



UPAN Newsletter Volume 12 Number 3 | **MARCH 2025**
“Empowerment and Growth Through Knowledge and Unity”

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**UDC Family Orientation Thursday March 6th – New UDC Director – Pigeonly Mail Update –
 Phone Rates Next Yr – Two *Dell Discussions* – New Grievance Process – Antelope Updates –
 USP Dog Program (w/Pics) – Tablet Books – Parole/Life Tips – Corresp. Courses**

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Next Meeting: Monday, March 10, 2025 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Guest Speaker: Oasis Perez Utah’s 211 Directory *Join all meetings at* <https://bit.ly/UPAN-Meet>

Following Meetings: Monday April 14, 2025 6:30- 8:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: **Sam Arungwa, PhD**, Director for Prevention Science here in Utah And Co-Chair for PRWG, National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve

Monday May 12, 2025 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Guest Speaker **Channae Haller of Justice By Objectives.**

Meetings Available on UPAN Facebook Live and on UPAN’s Facebook page afterwards. Visit UPAN Facebook page for newsletters. Visit website (page 10) to subscribe to the UPAN Newsletter, or Utah Prisoner Advocate Facebook Page for link to current monthly meeting. Free to the public. Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/UPAN-Meet>

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Disclaimer: *Formulate your own opinions about the information presented.*
 This information is presented for the reader’s enlightenment and evaluation.

NOTE: March is Women’s History Month – Please see two special articles on the women- pages 4 & 5.

“What a wonderful thought it is that some of the best days of our lives haven’t happened yet.”– Anne Frank

Loved One in Prison? Confused About How Things Work?
Attend the UDC Family Orientation March 6, 2025

The **quarterly Family Orientation** is scheduled for **6:30 – 8:30 p.m. on Thursday March 6, 2025** at the Fred House Academy, 14727 Minuteman Drive, in Draper. This is the building south of the UDC Administration building. Officials will explain the processes in various areas of the prison including mail, property, inmate accounting, visiting, phone use, case managers, and medical. Representatives from the Board of Pardons & Parole will be there as well. Recommended for all families and friends involved in the prison system. For more info: corrections@utah.gov

NOTE: Virtual Option: Will be livestreamed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@UtahCorrections>

Brian Redd Steps Down on March 4, Jared Garcia Takes Position as UDC Executive Director

By Molly Prince & Shane Severson

Leadership Transition at UDC: Thank You, Brian Redd & Welcome, Jared Garcia.

Brian Redd leaves to take on the job of Salt Lake City Police Chief. UPAN extends our heartfelt gratitude to Brian Redd for his leadership, commitment to transparency, and dedication to progress at the Utah Department of Corrections for the past 21 months.

Redd's efforts in fostering collaboration with stakeholders including staff, advocates, community partners and incarcerated individuals has been a first in UDC's history. He restructured UDC to become an organization where staff ideas are seriously considered and often implemented, which has resulted in improving reentry initiatives, and prioritizing rehabilitation have set a strong foundation for positive change in the future.

He will be sorely missed. We at UPAN deeply appreciate his openness to hearing from families and advocates during his tenure. He created an atmosphere that welcomed us to the table to discuss difficult and challenging issues facing our incarcerated loved ones and those working at the prisons.

UPAN wishes him the very best in his new role as Salt Lake City Police Chief which will occur the beginning of March.

Jared Garcia steps into the role of Executive Director of UDC. UPAN welcomes Jared Garcia as the newly appointed Executive Director of UDC. We have worked with him in the past as one of the Deputy Executive Directors of UDC under Redd. We look forward to working with him to ensure continued progress in creating a more transparent, rehabilitative, and effective corrections system in Utah.

The following is taken from UDC website:
<https://corrections.utah.gov/about-us/leadership-team/jared-garcia/>

"Jared Garcia began his career in 2002 when he was hired by the Utah Department of Public Safety. He served in a variety of roles at the Utah Highway Patrol and State Bureau of Investigation. Garcia oversaw the UHP Central Bureau, which includes Troopers in Salt Lake County and the DUI Squad. He also oversaw the SERT tactical team, the Motor Squad, the Dive Team, and the Public Order Unit.

In 2017, Garcia was named an International Association of Chiefs of Police "40 Under 40," an award that recognizes 40 law enforcement professionals under the age of 40 from around the world who demonstrate leadership and exemplify commitment to their Profession.

Garcia served a little over a year as the Chief of Police in Moab, Utah between May 2022 and moving to the UDC under Redd. He also served on the governing boards for the Salt Lake Area Gang Project, Utah Trafficking in Persons Task Force, and the Utah Crime Victim Council.

