note that any commentary by the author of this article is included in *italics*.

BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE QUESTIONS

Answered by **Greg Johnson**, *Administrative Coordinator* with the Utah Board of Pardons and Parole

1. How can the DOC and BOPP have different matrix systems?

According to Mr. Johnson, "There should be only one matrix. If there is new information that comes to the Board after sentencing, then the Board calculates this." He reported that the Board provides the matrix to the inmate and if the inmate sees a problem or has other information that would impact the matrix, "the inmate can let the board know." *Author's note: In UPAN's April 2015 meeting, Jan Nicol discussed another reason for discrepancies in matrix numbers between the sentencing or Presentence Investigation Report (PSI) matrix and the matrix calculated by the Board. She explained that since each jurisdiction in Utah has their own staff calculating the*

matrix prior to sentencing for the purpose of sentencing, there may be some discrepancies between jurisdictions. For this reason, the Board has its own staff that recalculate matrices for everyone under board jurisdiction (all state inmates). We have received letters stating that if corrections staff throughout the state are all using the same matrix guidelines, there should not be differences in how the matrix is scored. In a perfect world that would be true. But I would suggest that human bias and error can cause the same inmate to be rated differently by two different individuals calculating a matrix. No matter what agency they work for.

2. Why are the board meeting notes of decision factors released to the public?

"Because they are public information."

3. **Why is the DOC and BOPP not streamlined for programming, or other success factors for inmates to have a plan and a timeline?**

Mr. Johnson's response to this is that "we all should be." *Author's note: This is an area that we hope the DOC and the BOPP will work toward coordinating more effectively. This would assist incarcerated individuals to have the opportunity to meet their CAP priorities in a timely manner.*

4. **There are some classifications of crimes that do not require a formal, long term treatment program such as SOTP or SATP. These could include crimes that involved the death of a person (homicide, murder, involuntary manslaughter) or white collar crimes such as fraud, embezzlement, etc. What provisions are there for these types of offenders for earning time cuts?**

Answer: (paraphrased). There are certain programs that qualify for time cuts and these are identified in the Case Action Plan (CAP) with the case manager. There are only some things that will merit a time cut. Some of these types of offenses do not have a program that would merit a time cut based on requirements of HB 348. *Example:*

Someone on an embezzlement charge and no drug use was involved may not qualify for programs that earn a time cut. That individual could have a college education, so doesn't need a high school diploma, and won't need the other treatment programs, so will not be eligible for programs that could earn a time cut.

5. **Why are there not time cuts for inmates who have proven themselves within the prison setting to be rehabilitated and reformed and who have a clear plan to re-enter society successfully? (Separate from having obtained their High School Diploma or formally completed a treatment program.)**

This question was also included in the above answer. The bottom line is that HB 348 does not provide for time cuts for inmates who do not have CAP priorities that fall in the categories of qualified programs for time cuts. The qualifying programs are sex offender treatment, substance abuse treatment, high school diploma, GED. It was explained during the meeting that Vocational Trade

programs are not included because it is the responsibility of the inmate to pay for them at some point, which prohibits some people from being able to afford them. Graduation from vocational / trade programs or correspondence courses will not qualify. Those are not part of the programs that merit time cuts according to how HB 348 is being interpreted and implemented.

6. **Why don't the new rules for original hearings apply to 1st degree felony sex offenders?**

Author is paraphrasing Mr. Johnson's response and explanation: If an individual's sentence has a life top, then it is not reasonable to apply a time cut to a life top. It will not be applied to the bottom end of the sentence. HB 348 applies to individuals who have a release date. If there is no release date at the time someone completes their CAP priorities then the DOC is supposed to notify the Board and the Board will, at the time of a hearing, set the release date and back it up the 4 or 8 months for the two highest CAP priorities reached. *Author's note: It is our understanding that it is the case manager's responsibility to notify the Board of an inmate's accomplishment of a*

CAP priority. UPAN realizes that there is mistrust about how this may be accomplished. UPAN families and inmates have concerns that the Board can then simply set the release date out farther than may have originally been set without the requirement of HB 348. Then when the date is backed up to accommodate the 4 or 8 month time cut, the release date would be the same as the Board would have set without HB 348 guidelines. Time and observation about how things work will tell if the time cuts for sex offenders and life top sentences makes any difference for individuals who successfully complete that programming.

