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president's message

KAREN DETERMAN
 MCA President
 Wright County Community Corrections



The very long winter and dreary spring, along with the fact that May was Mental Health Awareness Month, prompted me to talk about mental health in this letter to the FORUM. Who isn't suffering a bit from winter and rainy day blues? It seems like the weather has been a main topic of conversation among Minnesotans for the past six months.

Fortunately, for most of us, our mood will improve when the sun shines again. However, according to NAMI, this is not the case for one out of 17 individuals who suffer from a serious and persistent mental illness. I suspect that a majority of us know someone personally that has been impacted by a mental health diagnosis, and I am no exception. Even with the strides made in understanding and supporting those with mental illness, many are still uncomfortable talking about personal experiences. As a professional educated about mental illness, I even sometimes struggle disclosing my story and sharing that I lost my daughter to suicidal depression. When talking about our tragedy, I'm uncertain how people will react, and to be honest most of the time it is very awkward. So, I know first-hand how difficult it can be.

Let's Start Talking, an initiative started by David Wellstone and Ken Barlow, is one local grass roots effort that is openly talking about such concerns. Mr. Wellstone and Mr. Barlow decided to team up and speak publicly in an attempt to increase awareness about mental health, and talk about the stigma of a mental health diagnosis. In their presentation, Ken Barlow shares his very personal story of dealing with Bi-Polar 2, his struggle getting a proper diagnosis and the fear of disclosing that he is diagnosed with Bi-Polar. David Wellstone shares how difficult it was to get the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 passed, and why it was so important for him to see this through. It took over 10 years of hard work for legislation to acknowledge that people who suffer from a mental health diagnosis are entitled to the same health care coverage as those needing treated for a physical illness.

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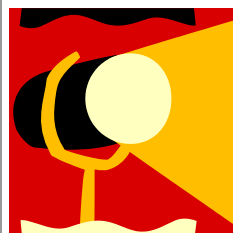


We in corrections see first-hand the impact mental illness has on clients and their families. We often deal with clients who have co-occurring diagnosis, use drugs or alcohol to self-medicate and then end up in jail instead of a mental health facility. There is also the issue of our men and women who have served our country in the armed forces and the mental health concerns for that group. NAMI reports “Although military members comprise less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, veterans represent 20 percent of suicides nationally. Each day, about 18 veterans die from suicide.” Sometimes people don’t seek help for mental illness because of the stigma attached with a diagnosis and treatment.

Fortunately, education and information sharing on mental health continues to advance, and the number of organizations that support those who deal with mental illness is growing. Public awareness is expanding, which hopefully will result in a greater awareness of the need to increase mental health services.

Two goals of Mental Health Awareness Month are to encourage positive connections and reduce the stigma attached. We as professionals can help to achieve these goals by continuing to work with those who suffer from mental illness with dignity and empathy, and be champions for improved services. Let’s do our part in the movement to open the lines of communication, enhance services, and reduce the stigma of mental illness.

Sincerely, *Karen Determan*



spotlight on: 180 degrees, inc.

JAKE NOWACK
Operations Manager
180 Degrees, Inc.

In 1971, Robbie Robinson introduced 180 Degrees, Inc. (referred to herein as 180) to a new kind of public that, at the time, appeared less fixed on latching to old opinions of effectiveness of rehabilitation by incarceration compared to the effectiveness of rehabilitation by use of restorative justice techniques. The timing of Robbie’s business venture into the field of community corrections complimented well the DOC’s obtained approval to establish a work release program in 1967, and the incorporation of the community based ex offender resource organization, AMICUS, that same year. The early 70’s was an era in

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which the DOC took strides towards no longer just housing offenders and instead preparing offenders for reentry. In conjunction with this transformation of ideology, the first correctional halfway house opened in 1969 under the authority of VOA. It could be argued that the outcomes produced by the VOA halfway house during the 2-years following its launch ultimately played a key role in making way for future halfway houses such as 180 (and 180 for those halfway houses to follow).

