

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

UNA NEWSLETTER

EXPERIENCES IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Personal experiences of Inside UNA Students

What UNA Restorative Justice certificate program means to me?

My involvement with UNA RJ came about because I desire to be an educated man. Through UNA, I met a fellow classmate who has served in the military, been married several times, has had children, has seen the world from both sides of the proverbial “tracks” and the more I get to know this guy, the more I realize that this person that I used to see and not see has more layers than an onion, and hundreds of....no, thousands, maybe even billions of experiences. On the other hand, I’ve been incarcerated for 30 years of my 48 years of life; so, what does UNA RJ mean to me? It means layers, it means expansion, it means the enlargement of my capacity in this experience and it allows me to be active in an expectation that is looking forward to the potential in the eventuality of my freedom, **BECAUSE I AM NOT DEAD YET!**

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Proverbs 29:18

Personal experience of a UNA student:

Arrested with a 9th grade education at the age of 17, I look back and see myself as very simple and uneducated, by where I’m at today.

Through encouragement of others, I strived to gain my GED, and at 22, I accomplished getting my GED. That was the beginning of my educational journey.

Not only did my GED show that I could accomplish it, it also gave me the courage to make more difficult goals that would begin my journey of becoming an Educated Man.

Even through the negative environment, the trials of overcoming my own temptations, and the label of being what I know I’m not: an inmate, a convict, or a killer.

Unpredictable circumstances, trying to become better for myself

SOFT SKILLS RJ ENHANCES

- 1) COMMUNICATION
- 2) TEAMWORK
- 3) PROBLEM SOLVING
- 4) TIME MANAGEMENT
- 5) CRITICAL THINKING
- 6) DECISION MAKING
- 7) ORGANIZATION
- 8) STRESS MANAGEMENT
- 9) ADAPTABILITY
- 10) CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
- 11) LEADERSHIP SKILLS
- 12) CREATIVITY
- 13) BEING RESOURCEFUL
- 14) PERSUASION
- 15) OPENNESS TO CRITICISM

above all things, and not letting my old habits or thinking control me, became an idea from my faith, in which has benefitted me and directed my life in an upward spiral, which my family and friends has noticed within me.

Taking all the Self-help classes available, taking all the Educational classes available, and taking all the

Trades that I could, has brought me from a simple teen, to an Educated Man.

But why stop there, after 19 years of my Educational journey: nearly accomplishing my Associates Degree, becoming an Ordained Minister, becoming Certified in 2 trades, and working everyday to prepare myself for when and if I ever walk

outside of these fences, I Am Becoming An Educated Man!

Today, in Restorative Justice, working on my soft skills, only enhances me to a higher degree in my desire to change and gain a better insight not only within myself, but for myself, and to achieve the highest degree of myself, in life.

TRANSFORMATIONS: BY A UNA STUDENT

In the shadow of life we exist
the temptations that surround us daily we resist.

Standing on the threshold of a new horizon
we strive to show our worth is rising.

Injustice all around the system in which we live
yet each day we continue to evolve and give.

We give of ourselves to show we are more than you see
our thoughts, actions and hearts are revealed to be.

That men of learning we stand ready to change
waiting for the freedom of release exchange.

So we can prove our education made a difference
that we can be trusted in society and be the difference.

That will change the views many have of prison
and gain the acknowledgement that we have risen.

To men of knowledge who paid the price
of punishment to grow and be restored, transformed.

Made new leaving the old, crossing the line
our achievements and faith will bring us into the light.

Restorative Justice has given us hope and a voice
with boldness we may enter the reformation fight.