7. **The new law gives four months off for completing a CAP program, what does the four months come off of? If a person's on a 5-life and life is 100 yrs does it come off that 100 years or the PSI matrix? Or the Board matrix?**

As in the above question, the time cut comes off of the RELEASE DATE not the matrix nor the bottom or top of the indeterminate sentence. If the individual completes a CAP priority prior to a release date, the DOC is to notify

the BOPP and the BOPP will then need to have a special attention hearing to determine a release date. Then the time cut will come off of the release date.

8. **In regard to "time cut" for Original Hearings. Would a time cut mean that a Re-hearing could be scheduled earlier?**

This question was also included in the answer to questions 6 and 7. It appears to the listener that the time cut will apply to a release date, no matter if it is an original hearing, special attention hearing, rehearing, etc.

9. **If an offender is convicted of kidnapping, why does the board order sex offender treatment?**

Mr. Johnson gave a generic answer to this question, most likely due to how it was asked (a generalization and not enough information). His answer was that if an offense involved other actions that were not included in the conviction, but were included in the crime committed, then the Board will take that into consideration and may order treatment based on that. The example he gave was if someone was convicted of committing a crime that involved substance abuse, but the charges were not specifically drug charges, the Board could still order Substance Abuse Treatment. *This question was not directly answered based on how it was asked. What this*

author got out of Mr. Johnson's answer is that the specifics of the actual behavior in the offense of record would be examined. For example, if the conviction is for kidnapping but there was a sexual offense involved, and a plea bargain was used to eliminate the sex offense charge, the Board may still take into consideration the illegal sexual behavior and order sex offender treatment. This still does not answer questions that would relate to cases where an individual was convicted of kidnapping where a sexual offense did not take place and the individual is ordered into sex offender treatment.

PROGRAMMING QUESTIONS

Answered by **Craig Burr**, *Director of Internal Operations and Programming*, Utah Department of Corrections

Mr. Burr opened his presentation with an introduction of his history with the DOC and his desire throughout his experience with the DOC to provide education and programming to assist offenders in improving themselves while in the institution so they may be successful upon release. He was involved in CUCF when it was first built and opened. As the Director of Programming he is dedicated to

ensure that the prison system offers research based, state of the art programming. His office is over the education programs, religious programming, sex offender treatment, and substance abuse treatment within the institution, as well as in the Community Correctional Centers and Adult Probation and Parole in Utah. Mr. Burr enjoys hearing about successes of former offenders in the community.

Programs qualifying for Time Cuts:

Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP) These are offered in Draper, San Juan County Jail & Sanpete County Jail.

Conquest and Hope were rated the two top institutional substance abuse programs in the United States last year.

Substance Abuse Treatment Program (SATP) specifically the following programs:

Excell (Female, Timpanogos, Draper) which is a 9 – 12 month program. The time frame is shorter because female sentences tend to be shorter than males, so the female inmates need to do their SATP more intensely and more quickly.

Conquest (Male, Promontory, Draper), Hope (Male, Gunnison), Focus, in Garfield County Jail. These are 12 – 18 month programs and progress depends on the individual, not the time frame. Mr. Burr was pleased to report that

Completion of High School Diploma and / or GED

Mr. Burr answered the following questions:

1. **Will HB 348 help the long list of sex offenders waiting to get into treatment?**

There is no easy answer to this question. Overall, HB 348 will not necessarily facilitate quick entry into Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP). Here is a summary information shared by Mr. Burr about the state of S O treatment in the prison system in Utah. SOTP is offered in three locations to state inmates. Draper has a 200 bed program. San Juan County Jail offers this specialized treatment to 66 state

inmates. Sanpete County Jail has a sex offender program that serves 32 state inmates. Roughly 1/3 of Utah's 7000 incarcerated inmates are sex offenders. This means approximately 2400 sex offenders need to be served by a program that can only accommodate 298 individuals at any one time, in a program that should take approximately 18 months to complete.