In 1973, 180 Degrees, Inc. officially opened its doors to the highest risk population of adult offenders. The criminal history of these offenders had time and time again left them seemingly intolerable to many outlets of society, as well as to the job market (you pick a sector). Robbie did not turn these clients away as we do not turn them away today in 2013 (nearly 40 years later). Instead, those at highest risk to reoffend represent the largest percentage of the 300 plus clients we serve at the halfway house annually. Each adult offender that walks through the door into our 236 Clifton Ave halfway house is presented with a second chance, a new opportunity to reestablish themselves within the community they left behind upon incarceration. The staff of the halfway house assists clients in seeking employment inside the boundaries of each individual's skillset and supplies clients with the contact info for landlords who have historically proven themselves as being "felon-friendly" (quotations to stress my innocence in having any creative input into the phrase "felon-friendly"). During the client's 60 day stay in the halfway house expectations are communicated clearly; get a job and find housing. For such a complex industry as reentry, the objectives prove themselves simple and straightforward. However, the absolute necessity for both objectives to be met in order to accomplish a successful transition cannot be underestimated. Here at 180 Degrees, Inc., we strive to create a path for our clients to travel in search of both livable wage employment and safe housing while partnering with our clients to help them fully understand and remain accountable to their conditions of release.

Since the inception of 180 Degrees, Inc. in 1971 the organization has continued to expand the spectrum of services provided. In 1989, 180 Degrees, Inc. launched a day reporting program as an alternative to incarceration for offenders facing jail time for technical violations. The NAP program (Non Residential Alternative Program) still exists today and is frequently utilized by Hennepin County probation officers in need of supportive programming for high need clients. The NAP program is complimented by the SONIC program (Skills Offenders Need in the Community), which is an employment and housing focused resource center located onsite at the halfway house in south Minneapolis.

In 2001, Juvenile Delinquent Unit (JDU) became the first 180 Degrees, Inc. youth-based program in Ramsey County. JDU recently changed its name to Youth Engagement Program (YEP), however; the usual high quality juvenile probation case management services apply. YEP operates under a contract with Ramsey County to provide specialized services to juveniles facing multiple obstacles.

Following the arrival of YEP in 2001, 180 Degrees, Inc. nearly multiplied the number of youth programs that are available to Ramsey county juveniles and their agencies of supervision. 180 Degrees, Inc. currently hosts a girls' resiliency group in collaboration with social workers, probation officers, and families in Ramsey County. This group/individual dual-mentoring model provides supportive adult leadership to its juvenile participants in a safe environment conducive to healthy development. This program not only remains available to a wide range of supervision agencies, but it also serves as an extension for other 180 Degrees, Inc. youth programs such as the Evening Learning Center (ELC), and the recently acquired scattered foster home services and group homes in St. Cloud, Von Wald, and Hayward. 180 Degrees, Inc. also proudly partners with our subsidiary program, Su Familia Multicultural Center, which provides endless counseling options to both male and female, adult and juvenile, clients in the metro area.

As we approach the 40th Anniversary celebration, the leaders of 180 Degrees, Inc. routinely remind us of the importance of operating under the influence of Robbie Robinson's vision. Richard Gardell, CEO of 180 Degrees, Inc., never lets us forget why we do the work we do and how important it is. Not only remembering the mission statement, "Turning lives around to ensure a safer community," but in fact living the mission by means of positive interactions with the clients we serve. As we enter the 40th year of existence we eagerly look forward to continuing our quest to provide a fresh start to all those who need it. And en route we hope to continue building relationships with the many organizations in Minnesota that share our commitment to serving people.