Garcia obtained a bachelor's degree from Columbia College in Criminal Justice Administration and a master's degree from University of San Diego with an emphasis in law enforcement and public safety leadership."

We encourage our community to stay engaged as we navigate this transition.

Pigeonly Mail Contract Problems & What UDC Is Doing About It

By Molly Prince, LCSW

As everyone is aware, the new mail contract UDC entered into with Pigeonly that began Monday, January 6, 2025, has proven to be a series of problems that have caused headaches for all of us.

Delays and lost shipments. These problems include, but are not limited to delayed mail getting from the contractor to the prisons, lost shipments of mail going to the prisons, and poor quality of scans and printouts of letters and photographs. Lt Diehl has been trying to track mail and figure out what is delayed versus what could be lost. As of Tuesday, February 18, Lt. Brewer informed us that Pigeonly has confirmed a known bug in the data tracking of parcels of mail being sent from Pigeonly to Utah's prisons. He reported that they are doing a system-wide audit of their processes. Since the contract requires them to scan the correspondence, then as soon as it is scanned, UDC should be able to scan check to see if it is in transit.

Some people receiving mail for other incarcerated individuals. This is a problem that has been more recently reported. It was determined that there are some letters being double fed. Pigeonly identified the source as a scanner that was double feeding, resulting in the possibility of the first or last page of one person's letter ending up in with another person's letter. It sounds as if they are feeding the letters in back to back without a break between recipients. We will see if we continue to get these complaints.

Poor or blurry scans. Lt. Diehl has been doing a quality follow up subsequent to complaints about blurry photos, pale or almost unreadable letters. He said that Pigeonly reports they do a weekly calibration, including a color calibration and they scan at 600 dpi.

Advertisement for private subscriptions to Pigeonly. In addition, Pigeonly is inserting advertisements into the

UDC contracted mail that does manage to get into the hands of residents of USCF and CUCF that encourages them to tell their families to sign up for Pigeonly's private subscription for mail, suggesting it will be of higher quality and faster delivery. UPAN has received complaints from both inmates and families about what we view as an unethical practice. Yet we are informed that it is standard practice with vendors of mail contracts for prison systems.

Dozens of UPAN Newsletters returned. Misinformation given to Pigeonly's staff about UPAN's newsletters being bulk mail – which Pigeonly does not accept – resulted in over 70 January newsletters being returned to UPAN in error. We are told that has been cleared up and Molly and Deon have re-sent those 70 January newsletters. However, as of February 20, three UPAN newsletters for February postmarked January 31 have been returned to the UPAN PO Box. These were newsletters sent by families or someone other than UPAN volunteers who used the UPAN return address. We recommend that families use their own return address when sending UPAN newsletters to Pigeonly's address so that Pigeonly does not mistake them for bulk mail, despite their employees being told they should be accepted.

Ambiguity about how some mail should be sent. There are unexpected issues that have arisen regarding how to send legal documents from a family member rather than an attorney. There have been poor scans of applications and other legal documents that cause the document not able to be used and delayed processes which impact the incarcerated individual.

Legal mail. Further, there was a problem even for attorneys signing up with Pigeonly to acquire their QR code stickers. These stickers are necessary to send legal mail directly into Utah's prisons. The attorneys were not advised they had to "activate" their QR codes prior to use, and then a complete recall of the initial QR Codes was sent out prior to a certain date. According to the Tuesday, February 18th updates that UPAN received, Pigeonly is working on a tutorial for Legal Mail for attorneys. As any reader can see, this has truly been a headache for families, incarcerated folks, advocates, UDC staff, UDC administrators, attorneys, - everyone involved.

Addressing these issues. UPAN has been working constantly and diligently on this problem throughout February. Every time we hear of a new report of a new problem, we're on it. We encourage families to continue to send their concerns and complaints to the [reporting portal](#) on the new UDC website.

Molly Prince brought this to the attention of Lt. Diehl in USCF who was tasked with overseeing the transition to the contract on the UDC side. Lt. Brewer in CUCF is Lt. Diehl's counterpart there. Lt. Diehl began doing the exhaustive work of contacting Pigeonly regularly to track

shipments of our mail and finding answers to our many questions on a variety of problems that have cropped up with this contract. Lt. Brewer was instrumental in discovering why legal mail was not being accepted and getting that cleared up for attorneys.

By Thursday, February 6, 2025, after UPAN's Molly Prince had been in contact with Lt. Diehl and Deputy Executive Director Rebecca Brown about the escalating reports of problems, more aggressive action was put into place to resolve these problems.