There has not been any increase of funding by the Utah Legislature for sex offender specific treatment in the prison system since 1996. But the numbers of sex offenders incarcerated and waiting for treatment has significantly increased over the past 20 years. It is up to the community (UPAN families and inmates) to contact our legislators and encourage them to increase funding for SOTP for

incarcerated individuals. That is the only way to expand SOTP in USP.

Mr. Burr also discussed the Expansion Contract which ended in 2015 for an additional 200 sex offenders for 2 years. This was reported on in the August Newsletter pg 2, so we won't repeat it here.

2. **What time frame will be looked at for referral for a special attention hearing regarding when an inmate needs to have completed treatment or educational CAP goal to qualify for a time cut?**

A summary of Mr. Burr's answer: Even though HB 348 goes into effect October 1, 2015, and that is when the DOC would be required to start referring individuals who have completed their CAP priorities on or after October 1, 2015 to the Board for special attention hearings, Mr. Burr reported that everyone who graduated from high school in June 2015 is eligible to be referred for a special attention hearing. The referral will be done by the Correction Specialists. A Correction Specialist was formerly called a Case Manager. As of September 26, 2015, all Correction Specialists will be under the same supervisor, rather than following different directives in different housing areas. This will assist in streamlining their duties and ensuring they have equal training and responsibilities across the board, no matter what housing area they are assigned to. They are currently being trained on completing risk

assessments. *Author's note: This change should help these specialists in being more effective in making their recommendations to the Board. Families and inmates would do well to remember that due to the DOC being willing to refer individuals who graduated or successfully completed a CAP program prior to October 1, there will be a large number of individuals needing to be referred who completed these programs since June 2015. We are pleased to hear the Correction Specialists will be under one department rather than many different housing areas, so their duties will remain uniform based on the housing area, versus their duties in the past being based on what the housing captain wanted them to focus on. We have expressed our interest in these Correction Specialists receiving training to do their jobs effectively and efficiently.*

3. **At a recent CCJJ meeting it was mentioned that several therapists have been hired by UDC. Where and in what capacity are these therapists going to be working?**

Mr. Burr indicated that there was funding allocated by the legislature this year to have been several full time therapists hired. Some funding was specifically earmarked to hire mental health therapists to be assigned in Adult Probation and Parole (A P & P) Treatment Resource Centers (TRC) throughout the state. There was also

funding this year for 10 more mental health therapists to be hired within the prison system to work with the growing number of inmates who have mental illness. There was not funding to increase the number of sex offender or drug offender therapists.

4. **Are there any plans to start SPTP in Gunnison?**

Mr. Burr responded that there are no plans at this time to have an SOTP program in Gunnison. This is due to the lack of therapists trained & approved in that specialty who

live in or are willing to travel to the Gunnison area, as well as the inability of the DOC to attract qualified sex offender therapists to work in CUCF.

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Further discussion with Craig Burr centered around what a Correctional Specialist's duties are and there were concerns reported by meeting attendees about the inconsistency in the quality and dedication of case managers throughout the system. *Families were invited to report specific concerns*

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about specific staff. They were given an option to report specific problems and identities of staff that is not doing their job to UPAN director Molly Prince to forward to the appropriate UDC administrators in an effort to protect inmates from any retaliation.

QUESTIONS FOR TRANSITION / PAROLE SUCCESS

Answered by **Steve Gehrke**, *Director of Quality and Process Improvement*, Utah Department of Corrections

Earlier this year, Steve Gehrke was appointed as the Director of the new Transition Services Division with UDC. There are 10 positions for Transition Specialists that were funded by the legislature this year associated with the criminal justice reform legislation. This means that individuals who will be releasing within the next few months will begin to have prison staff help them, as well as possibly be connected with a mentor from the community to assist them in making a successful transition from prison to the community. This was reported on in the July 2015 UPAN newsletter, please refer to it for more information.

successfully. He shared his perspective that many of us agree with. Many who end up in prison have been failed by the existing system our society has. Many end up in prison and for the first time find opportunities to have therapy and treatment to help them deal with longstanding issues that contributed to their choices that resulted in incarceration. Prison often is the first place for individuals to learn appropriate and pro-social coping skills, how to identify problem thinking and change it, and how to deal with problems without turning to addictive substances and behaviors.