For adult services please contact:

- Jacob Nowack: 612-813-5014

For Juvenile Services Please Contact:

- Nikki Miller (Mentoring): 651-332-5511
- Frank Hosch (Group homes and Foster Care): 651-332-5513
- Nuwoe Cooper (Stearns County ELC) : 763-496-9645
- Andre Isabell (Ramsey County ELC): 651-332-5520
- Christina Caballero (Su Familia): 651-332-5500

u.s. supreme court decisions: expungement

MARK HAASE

Vice President

Council on Crime and Justice

On May 22nd the Minnesota Supreme Court issued two important expungement decisions, one addresses the sealing of adult criminal records and the other juvenile delinquency records. The Minnesota Corrections Association, along with many others, filed an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief supporting the request for expungement in the juvenile case. In the adult records decision, *State v. M.D.T.*, the Supreme Court held that, with the exception of the limited cases allowed by statute, the court's authority to expunge the criminal records of adults is limited to records located within the judicial branch, and thus does not extend to records held by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the Department of Human Services. This is a very disappointing decision for those who hoped the Supreme Court would affirm the courts' inherent authority to seal executive branch records in some cases. This decision, in the words of dissenting Justice Paul Anderson, "effectively consigns M.D.T. to a large and growing group of citizens who seek to turn their lives around but cannot do so because of the way we interpret our expungement law...the collateral consequences of conviction will endure...long after they have served the punishment imposed." Based on this decision, any records sealing remedy that will really be effective will need to be created by the legislature.

The juvenile delinquency records decision, *In the Matter of the Welfare of J.J.P.* , held that courts can expunge some parts of juvenile delinquency records that are held by the executive branch, but limited the scope of the expungement power by making other parts of that record off-limits. This is a promising decision for limiting the collateral consequences of juvenile delinquency records, but the practical impact will need to be determined.

These decisions will require additional advocacy efforts to ensure that people with criminal and juvenile delinquency records will have reasonable opportunities to become fully-contributing members of our communities. If you have questions about the cases, contact Legislative Committee Chair Mark Haase, Vice President, Council on Crime and Justice, at haasem@crimeandjustice.org.

Here is a more in depth description of the cases:

State v. M.D.T. involved a district court order granting an expungement for a young woman who had been convicted of aggravated forgery after altering a prescription for Robitussin cold medicine; changing the dosage from 200 ml to 400 ml. She stated that she did not have enough money to go back to the doctor if she needed a refill. This was her first and only offense. The majority opinion, written by Chief Justice Gildea, held that the district court had exceeded its inherent authority in ordering the expungement of "all official records" of M.D.T.'s conviction because absent specific legislative authorization, the court's expungement authority does not extend to records held in the executive branch of the government. The Court rejected M.D.T.'s argument that the ability to expunge executive branch records is essential to the core judicial function of controlling court records in order to provide for a just outcome. The implications of this case can be summarized in the words of dissenting Justice Paul Anderson,

who was Joined by Justice Page, “The majority effectively consigns M.D.T. to a large and growing group of citizens who seek to turn their lives around but cannot do so because of the way we interpret our expungement law...the collateral consequences of conviction will endure...long after they have served the punishment imposed.”

In *In the Matter of the Welfare of J.J.P.*, the petitioner had pled guilty to two separate incidents of shoplifting and burglary as a juvenile. Seven years later, he found that those adjudications would create barriers to education and career paths for years to come. In his petition for expungement, he asked the court to seal not only his court records, but to use its authority under the juvenile expungement statute, 260B.198, subdivision 6, to seal records held in the executive branch as well. The Supreme Court affirmed the Court of Appeals opinion that the juvenile expungement statute allows the court to seal juvenile delinquency records held by the executive branch, but in a confusing two part decision the majority held that the court’s juvenile expungement power with respect to records held by the executive branch only applies to the record of the specific court order that adjudicated the juvenile delinquent. All other records collected and maintained by the executive branch, including those relating to the arrest and investigation and the petition for delinquency fall outside of the court’s juvenile expungement authority. The Court also articulated a new standard, by finding that “the petitioner bears the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the benefit to the petitioner outweighs the detriment to the public and the burden on the court”. Although the Court’s decision that judicial records of adjudication may be expunged at the executive branch can be seen as a positive result for the juvenile expungement remedy, the practical implications of the ruling, including the effect that an expungement of juvenile delinquency adjudication will have on background checks conducted by the Department of Human Services, are not clear.