Lt. Diehl had been researching each problem as they were reported. Dir. Brown jumped into information gathering and problem solving mode immediately once she was looped in on February 6. She and her team arranged for a UDC Listening Session / Town Hall about Pigeonly issues which was held on Tuesday, February 11. The Listening Session went well, and Dir. Brown and Lt. Diehl reported what they had discovered so far. UDC created a link to a complaint portal about the mail system which is:

https://utconciierge.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cYiyC5qL3kVQI4u (This is a quick and easy form to use. Ed.)

UDC Updates. On Friday, February 14, the UDC sent out this update and included it on the UDC website at corrections.utah.gov. It reads:

"UDC contracts office and our finance team are reviewing contract provisions to ensure alignment, fair pricing and service quality.

Leadership will be scheduling a meeting with Pigeonly leadership to review specific concerns and set standards for UDC alignment.

Improving transparency by sharing clear policies with families.

We will continue to provide the survey on the public website to monitor progress. Please use that link as needed to report issues.

Provide weekly updates on progress.

Exploring options for maintaining some physical mail privileges (e.g., approved postcards).

Gathering ongoing feedback to adjust mail policies as needed. Ensuring mail policies align with best practices for maintaining family bonds and reducing recidivism.

Lieutenants are researching individual cases and issues, including following up on tracking numbers, and addressing legal mail concerns."

Messaging also went out on the tablets for incarcerated individuals to see what the plan is to resolve this problem. As of Sunday, the 23rd of February, it still appears to be taking at least 3 or 4 weeks for individuals to receive mail sent through Pigeonly. We have not received further updates regarding the compliance with the contract, timeliness, and quality of the scanning. Families are encouraged to continue to use the link to the reporting portal for Pigeonly on the UDC website to report ALL concerns, continuing delays, etc.

Questions About USCF & CUCF Phone Rates Answered

By Molly Prince, LCSW

UPAN has received inquiries regarding when the phone rates in Utah's two prisons will go down. UPAN Co-Founder and Director Chris Moon researched this and has learned the following from Via Path (aka Global Tel Link Connect Network).

The way the FCC has outlined the changing of the phone call prices in correctional facilities is based on the dates of the contracts with the inmate communication service.

We learned that the FCC changes for the Martha Reed-Wright Act will go into effect at different times during the year, depending on when the contract was signed with the facility and when the contract ends.

The current contract with the Utah Department of Corrections will be up for renewal early next year, and that is when the change to the new rates will take effect.

"Letting there be room for not knowing is the most important thing of all. When there's a big disappointment, we don't know if that's the end of the story. It may just be the beginning of a great adventure. Life is like that. We don't know anything. We call something bad; we call it good. But really, we just don't know." Pema Chodron

Dell Discussions – Various Updates & Opportunities in the Women's World

Submitted by members of the Dell community

Due to the various issues with mail in January, both outgoing from the prisons and incoming to the prisons, UPAN received information and updates in an article from the women. Unfortunately, the letter with that information arrived a bit too late to put into February's newsletter, so we are including them here. Apologies if some are a bit dated, but the information is important no matter when it is received.

The Incarcerated Individual Advisory Committee (IIAC) meetings resumed in mid-January in Dell. These discussions are important as we work to make changes toward more positive things. If anyone has concerns or suggestions for the IIAC to look into or address, please complete the form on the tablet for that purpose, or talk to one of the committee members. Their names are also listed on the tablet.

Peer Support is available to everyone living in Dell, including those in closed custody. Make the request through a housing officer if you are in need of assistance.

The Student Center opened the first week of February. Sign-ups for tutoring are in the gym. This is offered through the University of Utah, and is a free service to

all. Please sign up if you want additional help with homework for any class. More information will be posted in the sections and through tablet messages.

You are encouraged to get involved in the variety of opportunities offered! There are classes at the chapel, gym, and life skills. Apply for jobs in your section, apply for a job in culinary, or apply to UCI. UCI offers employment to women in the Commissary, the Juice Plant, and the Sewing Shop.

Check out classes through Davis Tech, New Path, Captain My Story, Defy Ventures, and One Kind Act. Talk to your case manager or a peer support specialist for information or how to enroll.

Let's Make 2025 a year to remember!

Dell Discussions – UPAN Advocates Tour Dell and Meet the Women of I.N.S.P.I.R.E

By Molly Prince, LCSW

Dell is implementing a new program that is the culmination of the work of several women, notably Sally, who for many years has submitted requests and proposals to UDC administration to be able to create a community within the women's prison similar to the STRIVE program in Gunnison, where everyone is productive. The women of **INSPIRE (Individuals Nurturing Self Progression In a Restorative Environment)** are primarily employed and / or involved in educational courses as well as self-help, and risk reduction programming.