Mr. Gehrke introduced himself and shared his passionate belief in creating a system that helps incarcerated people to heal, gain skills, and move forward in their lives

He recently participated in a national conference on transitioning out of prison. He has gained ideas and information to implement in Utah. He discussed focusing

our correctional system and treatment programs in prison as well as transitional and aftercare services on Risk versus Need. This is looking at what the person needs to change, treat, and appropriately deal with that brought them to prison. If we, as a community and prison system contribute to help address the needs, then the risk is reduced and public safety is enhanced. Of course, it is still up to the

individual to make the choice, but if we have an environment that is conducive to change and supports that change, we will see a reduction in technical parole violations, recidivism, and an increase in success including public safety. *This is a tall order, but can be done, one step at a time. We all need to educate the public about the reality of this situation.*

Steve Gehrke brings enthusiasm and fresh perspective to this new position and new division. It was refreshing and encouraging to hear what he had to say. Here are his answers to some questions:

1. **UDOWD (a state organization comprised of corrections staff and Department of Workforce Services staff) is tasked with helping felons prepare themselves and find employment. However we have had reports from felons, particularly sex offenders, who say when they go through the process and go to the specialists and ask if there is even a list of felon friendly employers in the area, they are told no. Why with so many state employees becoming involved with helping offenders succeed, doesn't DWS or UDOWD compile a general list of felon-friendly employers throughout the state, by region or county?**

The simple answer is that employers who hire felons don't want to be put on a list that can be published and potentially lose business because of public backlash at their willingness to hire felons.

2. **Will there be a Parole Orientation Class for families / friends of offenders prior to their parole? If so, will the Orientation Class be specific to the type of Parole Stipulations the offender will be under (substance abuse, sex offender Group A or Group B, general stipulations, etc.)?**

Mr. Gehrke had already accepted a suggestion of such an orientation class at the FOCUS meeting in July. He reported that this is something that has not yet been developed, but is on the table for future attention. He

believes it is a good idea and could assist in the success of individuals on parole if their support systems understand and are aware of the parole stipulations and restrictions they must abide by.

3. **What is being done by the Department of Corrections to help educate the general public about the importance of the public allowing people who have made poor choices to return to the community and have a chance at being successful?**

Mr. Gehrke discussed how important it is to get the success stories out there. He stated "we need to highlight people and their success stories." This would include media attention to individuals who have turned their lives around. Currently Brooke Adams, the public information specialist for the DOC works to share the positive programs and outcomes on the UDC website www.corrections.utah.gov We, as UPAN families and

supporters of our loved ones in prison and on parole can share success stories as well – with co-workers, neighbors, in our churches, etc. Share them with legislators to encourage funding for transitional programs. I (author), for one, would love to see the DOC sponsor a community forum highlighting individuals who have been successful in prison and on parole and created new and beautiful lives for themselves.

4. **What is being done by the DOC to educate the public about the harmfulness of so-called "good landlord" programs, and to encourage the public to rent to felons?**

Mr. Gehrke reports that Deputy Director Mike Hadden is working on this area. No details or specifics were available.

5. **Is there a process in place where an inmate who has had a good employment record within the prison (UCI, block jobs, culinary, etc) can receive a letter of recommendation about their work ethic / performance from their supervisor prior to release?**

Mr. Gehrke reports that the "UCI Director is open to exploring" this and other possibilities.

6. **Are job fairs being put together for employers who hire felons to go into the prison and have a job fair for inmates who are going to be paroling within a couple of months to help the inmate get a foot in the door, or even possibly have a job waiting for them?**

It is a possibility for the future. So at this time, the answer is no. *Author's note: This was also suggested in the FOCUS meeting when Mr. Gehrke presented. The newly formed division seems to have a lot on its plate right now. Mr. Gehrke is open to all of these ideas but it will take time for many to be worked through and implemented, if the decision is made to implement them.*

7. **Please explain the mentoring programs we have been told are occurring with offenders while still incarcerated to prepare them for release. For both female and male offenders, and throughout the state, including prisons and the county jails where state inmates are housed. (How they work, who runs them, how offenders access them, where one goes to volunteer for them).**

Mr. Gehrke was the final presenter of the night and was running out of time. He brought an article from KSL.com dated December 8, 2014 on the mentoring program in Timpanogos for the women. UPAN has sent this link out via email to our email list. The article can be found at

<http://www.ksl.com/index.php?sid=32671156&nid+481>
Captain Bryan Taylor was in charge of the volunteer program at that time; it is our understanding that he has been transferred as of the end of September. He can still be reached through the prison main number 801-576-7000

Steve Gehrke also reported they are working to put together a multi-agency task force to facilitate transition success. This would include corrections and community agencies that work with individuals on parole including treatment providers in a variety of disciplines.