overcoming barriers to a housing search

JOSH DYE
Marketing & Outreach Coordinator
HousingLink

Having a criminal background, particularly a felony, makes a rental housing search difficult. It is common for renters to lose significant amounts of money on application fees and have bouts of homelessness when they are denied housing due to background issues. To address this challenge, HousingLink recorded a training DVD with a companion workbook called *Overcome Barriers to Your Housing Search*. The following are some of the tips offered in the video:

Treat Your Housing Search Like a Job Search

Traditionally, what is the difference between a housing search and a job search? In a job search we dress nicer than we normally dress, we speak more professionally, and we prepare a story about why we are a good fit for the position. If someone has a criminal background, they need to approach the housing search with the professionalism of a job search. This is because a landlord’s criteria will typically deny those with a felony, so the renter must present a compelling reason why the landlord should make an exception.

Know Who You Are

At the beginning of the housing search, a renter needs to know the following in detail:

- Criminal background
- Monthly income (Make sure to include all sources)
- Credit score
- Rental history (Evictions/Unlawful Detainers, money owed, etc.)

Knowing this will let the renter know if he or she meets the landlord's rental criteria. If not, the renter needs to explain his or her story about what happened, and why the landlord should make an exception.

What is Your Story?

A renter needs to have a three-part story ready for each background issue that disqualifies them based on the landlord's rental criteria. For example, if the renter has a felony for drug possession:

Part 1 – An open, honest, and brief account of what happened: "Mrs. Landlord, three years ago I was caught up in the wrong crowd and was convicted of felony drug possession. You will see that when you look at my background report." The point of the open, honest, and brief story is to reveal what happened, so there are no surprises when the landlord pulls the background report.

Part 2 – How has the renter turned his or her life around?: "I went to jail, and since that time I have really worked to learn from this experience and grow as a person. I am no longer spending time with bad influences, drugs are no longer part of my life, and I have worked with 'x' organization which has made a big difference. Though I am disappointed at what I did, I have learned a lot and am a stronger, better person now."

Part 3 – Explain why you are a good renter: "Mrs. Landlord, I understand that this property is an asset and investment for you. I will make sure to pay my rent on time every time. I will keep a clean well-maintained apartment and treat it as if I was the owner, and I will be a great neighbor."

Once the renter has told the three-part story, it is time to ask the landlord if he or she will make an exception to their rental criteria and work with the renter's specific situation. If yes, go ahead and apply for the apartment. If no, do NOT pay an application fee or apply for the apartment. Thank the landlord for their time and move on to the next possible rental unit.

For more information about the *Overcome Barriers to Your Housing Search* DVD and workbook go to www.housinglink.org/overcome-barriers. To search for affordable housing openings throughout Minnesota go to www.housinglink.org.

goodwill/easter seals of minnesota

ANDY SAGVOLD

Program Manager – ReEntry Services

Goodwill/Easter Seals of Minnesota

Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota (G/ESM) has been transforming lives through the power of work for more than 91-years. The mission of G/ESM is to assist people with barriers to education, employment and independence in achieving their goals. This mission is supported by the net revenue from over 30 Goodwill stores, public and private foundation grants and financial donations. The Goodwill stores have also historically provided work experience opportunities for thousands of individuals without a work history. Participants are provided with a broad range of specialized services and programs that support our mission and their individual success. In addition to our career services, we offer support to non-custodial dads in our FATHER Project, offer individual counseling at our Working Well Mental Health Clinic (WWMHC) and provide industry-specific construction, automotive and customer call center programs in our Skills Training division. In 2012, G/ESM Mission Services Division served 15,651 Minnesotans and through the Goodwill stores and salvage programs, we diverted 19.8 million pounds of material from landfills.