On February 20, 2025 UPAN advocates An Bradshaw, Deon Corkins, Susan Sundstrom, and Molly Prince were joined by Roni Wilcox of PAG, Paige Norton, and two representatives from the ACLU of Utah, on a tour of Dell that included meeting the women of INSPIRE.

This informative event was arranged by Esekia Afatasi (Skee), the UDC Stakeholder Experience Coordinator. It was led by Deputy Warden Zorn, Captain Beers, Lt. Gehman, and Lt. Coombs. We wish to extend our sincere appreciation to these men who took time in their afternoon to guide us through the housing units,

classrooms, the gym and library, and culinary. We were privileged to meet and speak with the women of Dell.

We also want to thank Intergenerational Coordinator Trisha Reynolds for suggesting to Skee that everyone would benefit from this tour subsequent to Molly Prince sending her inquiries about it over the past few months. They all made it happen. As Skee says, "Teamwork makes the Dream Work!"

Pregnant Women's Unit. Before making it to the INSPIRE housing, we had the opportunity to stop by the small unit specifically for pregnant women. It is a small area, with comforts a bit unusual in a prison. These include more comfortable seating, a washer and dryer, and two-person cells with showers. It has the capacity for 8 expectant mothers. The residents shared their perception of this unit, which is quiet, calm, and away from the stress, hustle and bustle of the rest of prison life. It was good to learn about the safe and nurturing space that has been created for the expectant mothers who enter prison to stay in until they give birth.

No Nursery in Dell. As has been reported previously, Utah has made a decision to not have a mother and baby unit in which an infant could remain with their mother for several months after birth in the prison setting. The expectant mothers remain there until their child is born, and the baby is then placed with family or other care givers in the community. The mothers then transition into general population in Dell.

Meeting the women of INSPIRE. The primary focus of this tour was to learn more about INSPIRE. A significant amount of time included visiting the INSPIRE dorms. In the first dorm, we had an opportunity to talk with the women and hear their experience of living in the INSPIRE community. We learned from Sally of her decade long efforts to create a program based on what the STRIVE program has been in CUCF. INSPIRE is new, only months into its existence. It is a productive, inmate led community that pursues education, self-improvement, support, and knowledge within the prison environment.

The women of the INSPIRE community are busy creating the groundwork for it. This is in addition to holding full time jobs and getting their education and

participating in other programs. On the tour, got to speak in person with a woman named Nghia with whom I have been in communication with over the years. She is helping to design the draft of rules and expectations of the community for the handbook. There are a variety of women in this program who are all contributing to the foundation and to the entire community in a positive manner, but I was not able to get (or remember) all of their names since we cannot take notes on a tour.

Certified Support Specialists. A variety of individuals who are part of INSPIRE are also Certified Peer Support Specialists who are trained to provide peer support to others in Dell who are experiencing challenges in adjusting to their situations, adversity, stress, mental health issues, and more. As advocates, we are thankful for the support and efforts that UDC Dell staff have offered to these women who are making INSPIRE a reality.

We enjoyed meeting the women in the second INSPIRE dorm and getting to speak to some of them briefly and let them know who UPAN is as well as learn about their experience.

We did not have time to stop and speak with the women of ELEVATE, the women's substance use program. Maybe that can be arranged another time.

This tour was greatly appreciated. I do not think any of us on the tour had ever had the privilege to tour Dell, even prior to the opening of USCF. The last tour any of the UPAN advocates participated in prior to USCF opening, we were told Dell was "not quite finished" so we could not tour it. We had been informed that it mirrored the men's units that we had already toured. However, we saw that it really did not. It has its own feel, its own personality, which is definitely different than the men's units. It was very helpful to experience.

UPAN would like to express our appreciation to the staff who took us on the tour and demonstrated patience with our endless questions and desire to see as much as possible. We also appreciate the staff support provided to these women who are dedicated to making the most of the situation they are in and improve their environment to prepare themselves for success in their futures.

"Never underestimate the power you have to take your life in a new direction." — Germany Kent

Understanding the New Grievance Process

by Molly Prince, LCSW

UPAN learned of the new Grievance Process UDC has put into place during our February 18, 2025 Stakeholder Meeting with UDC. By the time you receive this newsletter, everyone should have seen a new infographic posted in their housing units titled "Understanding the New Grievance Process." This new process is for non-medical grievances.