Frequently Asked Questions (And Answers) About Utah's Justice Reinvestment Initiative

Here are some FAQ's related to the HB348 changes that might be of interest. People can read 5 pages of Q&A at the website (below) and get more information on the actual implementation as it has started to play out.

http://corrections.utah.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1098&Itemid=342

IMPORTANT LETTER TO INMATES

Molly Prince

UPAN wants everyone incarcerated in the Utah State Prison to know that we read your letters and do our best to follow up on issues brought to our attention. With the Matrix Survey going out over the past several weeks, there has been a significant increase in letters from individuals sharing problems and issues they face, as well as asking to be added to our newsletter mailing list. We have been getting requests for other information to be sent, including past issues of the newsletter.

Unfortunately, we cannot always do this. For those who are not familiar with UPAN, I want to share information about what Utah Prisoner Advocate Network is. Hopefully this will reduce the number of requests that we cannot respond to or fulfill.

UPAN is made up primarily of family members of incarcerated individuals. We are a group of concerned people who, in our "spare" time, do our best to accomplish several objectives and goals related to assisting other families who have loved ones incarcerated in the Utah State Prison System. Nearly everyone involved with UPAN has their own inmate somewhere in the system, on parole, or has been in prison in the past and wants to help. We all have our families out here, and our own jobs and face our own challenges in our own prison journeys.

UPAN does not have an office. We use our kitchen tables, home offices, and home or laptop computers to do our UPAN work. Our director meetings are often held in local restaurants or at someone's home. We have our monthly meetings in libraries because UPAN cannot afford to pay the

high cost of renting meeting or conference rooms for our meetings each month. Most of the costs of UPAN for the past two years have come out of the directors and other volunteers' pockets. We have a small fund in an account that we use to pay for things like the web hosting for our website, postage for some of the letters and newsletters sent out that are over and above those sent by volunteers.

UPAN was originally started informally as a support group for families with loved ones in prison in Utah. Over the past two years it has grown to have not only almost 200 inmates who have contacted us at some point for some reason, but also over 360 individuals on our email list to receive newsletters and updates / announcements about criminal justice system and the prison.

UPAN is non-profit and has no income source other than donations that we receive once in a while from family or friends who are involved in the prison journey, and from inmates who send \$5 or \$10 (or blank envelopes) to help defray the costs of operations which mostly includes responding to inmate correspondence and sending out newsletters. It is amazing the high cost of printing, copying, and mailing a simple newsletter each month to 182+ inmates (and that grows each day by one or two). Volunteers pay their own fuel and travel costs to go to not only UPAN meetings, but FOCUS meetings, and other meetings related to the prison, the Board, and criminal justice reform meetings.

IF YOU HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER WHO HAS A COMPUTER AND EMAIL, PLEASE ASK THEM TO CONTACT US AT utahprisoneradvocate@gmail.com to request to be added to our email list or go to www.utahprisoneradvocate.org and sign up for the monthly newsletter. THEY CAN THEN PRINT THE NEWSLETTER AND MAIL TO YOU THEMSELVES. This can assure you will get the newsletter as soon as they choose to mail it, and they are likely to know long before we do when you are moved to a different housing or facility and can make sure you receive your newsletters in a timely manner.

If you are on UPAN's mailing list and decide to have a family member or friend mail to you, please write to us (or have them email us) ASAP and let us know to take you off our mailing list.

We currently have about 13 volunteers who each generously print and mail several newsletters every month. The President, Vice President, and Secretary also do our best to send newsletters to the remaining inmates on our inmate mailing list who are not covered by the volunteers.