The ReEntry Services division is one of the specialized service programs offered by G/ESM. The ReEntry Services division is set up to increase public safety by using evidence-based practices to address criminogenic factors that lead to recidivism. The services are focused on helping ex-prisoners and others with criminal records overcome barriers to employment, independence and success.

In addition to the one-on-one services provided to help the individuals served, the program focuses on developing employer relationships in the community by providing education about the myths, facts and benefits surrounding the hiring of individuals with records. After relationships are developed with employers, we match the program participants who have skills and interests related to the job duties and are most likely in a position to succeed in retaining the position. Our ideas about who would be a good fit are based upon our individualized work with them in the various program components. Trying to make a good employer/participant match is critical in helping ensure the continued business relationship and encourage the hiring of additional participants (or others with records) in the future.

One of the services offered is Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT). MRT is a cognitive-behavioral, step-by-step treatment strategy designed to enhance self-image, promote growth of a positive and productive identity while facilitating the development of higher stages of moral reasoning. The MRT group is evidence-based, with over 120 outcome studies showing significantly lower levels of rearrests and reincarceration, as well as significant increases in moral reasoning levels in participants. MRT addresses the dynamic risk factors associated with anti-social personality patterns and pro-criminal thinking and is co-facilitated by a licensed therapist from our WWMHC and a member of the ReEntry Services team.

Other program services also work to address criminogenic factors. For instance, the mentoring component addresses many risk factors, including a lack of pro-social activities and associations

with anti-social friends and family. Our Monday Morning Motivational Job Club is offered weekly and doubles as a motivational support group where participants can discuss and vent about any struggles and barriers faced over the weekend. This group was established to develop ongoing pro-social connections, distribute relevant job leads and is often used as a platform to bring back successful participants who can share their stories and accomplishments. Our 4-day Employment Readiness Training (ERT) focuses on managing workplace conflict, employer expectations, creating a resume and discussing conviction records. Mock job interviews are conducted by volunteers (often community employers) and video-taped so that both staff and peers can critique one another and make suggestions on how to improve interviewing and look more comfortable discussing their convictions. The program also offers MSW Interns (Resource Navigators) who work with each participant (in addition to their Employment Counselor or Case Manager) to help address a variety of issues that will impact their ability to gain or retain employment.

The eligibility requirements for the ReEntry Services division varies by program and it may be easiest to contact Christen Munn, Intake Coordinator at G/ESM, by dialing (651) 379-5835 to learn more about our current programs. If you would like to contact the Manager of ReEntry Services, please feel free to reach Andy Sagvold at (651) 379-5863 or asagvold@goodwilleasterseals.org at any time.

job search with a criminal history: learning to level the playing field

KATHLEEN DuCHANE

Training & Employment Development Director
Amicus

If ever a person needs hope and self-confidence, it's when we're looking for a job. Consider how anxiety-ridden the whole process is . . . even for the most articulate, educated and experienced job seekers. We're all looking to "level the playing field" and gain an advantage over all the other people applying for the same job. Then consider how intimidating the prospect might be if you had a criminal background. And consider also the many fellow inmates you might have seen return to the cell block, disappointed and discouraged. It might be enough to make you quit trying before you even got started. But then consider this:

Profile #1: Male; a former teacher, twenty-seven years in prison for murder, closing in on sixty, scared as hell but manages to land a good job within several weeks at a small St. Paul manufacturer in their technology support department.

Profile #2: Female, kids to support; eight years at Shakopee for embezzlement, good bookkeeping and financial background, applies for a job with US Bank and is told "we don't hire ex-felons" but succeeds in convincing them to hire her on an extended probationary basis, despite their "policy". (Extended probation waived after three months and a friend from Shakopee also hired.)

Profile #3: Male; late middle age, served seven years on drug charges, who writes a letter to a mattress manufacturer before he's released from CIP inquiring about job opportunities and gets an application and letter from the vice president instructing him to call for an interview as soon as he's released. Gets a production job and is promoted to line leader within several months.