What Is a Grievance? It is a process where you can hopefully resolve issues if you feel you have been treated inappropriately, or something wrong has happened to you within the prison system. There are three levels to the grievance process. It is hoped that for most issues they can be resolved before getting to the grievance process. But if not easily resolved, each

grievance level is reviewed by a higher level of administration.

Steps to take before grieving an issue. Request an OMR meeting. (OMR is Offender Management Review). You can talk through it with your OMR team. It is believed that talking to someone directly, including OMR, is often more constructive, direct, and could achieve quicker results and resolution than a grievance process.

Policy allows 14 calendar days to file a grievance from the time you knew of an issue or addressed it with OMR. If you are not satisfied with the result through an OMR, you can submit a Level 1 grievance in writing to ask for what you want to happen to resolve or fix it. There are two higher levels that you can appeal to if the Level 1 response does not solve the issue.

If it is a medical / mental health, dental, or eye care concern, have you filed an Inmate Care Request (ICR) to be seen by medical? A grievance can't replace a visit with a medical provider. All medical grievances should be addressed to Correctional Health Services (CHS /Medical).

The Process: Address only one problem per grievance form. If you have multiple issues, put in a separate grievance form for each issue.

Step 1 Talk to your OMR and attempt to resolve your non-medical complaint within 14 calendar days of the incident. Discussing an issue directly is often the easiest and fastest resolution.

Step 2 If OMR didn't resolve your complaint, write a Level 1 grievance within 14 calendar days of when the issue occurred or meeting with OMR. **Explain your situation in detail** when writing a grievance. Put as much information and evidence as possible in your original (level 1) grievance while staying on topic. Identify who you spoke with, what action was taken by staff, and what you were told.

Step 3 Did you receive a Problem Form back after submitting your Grievance? If so, correct the issue identified in the Problem Form and resubmit the grievance.

A Problem Form is a form that will be returned to you if there is a problem on your original grievance form. This could be about missing details or information. It could be about failure to document everything you have already done to try to resolve the issue. It could be due to inappropriate language. It could be failure to provide

the remedy you are seeking. If the grievance fails to document your efforts to resolve the issue. It could be because the facts of your complaint are unclear. Finally, a problem form will be sent if there is more than one issue listed on the grievance asking you to submit separate grievances for each issue.

The Problem Form is sent in order to help those reviewing the grievance to understand all the specific information related to the identified problem.

Step 4 You should receive a Level 1 response within 30 calendar days of the grievance office receiving the complaint. You have 7 calendar days to appeal.

Step 5 You should receive a response to a Level 2 grievance in 30 calendar days of receiving your appeal. If you are still not satisfied it has been addressed, you may appeal to Level 3 within 7 calendar days.

Step 6 Level 3 grievances should also be responded to within 30 calendar days of receiving the appeal. Were you denied? You've exhausted the process and now can file suit with the courts if you choose.

What you should NOT do when filing a grievance.

- Do not have someone else write a grievance on your behalf. Someone can help you if you struggle with writing, but they cannot do it on your behalf.
- You cannot grieve on behalf of someone else.
- Asking for staff to be disciplined/fired is not an available remedy.
- Malicious or frivolous grievances can get your grievance privilege suspended.

A Grievance may be Rejected if:

- The grievance was submitted after 14 calendar days of the event or OMR meeting.
- You have submitted more than 5 non-medical grievances in the past 30 days.
- The grievance pertains to a non-grievable issue. These are basically all issues outside of the jurisdiction of UDC. These include issues related to the Board of Pardons & Parole; ADA issues (has its own grievance process); PREA issues; and GRAMA issues, which also have their own grievance processes.
- Grievances related to classification and disciplinary actions will not be accepted.

You can ask your case manager or any staff member for the new grievance forms.

The 30 calendar day response timeframe (on each level) begins when your grievance is received and opened.

Antelope Updates

By Molly Prince, LCSW

Deputy Warden Jacob Romero joined the February 18th Stakeholder Advocacy Meeting regarding questions and issues we have been pursuing in Antelope. The following is the new information he shared with us.

Coats. Romero reports that as of the beginning of February, new coats were made available for everyone in Antelope. If anyone is told there is not a coat for

them, please advise Deputy Warden Romero of the date and time they were told that.

Peer Support is now available to Antelope. The Certified Peer Support Specialists (CPSS) come to Antelope from other housing units. The function of peer support is to have incarcerated men trained as CPSS talk to individuals who are in crisis, who are struggling, who may need mental health support or general support.

Education. It is reported that some in-person courses

are being offered in the classrooms in Antelope. There was no information provided on what specific courses are being taught, or what the criteria is to enroll in them.