YOU CAN HELP US. IF YOU RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER FROM UPAN, AND YOU ARE MOVED TO A DIFFERENT FACILITY, PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY AT P.O. Box 464 Draper UT 84020 OF YOUR NEW ADDRESS. Also if in a jail with a different number, make sure you inform us of your new numbers moving back and forth between IPP and prisons. Otherwise your newsletter is returned to us as undeliverable as the prison and jails do not generally forward. They also return mail if we have an incorrect Offender # on it. This means your volunteer who mails to you spent time and funds to send a newsletter to you that never reached you. To look up your location and put in a new envelope with new postage is time consuming and becomes expensive for UPAN directors.

When working on the newsletter, we are nothing like a regular newsletter or magazine publisher. We do not plan the next month's newsletter weeks in advance. We write about things that are of current interest and that we have recent information about. Questions and letters and emails often drive the content of any given month's newsletter. Sometimes we don't get the newsletters emailed until the last week of the month. This means you may not receive it until the first week of the following month. On the other hand, I think that one month we got the newsletter out before the 20th of the month! That was quite an accomplishment! We appreciate your understanding and patience with the irregular schedule.

We may not get your letters answered in a timely manner. We may not get some of your letters answered at all. That doesn't mean we don't read them or don't care about them. We do! We take inmate letters seriously. When we get more than one or two about the same concern, incident or issue, we start looking into trends of what is happening within Corrections. But we cannot always individually write you back to tell you what we found out. For this reason, we started the newsletter in June 2014. It became a more efficient way of addressing the concerns and questions many

inmates and families contact us about. We simply cannot respond individually to each letter we receive. The directors spend many hours gathering information, writing, compiling and editing the monthly newsletter. Finding, reserving rooms and planning for the monthly family meetings and meetings with guest speakers is something else that we do. The directors spend time each month engaged in communicating with or meeting with various correctional officials about various issues that are always of importance. The website requires regular monitoring and updating. The email requires constant monitoring and responses to questions and concerns your families and supporters contact us about.

When you or your family members contact us about a situation or issue specific to you alone (such as a medical problem) we cannot take that on. Instead we encourage you to have your family members contact us and we will direct them who to contact in administration to help address the problem. We also can help them figure out how to best approach the administrator, even helping them understand some dynamics around whatever the issue is. This will necessarily involve your willingness to have your identity revealed so that they can look into the situation. There is a process that you can go through to complete an authorization to release information so that Medical can talk to one designated individual in your support system out here about your medical information. It was published in the June 2015 UPAN newsletter and is re-printed (below) in this issue for those who missed it.

UPAN wants to provide a safe and understanding place for families and friends of inmates to connect with each other and share their challenges and receive support and information to help them more effectively cope on their prison journey.

UPAN wants to offer support and assistance to incarcerated individuals by identifying challenges and problems faced by inmates as they serve their sentences and to communicate with prison officials and the Utah Department of Corrections administration to address and resolve these problems.

UPAN wants to provide education and information to both the family and friends of inmates as well as the general public for the purpose of improving the level of understanding of what happens in the prison system and how things work which ultimately impacts prisoners, their families, and support systems as well as the community at large. This is accomplished by providing monthly meetings, public discussion groups, forums, panels, lectures, or other programs. It includes dissemination of information through electronic media. We hope to assist your family members and support systems in learning how the system works so that they can become effective advocates for your wellbeing and their peace of mind while you are incarcerated.

Finally, UPAN has a goal to (at some point in the future) be able to offer information about resources available to families and ex-offenders once they are released from the institution to the community.

UPAN does not offer any legal services and does not have legal counsel. We cannot give advice or do anything to help

with appeals or other legal matters. Please do not send us your legal documents.

Please know that we appreciate the letters we receive alerting us to situations occurring in the prison system. And we are amazed at the response we have received regarding the Board Matrix Survey.

AUTHORIZATION TO VERBALLY DISCUSS HEALTH INFORMATION

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A Major Advance In Health Care Concerns

UPAN is pleased to announce that Utah Department of Corrections has finished developing their new "Authorization To Verbally Discuss Health Information" form and procedure for inmates to use when they want to give a third-party person permission to speak with the Clinical Services Bureau (Medical) about their health information. The third-party person would be a family member or friend outside of prison, not in the medical profession, that the inmate identifies on a form that has been developed and is available to the inmates through their Case Managers.