Profile #4: Female; ten years at Shakopee on multiple charges, spotty work and education history, returns home to rural North Carolina after release and immediately gets a job operating heavy equipment (bulldozers, road graders) without previous experience.

Profile #5: Male; lengthy sentence for criminal sexual conduct, completed GED while in prison but very little work experience either in or out of prison, gets bakery job (which he loves!) within two weeks of release.

All very different people with widely varying crimes, sentences, and levels of education, training and work experience but with one critical thing in common as they approached their job search: they had all learned how to THINK LIKE AN EMPLOYER!!! Literally.

Eight years ago I was hired by Amicus under a DOC/Perkins Grant contract to facilitate a pre-release job-readiness program for offenders. At that point I had as little knowledge or experience teaching offenders how to re-enter the job market as the skeptical participants in my classes. Even after many years in the private sector interviewing, hiring and training hundreds of employees in jobs ranging from PhD-level labor market analysts to warehouse personnel, I was hard-pressed to define precisely what makes the critical difference in hiring decisions.

So the challenge was how to shape a curriculum that would help level the playing field for offenders by giving them the *advantage* of crawling inside an employer's head to understand, in very literal terms, how they decide who to hire. Central to the challenge was being able to define critical employer decision-making factors that would be easy for any job seeker to understand and could serve as the umbrella under which the entire curriculum would be aligned. Not wanting to rely solely on my own experience and instincts, I eventually hit upon a brilliant piece of university research which solved the challenge and became the cornerstone of the **Amicus Employment Advantage** program. The study surveyed thousands of employers across the country in practically every type of occupation about the precise factors that influence a hiring decision. Their answers were examined against several standards which ultimately fell into just four critical decision-making categories, regardless of specific job or occupational classification. Those four decision-making categories are:

1. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA's)
2. Reliability
3. Motivation
4. Values

Quiz Question #1: In an interview, which of the above four factors weighs most heavily in the decision-making process about who to hire?

This is the question posed to offenders in Employment Advantage classes. Each participant weighs in and votes on the answer, citing reasons for their vote. Votes are generally pretty scattered, but the majority of people usually vote for #1) KSA's. We're conditioned to believe that the most qualified, educated, best trained, most experienced people get the job.

And all of us who voted for KSA's are wrong. (When I initially reviewed the study I voted for KSA's too). But only 25 percent of an employer's decision in an interview is based on an applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities. The remaining whopping 75% of any hiring decision is based on a combination of an employer's assessment of the jobseeker's sense of reliability, motivation and values. This is particularly significant for offenders to know and learn to address because it means that soft skills, the intangibles, far outweigh the hard skills or tangibles. Employers can teach the KSA's. They can't teach the rest. So whether consciously or subconsciously, most all employers are looking for applicants who can effectively address a wide range of issues related to reliability, motivation and values.

This one nugget of research is astounding because it LITERALLY provides the crucial window into an employer's mind that job seekers need in order to begin to understand how to successfully interview for ANY job. And it became the hinge or lever for every aspect of the Employment Advantage program. Participants are taught to weigh, assess and evaluate every aspect of their job search from the employer's perspective: from cover letter or application to resume, interview and portfolio, the bottom line in class is always: **how can I demonstrate my worthiness for this job in relation to the key decision-making factors of reliability, motivation and values?**

Employment Advantage is not typical of most job search or employment readiness programs in that specific context. Participants are actually discouraged from approaching their job search from the perspective of a job seeker. By learning to **THINK LIKE AN EMPLOYER**, participants step into the shoes of the employer and begin to understand their needs, concerns and expectations. Job search then becomes less intimidating because participants have established a very simple tool for articulating their skills and experiences in ways that resonate with employers. They have actually gone through the rigorous process of evaluating their potential interactions with employers in intensive coaching and debriefing sessions throughout the curriculum as if they themselves are the employers.

