



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

There are often experiences and contacts with people that I find inspiring and unforgettable. I recently had one of those moments when five of our south Florida program participants were recognized as "Favorite Fathers of 2012" at the National Partnership for Community Leadership's *14th Annual International Fatherhood Conference* during the week of June 15, 2012.



These five honorees were chosen based upon the criteria of being responsible fathers, demonstrating love and support of their children, being a motivator/encourager, protecting their child or children's welfare; being trustworthy, valuing the importance of education, being a good role model and working in partnership with the child or children's mother. Those are huge standards that each of these five men has worked diligently to meet.

Congratulations to Claude Wright (three sons); Tim Martin (one daughter); Nick Copertino (one daughter); Mark Anderson (one daughter and a new grandchild); and Agustin Diaz (two sons). Watching them work to meet these criteria has been a blessing for me and I couldn't be more proud of each man.

At all our Bridges facilities, we do an exemplary job of preparing our men and women for their re-entry to society and to the workplace. But it is important for us to remember that most of our inmates have families to care for, to go home to and to inspire. Relationships may be damaged and we recognize that. This is why we have programs in place to repair, nurture and shore up family relationships and dynamics. Family events, holiday visitations, and regular counseling are all designed to ensure that family dynamics are not further damaged by one member's incarceration. We strive to guide our men and women

UPCOMING EVENTS

Florida Partners in Crisis Conference

July 12th - 14th

Bradenton Bridge

Toastmasters Speech Competition

Saturday, June 14th

Orlando Bridge TC

Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency

Chapter 7 Awards

Ceremony & Luncheon

Thursday, July 19th

11:30AM - 1:30PM

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The Pew Center's Criminal Justice Study

[Time Served: The High Cost Low Return of Longer Prison Terms](#)

to return their worlds greatly improved through therapeutic transition and re-entry work release programs.

As one Favorite Father stated: "With all the tools that I have gained, I know I can make sober, positive differences in my daughter's life."

Again, congratulations to these "Favorite Fathers" for their modeling of fatherhood behavior, even as they are serving time for various convictions, and working to achieve their successes. This is a huge commitment from each man to be the fathers that they know they can be to their families.

Click [here](#) to see pictures from the conference.

Sincerely,

Lei Costantino Brown

President and CEO

VOCATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Turning Point Bridge



The Turning Point Bridge is now offering a Basic Air Conditioning and Refrigeration class, thanks to inmate Baglio who has over 30 years of high-level experience as an Electrician and AC/Duct Mechanic. Every Sunday from 3:30 to 5PM Baglio teaches the men about topics such as thermostats, control circuits, voltage, and the refrigeration cycle, just to name a few. The 15 men enrolled in the course will take the certification exam through American Trainco to improve the likelihood of securing a job in the field upon release.

Orlando Bridge Transition Center

NEW Jacksonville Bridge Construction Progress



Bridges of America is Smoke and Tobacco-Free!





Under the leadership of Chef Michael Schnitzer, all 14 Culinary Arts Apprentices at the Orlando Bridge TC passed their *ServSafe*® *Manager* exam! The *ServSafe*® program blends together the latest FDA Food Code, food safety research and years of food sanitation training experience. Culinary Arts Apprentices learn how to implement essential food safety practices and create a culture of food safety. All content and materials are based on actual job tasks identified by food service industry experts. This certification will help these men attain higher-paying jobs in this field.

The Broward County Bridge

The Broward County Bridge is now offering a course that allows program participants to study for the written portion of their Commercial Driver's License exam. We are proud to announce that the six men who comprised this first-ever CDL course all passed their exam! Congratulations on a job well done.

RE-ENTRY FAIR The Jacksonville Bridge



The Jacksonville Bridge Re-Entry Fair on June 15th was a huge success! Sincere thanks to the following participating organizations: *The Veterans Health Center, Northeast Florida Builders Association, Work Source, Gateway Services, SunTrust Bank, Vocational Rehabilitation, Fulton's Hope House, and the Jacksonville Re-Entry Center.* After the fair, the providers and program participants enjoyed a special meal catered by Gateway Services. Special thanks to Chaplain Robert Brown and Clinical Director Judy Razzano for organizing the event.

CHAPLAINCY SPOTLIGHT

The Broward County Bridge



On Saturday, June 9th, the Broward County Bridge had some special guests for Family Day. The Christian Hip Hop Group "Authentik" provided an awesome concert. Their music and lyrics were great and enjoyed by all ages. The Mentoring Task Force, comprised of Mentors, men currently in the program, and alumni, spoke about the role mentoring has played in their lives. One alumnus made the point that we all have people who influence us, but we need someone who will help us move forward, overcome obstacles, and encourages us to become a better person. Everyone enjoyed the games, great food, and wonderful time of family fellowship. Special thanks to Chaplain Ginery Twichell for organizing this event.

The Bradenton Bridge



**The graduates pictured with Rev. Art Hallett, Evangelism Explosion
Director of North American Prison Ministries**

On Wednesday, June 13th, the team from *Evangelism Explosion* hosted a special graduation for 11 women at the Bradenton Bridge. These 11 women graduated with their college credit class on Evangelism. Evangelism Explosion International is affiliated with Knox Theological Seminary in Fort Lauderdale. It was founded by Dr. James Kennedy in 1970 at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church. Rev. Art Hallett is currently the Director of the North American Prison Ministries. The courses include the following topics: *Share Your Faith, Everyday Evangelism, Handling Objections, and Advanced Communication Skills*. Upon release, these credit courses can be applied to the seminary or college of the ladies' choice. Special thanks to Chaplain Sharon Burke for facilitating this partnership.



The picture links to a flyer with more details.

Bridges of America is thankful to be a recipient of donations from the *Men's Wearhouse National Suit Drive* for the fourth year in a row. Any of the following gently used professional attire will be accepted:

- Suits
- Sport coats
- Dress slacks
- Dress shirts
- Dress shoes
- Sportswear (collared shirts, sweaters, casual slacks, vests)
- Outerwear (jackets, long coats, raincoats)
- Ties and other accessories
- Women's professional clothing and accessories

We can also accept these items at our seven sites throughout Florida. Please email kkuehn@bridgesofamerica.org if you need more information.

www.bridgesofamerica.com

Bridges of America is a nonprofit organization founded in 1972 with the mission of changing criminal behavior through a practical, comprehensive approach that includes intensive substance-abuse counseling, parenting classes and work-release programs. Bridges' core value is a belief that people can change.

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