How The Form Is Accessed

The form the inmate needs to use has been posted on the UDC's internal website, where Case Managers will be able to access it and print it out for inmates.

Its Use Is Limited To Verbal Discussions

It is to be used ONLY to grant permission for verbal discussions about an inmate's health situation between a Clinical Services Bureau staff member or provider and the identified third party representative.

GRAMA Still Required For Physical Copies

For physical copies of medical records, inmates still need to use the GRAMA form to request medical records; that form is also available from a Case Manager.

How It Works Internally

Acting Director David Worthington has designated a person at the Clinical Services Bureau to handle the calls from designated family members about an inmate's medical situation.

How It Works For Inmate And Third Party

The process works like this:

1. Inmate requests the form from Case Manager, who prints it out for inmate.
2. Inmate fills out form which identifies the name of the third party being designated, including a phone number to contact them, and returns completed form to case manager.
3. Case Manager notarizes form and submits it to the Clinical Services Bureau.
4. A designated staff member at the Clinical Services Bureau will contact the inmate's designated person to confirm telephone number, set up pass code, and provide a telephone number the third-party will use to call for information. The staff member will have authority to either answer questions or get information.
5. Each authorization is good for 90 days. So if an inmate has an ongoing or chronic medical conditions, the inmate would be wise to renew the authorization every 90 days so it is in place in case something comes up. It is the responsibility of the inmate, not the designated third party representative, to renew the authorization in a timely manner.

UPAN doesn't know how long it takes for the authorization process to occur once the inmate submits the form to the Case Manager, but we are anticipating about a week, depending upon if the correctional staff from Medical can reach the designated third-party.

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Open Letter from Heather:

I wanted to let the UPAN world know that my role as a board member will be changing. I am moving out of state in November with my family. I am happy to be able to stay on UPAN's board and help in the ways I can from a distance. When we started UPAN over 2 years ago I never imagined that this organization would reach and potentially help so many. It has been such a privilege to help start this

organization, to work with inmates and families to realize needed improvement in the prison system, and work with Corrections to advocate for meaningful change. What an incredible honor it has been to get to know so many amazing individuals along this journey. Thank you for all of your support. I know UPAN has a great road ahead and I am glad to get to be a part of that in a new way!

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Our Comment to Heather, Thank you for this touching note. It tugged at our hearts. Also, thank you for remaining on the Board. We will miss your presence at our meetings, your verbal contributions, upbeat, can-do attitude, and happy, pleasant smile. Best Wishes in your move, your new location, and the challenges of this major change. The UPAN Staff.

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Disclaimer: Formulate your own opinions about the information presented, intended for neutrality, not intending any opinion or comment to be UPAN's position other than where specifically noted. This information is presented for the reader's enlightenment and evaluation.

PrisonEd September 2015 Report

Greetings friends and associates of PrisonEd, Thank you for your interest and assistance. With moves, releases, and program drop-outs, PrisonEd students are a fluid group. To have a more accurate picture, we are now altering our tracking to give greater precision. Below is the September summary:

New Students During September: 13

Student Tracking by Activity

197 Currently active students who have turned in assignments during 2015 – 77%
27 Previously active students who initially turned in assignments but not during 2015 – 11%
31 Previously enrolled students with a book/packet who never turned in assignments – 12%
224 Total students who have turned in at least one assignment since enrolling – 88%
255 Total students who have ever enrolled in a PrisonEd course regardless of activity – 100%

We are always interested in additional tutors as well as other support personnel. If you know of interested people, please extend the invitation. Contact Don Wright at: prisonedfoundation@gmail.com -Don Wright, PrisonEd

Student Comment

"I've spent the last 15 years in and out of prison. I have 7 years left on my sentence. I need to change my thinking now or I really believe I will spend the rest of my life in prison. If I educate myself I believe I can change my thinking, give myself the self-esteem, tools, and hope I need to make it. I'm hungry to learn, be taught, and succeed in life." - DF