This type of debrief is done together, as a group of employers "sitting in" as it were on interview after interview, giving each other feedback on how an employer might respond to things like their disclosure speeches, application forms, interview questions, overall demeanor. Rigorous is a key word here. Participants are put on notice within the first hour of class that one of the goals of the facilitator during the course of the classes is "to back each one of them into a corner they can't get out of". It's an important learning tool – understanding how easy it is to shoot yourself in the foot, but more importantly, learning how to self-correct during class and not make crucial mistakes in the "real world" where it can cost you the job. Somewhat

ironically, this aspect of the coaching/de-briefing process in **Employment Advantage** produces the most laughter and camaraderie among participants.....they intrinsically begin to internalize the sheer “laughableness” of some of their responses to employers’ questions and concerns, but they immediately also have the redemptive and confidence-building power of crafting their own rescues. One memorable moment in a Shakopee class was the woman who brought the entire class to howls of laughter when she asked her fellow “employers” after one of her mock interviews: “You think I shouldn’t have said I came to prison after I blew up the warehouse because I was mad at my supervisor?!?!?!?”

But here’s the point: if you were in her shoes, how would you reveal and accept responsibility for your crime with honesty and sincerity in a less damaging way?

Participating in **Employment Advantage** provides the structure and tools for figuring that out. For “filtering” yourself through the mind of an employer. No one leaves class without being able to effectively articulate their desire, ability and commitment to being a productive, reliable employee and member of the community at large. **Employment Advantage** is strength-based. It’s interactive. It’s 100% relationship-based because ultimately, that’s the goal in any interview....to quickly form a solid relationship with the employer that convinces them you’re **worth the investment** they’re about to make. The bottom line goal of **Employment Advantage is for** participants to demonstrate their understanding by effectively handling all potential employer concerns. To wit: toward the end of one mock interview I told the applicant I appreciated him telling me about his incarceration and that he was well qualified for the job, but how could I actually trust him? I remember his exact response clearly: “I certainly understand your concerns. That’s why I volunteered information about my crime at the beginning of the interview. I want an honest, trusting relationship with my future employer. I know I have to prove myself and I’m willing to do whatever else it takes to gain your confidence.” **RIGHT ON!! THINKING LIKE AN EMPLOYER!!!** Spontaneous, wild applause, hoots and cheers from the participant “employers”.....you got the job, man!

Which brings us to a concluding footnote: **Employment Advantage** is actually FUN. The most frequent comment on eight years’-worth of participant evaluation forms at the end of the course is that they actually wanted the class to last longer. For more information about Employment Advantage, please contact Amicus: 612-877-4258.

Session ending legislative report – May 2013

CAL SAARI
MCA Legislative Liaison



With the end of the Regular 2013 Session of the Minnesota Legislature, it's a good time for all of us to spend some time reflecting on the results and what we might have done differently in our work with legislators in pursuing our legislative agendas - this is particularly important for those of us who spend a fair amount of time at the legislative Committee meetings and in consultation with key legislators.

I just submitted a Session-ending legislative update report to the MCA Board of Directors and members of the MCA Legislative/Adult Justice Committee where I summarized our successes and some disappointments with the Session results. I'm not going to take the time to again summarize that information as it's readily available to all on the MCA website for your review. For this issue of the Forum I'd like to digress if I may, and give you some personal commentary on my experiences in working on your behalf at the Minnesota Legislature.

From a MCA perspective, I think we'd have to agree that the 2013 Session was a good one for Corrections and we made great inroads on many of our specific agenda items. This year we made Juvenile Justice our primary focus with emphasis on juvenile records and the stay of adjudication issue, and then during the Session, we saw an opportunity to lobby on behalf of an increase in the CCA and CPO subsidies. These things were passed by the Legislature this year with the exception of the stay of adjudication concern, which I personally wanted to really get through because that was the one issue I heard most about from our membership.

Unfortunately, that bill fell to some political partisanship and is one of the pieces left for us to pick up on for the start of the next Session. This leads me to my personal observation of the legislature in Minnesota (and even more so on the federal level).