Tablets. There continues to not be enough tablets in Antelope for everyone. The ratio continues to be 1 tablet for every two incarcerated residents of Antelope. Deputy Warden Romero updated that he is working to get each man in Antelope tablet access. This will be based on privilege levels.

USP Dog Program in Timpanogos (Canines With A Cause)

by Bobbie Dawn Ha



Editor's Note: The UDC had a Dog Program in the Women's Unit at the old Draper Utah State Prison for several years beginning in 2013. UPAN has been approached by various people asking if there could be a dog program implemented in USCF and / or CUCF. UPAN brought it up and was not given any encouragement that this is something to be considered at this time. In an effort to share information about the wonderful program and how it touched lives of the incarcerated, the dogs, and their new owners after training, this article is written by a woman who now lives in the community but during the last years of her incarceration had been deeply involved with the Dog Program in Timpanogos at USP.

"Dogs in prison? Uh, no, not me!" That was my attitude when I was first approached about participating in a dog training program. Six months later, April 7,



2014, I'm sitting in the gym with hotdogs in my treat bag, 14 other women, 3 dog trainers and assistants, a slew of prison officials, and 6 dogs waiting to go to their new, temporary homes. The room was filled with excitement, anticipation, fear, anxiety, doubt, unbridled joy, and the distinct smell of Jennie-O turkey hotdogs.

It was late 2013 we started our dog trainer/handler training. Many of us never had a pet before, had no prior interaction with service dogs, and didn't know the first thing about how to handle or train a dog to do anything at all. Now we are being asked to train this dog to be a service animal for a veteran that has suffered from very serious injuries leading to a lifetime of side effects, many being debilitating for him. Talk about the pressure that we felt, the weight of responsibility, and the tremendous pride at being chosen for this very important and humbling task!

Two days a week we had our training in the gym to prepare for the "homecoming" of these precious souls. Armed with hotdogs, poop bags, and a wet cloth (to wipe my fingers off after every hotdog given to the dog) I went to class to learn basic fundamentals of handling a dog.

We also learned about PTSD, TBI (traumatic brain injury), bathing and grooming the dog, how to introduce dogs to each other.

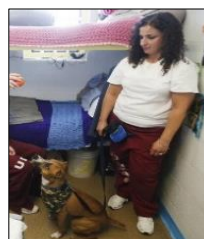
We learned patience, humility, and forgiveness for ourselves and each other. At times our training sessions turned to "therapy sessions" as we encountered struggles with feelings of inadequacy, trust, anxiety, hopelessness, even guilt and shame. Not to mention having to work and live in such close quarters with our handler partner and dog.



Our 2-person "room" accommodated 2 women, 1 dog, a soft crate, food and water bowls, food container, toys, a rug or "mat" used for training, and rolls of poop bags on the pony wall.

For the next 8 months **Liberty** was my main focus. I now had a purpose in this dark, dreary place.

Canines With a Cause founder Kathy King with trainer Shaun Woodard, is the non-profit organization that was responsible for the program that essentially saved 3 lives (with 1 dog): the dog who was rescued from a shelter with the possibility of euthanasia; the woman who is incarcerated for an indeterminate time; and the veteran who suffers from PTSD and/or traumatic brain injury, that the dog will be placed with.



"While in the prison dog program in Utah, I discovered a deep passion for training and working with animals. The program gave me purpose, connected me to the outside world, and provided hope in a challenging environment. I value the trust and innocence of animals, knowing they

depend on us after domestication. Training dogs in a systematic and effective way brought me joy, as it improved the lives of both the dogs and their future owners. This experience reinforced my love for animals and my dedication to helping them thrive, creating a meaningful impact for everyone involved." – Cassie Shepard

"I wanted to prove that I could take care of something other than myself, I had a lot of anxiety before we got her," Sawsan Whitelaw said, handler of a boxer named Glory. "I've never had a dog before. But after only a week, not only did I feel more confident, but that little dog tugged on your heart. She'd been tugging on mine."

This experience has changed my life completely. It helped me to see the world in a different light, to have

compassion for someone I never met, to look at a dog and see their pure, genuine love and adoration, something I had never felt from a human being.

Watching these dogs grow and become such heroes in the lives of great people was such an honor.

Although it was hard emotionally at times to give the dog up that we lived and trained with, we knew that that was the purpose. The joy that they would bring to their veteran was the driving force.

Two of the dogs I trained went on to be full service dogs for veterans. Liberty and Max both graduated from the program with their CGC (canine good citizen) certificate. Not all dogs made it to service but they all went out with the training to make them great dogs, no longer outcasts, thrown away.



Liberty living her best life!



Meeting her new human (a Veteran)



Saying Goodbye...