I've always been a political science nerd dating back to my high school days, and I've been pretty familiar with the Minnesota Legislature since the early 60's when I started working as a probation officer. I spent a fair amount of time involved with the legislature dating back to the years of Governor Rudy Perpich, and before then when he was a State Senator with his two brothers. I am proud to say that I have personally known every Minnesota Governor since Karl Rolvagg dating back to the early 60's.

In those days we had essentially a two party system just like we have today with some power surges at times from a third party movement. What was different then was we basically saw a group of "free-spirited" legislators, all of which identified with a political party and a majority constituting the ruling party, but legislators had the freedom to act on their individual beliefs for the most part, without party affiliation and the threat of being chastised by your own party. There were political differences and plenty of debates, but at the end of the day they put their heads together to form a working solution for the good of Minnesota citizens.

Today political parties are so evenly divided that e-v-e-r-y vote counts and could mean political control of the Legislature. As a result, party leaders essentially make all the decisions as to how members will act, what they support or oppose, and how they will vote on key issues. Some will still deny it's gone this far, but folks, I've seen it first hand - six to eight legislators are calling all the shots on the direction their party will take, and that's why we're often frustrated with the difficulty of getting even simple policy bills with bi-partisan support passed into law. Perhaps it is time to seriously consider a Unicameral Legislature! Food for thought?

cell phone detectors

DAVID HEATH
MCA Technical Committee Chair



About a month ago, a new product came to my attention while doing research to write an MCA technical article. The product is the Manta Ray cell phone, made by Berkeley Varitronics Systems. The detector is selling on their website for \$499.00 and boast things past cell phone detectors have not been able to do. The advanced cell detector can find cell phones through walls and other barriers even if their batteries and SIM cards are removed. To see a You Tube Video of the product in action copy the link below to your browser.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqRi73NpOB8>



It can penetrate a number of different construction materials and was designed for use in locations where cell phones are forbidden. Primarily, to addresses the growing problem of illegal cell phones smuggled into Correctional Facilities around the nation. Another projected use is sensitive government or corporate facilities that want to protect unauthorized photography or electronic transfer of sensitive data from a mobile phone. It could be used by guards to do quick scans with a range of about six inches instead of invasive pat downs or less discriminating metal detectors.

The company is not divulging how the product works, but say that metal detectors can't distinguish between cell phones and other objects, and that many phones only have small amounts of metal to be detected. Past conventional cell phone detectors, including the ones Berkeley sells, only work when the phones are turned on. This is because they depend on sensing the cellular signals coming out of the phone. The Manta Ray uses neither of these techniques. Instead, it identifies specific components found in all cell phones. Berkeley is not saying what those components are at this time.

They have divulged what it doesn't use, claiming it does not transmit anything or use x-ray or any other optical methods. It also does not detect chemical signatures in the air or use UWB (ultra wide band), a technology that uses very low frequencies and has been used in ground penetrating radar. It does not focus on traditional radio frequencies at all.

Whatever magic it does use, it looks like it could help control the illegal use of smuggled cell phones within the confines of a Correctional facility. Maybe this tool will become part of other standard Correctional search equipment, specializing in the battle against illegal phones. The company website is listed below for reference:

<http://bvsystems.com/Products/Security/Manta-Ray/manta-ray.htm>

the lighter side

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: My name is Susan!

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget.

ATTORNEY: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

ATTORNEY: Do you know if your daughter has ever been involved in voodoo?

WITNESS: We both do.

ATTORNEY: Voodoo?

WITNESS: We do.

ATTORNEY: You do?

WITNESS: Yes, voodoo.

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the 20-year-old , how old is he?

WITNESS: He's 20, much like your IQ.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Are you sh***ing me?

ATTORNEY: So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And what were you doing at that time?

WITNESS: Getting laid

ATTORNEY: She had three children , right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town I'm going with male.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral , OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 PM

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If no , he was by the time I finished.

ATTORNEY: Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

WITNESS: Are you qualified to ask that question?

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

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