"I must change my life so that I can live it, not wait for it." Susan Sontag, author

Books From the National Corrections Library Taken Off Tablets Temporarily

By Molly Prince, LCSW

On Tuesday, February 18, 2025 during the monthly Stakeholder Advocate Meeting with UDC, we learned that UDC had to take down the National Corrections Library link that has been provided on the tablets for incarcerated individuals to order through the tablets to read. An audiobook function was one of the features offered through that application.

A few incarcerated abused the system, ruining it for the rest. Unfortunately, there were certain incarcerated individuals who were using the audible function to communicate with each other across both facilities. Therefore, for safety and security reasons, UDC took it down.

Orijin is the provider for tablet programs that UDC uses. It works with departments of corrections, parole and probation, and other governmental entities across the nation to provide comprehensive education to prisons and other organizations. Orijin provides the various applications and programs available on the tablet for Utah prison inmates to use.

We were told "Orijin is actively working right now to rebuild a custom library for Utah's two prisons that will still contain the electronic books (E-books) without the

audio books." Orijin representatives were at UDC the second week of February to meet with UDC administration. They were not able to provide a definite date that a new library will be up and running, but it is expected a new application that can access books for reading on the tablets will be available within the coming month.

This creates challenges and frustrations on many levels. Valerie Worrall, who is over the tablets acknowledged that this development impacts many people on various levels, for various reasons. An example is there is an incarcerated individual in CUCF who is currently teaching a Spanish class. He was using a library book accessed through the tablet to help him.

Incarcerated individuals who are blind or have diminished eyesight also have been using the audio books, as have individuals who cannot read for other reasons. Ms. Worrall assured us that Orijin is working to put a function within the e-book where the reader can select it to read it aloud to them. This will be a different accessibility feature than was used in the previous application that was being abused.

This interruption of the service to the National Corrections Library does not affect the Law Library. It was explained that the Law Library is accessed

through a completely different application on the tablets, so incarcerated folks will still have access to that.

Be True and Be Truthful By Ernie Rogers

This article is submitted by Ernie Rogers to everyone with the idea that they will go before the Board of Pardons & Parole at some point. It represents Mr. Rogers' perspective on the best way to approach a hearing.

We hope you read this shortly after entering the prison or jail system. Mistakes happen. Being in prison isn't the end. It can even be the beginning. If you made a mistake, that's over and done—let's start over. If somebody else made the mistake—the court maybe—you can't change that by telling the Board.

Concentrate on what you can do. If you haven't done it already, start today to be all you can be. (We should do that too.) Make no mistake, people CAN see who you are. When the time comes for a hearing to consider your release, the Board cares very little about what you may have done, they really just care about who you are. What can you offer?

BE TRUE. If you made a mistake, own up to it. Then put it behind you. Never look back. And, if it wasn't your fault—here, the rules are the same. Resolve today to be even better. Remember, the Board can't change your conviction. (Only the courts can do that.) They want to know who you are—now. Be true.

BE TRUTHFUL. Others will tell you to lie: "Fake it 'til you make it." From here on, never admit to things you didn't do. (But, if you did, say so.) Experience has shown that telling the truth is the best choice. If you say you did something that you didn't, that will surely be brought up against you later.

Now, the hard part. If there is a disagreement, hold to what you believe to be true but do not argue, and do not raise your voice. That *will* block hearing and understanding. At a Board hearing or elsewhere, present any evidence that you have, and do it quietly and respectfully—they will hear you then. This is the best rule in life and what you must do at your Board hearings.

IMPORTANT FINAL REMARKS. The Board of Pardons and Parole does care about you and wants most of all for you to succeed. From your first day in prison, show them that they can count on you. If you were innocent, let your conduct show them that.

When you go to your hearing to be considered for release, give straight, truthful answers to questions. If some concerns do not apply to you, you can say so, in a quiet tone. IF the question comes up, you can say you believe you are innocent, and the Board will not hold that against you in their decision. If it seems appropriate, you may ask for further evaluation and testing to resolve a question. For example, this might be to obtain a polygraph exam. The primary purpose of the Board is to do what is best for you, and for all of the citizens of the State.

"A positive mind finds opportunity in everything. A negative mind finds fault in everything." Simple Life

Some Information on College Correspondence Courses for Incarcerated

It continues to be challenging for incarcerated individuals to access college / university courses, and the vocational programs offered in Utah's prisons have strict guidelines around who can access them. This list is a short list of programs Utah prisoners have participated in and that we have heard have been "inmate friendly". This is not an endorsement of any of these programs. It is simply a list for information.

BLACKSTONE CAREER INSTITUTE

Blackstone is certified, VA approved, self-paced, and offers printed material correspondence courses. Their correspondence education for incarcerated individuals seems to be mostly geared toward a certificate in paralegal courses.

What it teaches: The Legal Assistant/Paralegal certificate program provides the foundational knowledge and skills needed in general law. Blackstone Career Institute prepares students for employment in a law firm, bank, court, government agency, or dozens of organizations that depend on legal assistants/paralegals today. The student will learn the following:

Define law and identify basic legal terms; Explain legal concepts related to contracts; Identify aspects of torts; Identify legal cause, negligence, and deceit.

Demonstrate an understanding of civil and criminal defamation; Give the legal definition of property and describe damages; Distinguish a crime from a tort and list the three classes of crime; Describe larceny and identify the three degrees of larceny.

Identify legal terms related to real property; Identify actions to recover damages in civil suits; Identify legal terms related to civil actions. Identify legal terms related to criminal procedure; Explain the process of criminal procedure.

Identify and explain legal concepts related to wills; Identify and explain legal concepts related to trusts and trustees.

Explain how partnerships and corporations are formed. Discuss the elements of constitutional law. Describe how legal research should be conducted. Identify effective job-search techniques for paralegals. Describe common ethics related to the paralegal profession.

Families are generally the ones to sponsor their incarcerated loved one for this program. The course cost includes Modern American Law Series – 14 Volume Set, Merriam-Webster Law Dictionary, Writing to Win Book, and all shipping and handling. According to the website the entire Paralegal Course costs close to \$900. Contact: 1011 Brookside Rd, Suite 300 Allentown, PA 18106 www.blackstone.edu, 1-800-826-9228.

STRATFORD CAREER INSTITUTE

Stratford Career Institute (SCI) offers up to 60 different courses that can be received through their Inmate Education division. One UPAN family whose loved one took a course from SCI states, “The courses seemed to be good. They offer a wide range of courses in business, vocational careers, medical careers, legal, computer technology, education and high school.” All textbooks and study guides are included. No technology required if you choose the print option.

Popular courses include: Business Mgmt.; Drug & Alcohol Treatment Specialist; Electrician; Fitness & Nutrition; Legal Assistant/Paralegal; Psychology/Social Work.

Flexible Study: No deadlines - study at a pace that works best for you. Complete exams online or through the mail. You study whenever it works best for you. SCI's self-paced courses do not have deadlines or rigid schedules.

Their website states, “You gain real-world practical knowledge from your first module. Your course was

written by professionals in the field and doesn't contain any extraneous coursework.”

It appears that if families can help get their loved one enrolled, that might make things easier but there is a physical mailing address incarcerated students can write to them requesting information on courses, enrollment, and costs.

www.scitraining.com, 1-800-363-0058.

U.S. Shipping/Mailing Address:

Stratford Career Institute 1 Champlain Commons, Unit 3
P.O. Box 1560 Saint Albans, VT 05478-5560

ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM (PEP) *Empowering Incarcerated People Through Educational Opportunities*

ASU-PEP's website states it is a leading higher education institution in the United States. It specializes in print-based correspondence education. It is accessible nationwide. Adam's website states its primary goal “is to empower incarcerated individuals through educational opportunities, which improves their chances of success after release.”

Adams' academic programs are designed to cater to a broad range of students. These include different programs offering certificates, associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees. They state they are “deeply committed to fostering educational opportunities and take pride in being one of the few quality correspondence programs available to incarcerated individuals in the country.” Their correspondence courses and remote learning options are designed to serve those who need access to traditional education.

Prison Education Program (PEP) - Adams State University Website: adams.edu

<https://www.adams.edu/academics/pep/print-based/>

MAILING ADDRESS: Prison Education Program (PEP)
Adams State University 208 Edgemont Blvd. Suite 3000
Alamosa, CO 81101 1-800-548-6679 Fax: 719-587-7974
prisonedprogram@adams.edu

Request for more resources. If you have used a University that does mail-in correspondence, please feel free to write an article about the school and your experience and submit it to UPAN for future newsletters.

Couple of Smiles and Maybe a Laugh

What do you call a cow with bad manners? Beef jerky ~ What did one DNA say to the other DNA? “Do these genes make me look fat?” ~ Can February March? No, but April May.~ Sometimes February feels like it will last forever...

But time Marches on ~ I asked my girlfriend when her birthday was. She said “March 1st”. So I walked round the room and asked her again! ~ What is a leg's favorite month? March.

From Winter we're entering Spring - a new cycle of beginning anew and growth. Be there and be cool. Ed

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“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead.