

## *A Community Success Initiative Publication*

**Community Success Initiative is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Corporation, Tax ID# 16-1702165**  
P.O. Box 61114 Raleigh, NC 27661 (919)834-7626 [www.communitysuccess.org](http://www.communitysuccess.org)  
Dennis W. Gaddy, Executive Director

### CSI Receives Award From The North Carolina Justice Center

It was a gorgeous spring evening in May as hundreds of community conscience North Carolinians gathered at Bay 7 of the American Tobacco Complex for The North Carolina Justice Center's (The Justice Center) annual "Defenders of Justice Awards" ceremony. CSI's Executive Director, Dennis Gaddy, was especially excited that evening; for, he was one of the recipients receiving an award on behalf of Community Success Initiative.

The Justice Center, a non-profit poverty organization, based in Raleigh, was founded in 1996 with a mission to reduce poverty in North Carolina by helping to ensure that North Carolinians have access to resources, services, and fair treatment needed for them to enjoy economic security.

Examples of The Justice Center's work include:

- Promoting access to health care
- Protecting vulnerable consumers
- Helping to assure a livable income for workers and their families
- Building a better education system
- Promoting access to the justice system

And much, much more.

For several years, The Justice Center has recognized area individuals and organizations that work towards bringing about positive tangible changes in the lives of people.



*CSI Executive Director, Dennis Gaddy (center) and CSI Team*

Since its inception over 6 years ago, with Dennis at the helm, CSI has touched and influenced the lives of over 2,000 formerly incarcerated persons. Through the efforts of the CSI team, hundreds of these persons have found employment, better housing, and/or other needed services and resources.

Other award recipients included:

Legislative Advocacy Award— State Senator, Josh Stein  
State Representative, Angela Bryant

Policy & Research Advocacy Award— Democracy North Carolina

Litigation Award— Elliot Prishko Morgan, PA

Community Capacity Building Award— Coalicion DeOrganizacione Latino-Americanas (COSA)

### CSI Team Gives Words Of Hope To The Homeless

The CSI team has joined forces with the South Wilmington Street Shelter to bring "words of wisdom and encouragement" to the residents of the shelter. In May, Wayne Eaton, a CSI participant and also President of the shelter's Guest Advisory Council, invited CSI team to speak to the residents. This initial invitation has now become a regular session.

This is a time that allows the residents at the shelter a platform to discuss various issues, such as personal development, leadership, career goals, etc.

The residents with a criminal background can easily relate

to the CSI team because they've experienced some of the same issues that the residents currently face.

Since Wayne introduced the residents to Community Success Initiative's Reentry Program, several of them have joined CSI. This step helps them to receive additional help and opportunities as they strive to move forward.

## CSI Mentors Making It Happen Featuring Sheldon Howard & Lynn Burke

One of CSI's most dedicated and valued employee, Sheldon Howard, wears several "hats" as he works towards helping the program's participants. He's an instructor, advocate for 2nd chances, job coordinator, member of CSI's speakers bureau, and mentor.



The effectiveness of his work weighs heavily on his strong interpersonal skills and his ability to build supportive relationships with community organizations, local agencies, and businesses. Evidence of this occurred several months ago.

A community volunteer sponsor who was working with the Dept. of Corrections (DOC), contacted Sheldon regarding a soon to be released inmate. The sponsor was confident that the inmate had turned his life around, had some marketable skills, and deserved a second chance. After several conversations with the sponsor, he and Sheldon were successful in getting the DOC counselor to facilitate and monitor calls between Sheldon and the inmate. While still incarcerated, the inmate completed his resume' and mailed it to Sheldon. Over the phone, Sheldon conducted a CSI intake interview with the inmate..

After contacting several businesses, Sheldon finally found one that could possibly use the inmate's skills. After the young man's release, Sheldon set up an interview for him with the potential employer.

The interview was successful; the young man started work the next morning.

Every interaction may not bring about the same results as this scenario, but it does show what can happen when the community, DOC, and specialty services organizations work



A recent law school graduate, Lynn brings special skills and knowledge to CSI as she mentors and gives direction to those mentees who are having various legal issues. Just recently she assisted two of our participants in getting driving fines cleared so that they could get their drivers license restored.

In one instance, Lynn drove a participant to a DMV office so that he could get needed documentation. Her knowledge saves time and also relieves stress and frustration that can become evident when one does not know legal processes and procedures. When needed, she accompanies our participants to court; showing support and also providing the court (or relevant person) information that would assist in the resolution of problem areas. She is

dedicated to her work and always faces challenges with a smile and a determination to get positive results.

Lynn is a member of CSI's Reentry Legal Advocacy Project (RLAP) which will supplement traditional reentry services with legal advocacy in three areas: driver's license restoration, expungement, and employment and occupational licensing hearings.



Do You...

Have a Caring Heart?

Want a New Friend?

Want to Help Someone in Need?

Have 1 Hour a Week to Volunteer?

Follow thru with Commitments?

Have the Ability to be Non- judgmental?

Answered "YES"?  
CSI needs YOU as a mentor.

Call Veronica (919) 834-7626 ext. 26  
for more information.

### Contributing to CSI is easy!

Your generosity helps to continue the work of Community Success Initiative. You can use your debit or credit card to make a tax-deductible donation today, at [www.communitysuccess.org](http://www.communitysuccess.org) or you can still mail your check payable to:

Community Success Initiative  
P.O. Box 61114  
Raleigh, NC 27661

## C.O.R.E. ( Children of Reentry) Hosts Youth Roundtable

On Friday, July 22, 2011 C.O.R.E. hosted its first Youth Focused Roundtable. The roundtable was attended by 55+ youth, organization representatives, Federal and State representatives, parents and community leaders. During the three hour session participants examined specific challenges facing youth who have been incarcerated or who have criminal records.

The group broke into small work teams to identify and provide resources and suggestions to various issues specific to these those challenges.

Special thanks goes to the spotlight organizations and their representatives, Father's Forever, Incarcerated Youth Advocacy Project, Life Resources of North Carolina, and Capital Area Workforce Development Board for sharing specifically how their organizations are helping provide, parenting skills, legal assistance, healthcare and job training for youth.

Participants left with a broader knowledge of specific challenges faced by youth, a better understanding of programs that cater to these challenges, and new connections. We look forward to hosting this event again!



## CSI Highlights LINC: A Wilmington, NC Partner



CSI often gets inquiries from persons outside of Raleigh about reentry programs or services that are available to formerly incarcerated individuals.

Since CSI is in the business of providing quality SERVICE, CSI has partnered with organizations outside of the Raleigh-Durham Triangle area. One such partnership is with Leading Into New Communities, Inc. (LINC).

*Frankie Roberts, Exec. Director* This non-profit organization is based in Wilmington, NC, and offers a comprehensive program of services not only to persons with criminal records, but also to children who are at-risk .

LINC's Executive Director, Frankie Robert's mission is to help individuals achieve their goals by "creating bridges between them and valuable resources".

With this in mind, for those who seek their assistance, LINC offers services in four major areas:

1. **Education** - Literacy Training, GED Assistance, Secondary Education Assistance
2. **Mental Health** - 12-Step Development Services, Mentoring, Diagnostic Assessment, Community Support
3. **Health & Medical** - Counseling, Prescription Drug Purchase, Eye Exam/Treatment, Medical Referral
4. **LITE Manhood Program** - Intervention Services for African-American Males (16-24 year of age).

It is because of partnerships, such as this one with LINC, that CSI and other non-profit organizations are able to be more effective in their quest of helping those in need.

## Veronica Everette', CSI Mentor, Publishes Book

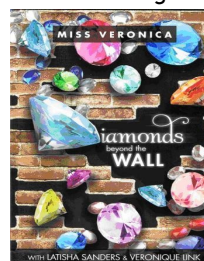


Six years ago, Veronica's life took a dramatic change. She was no longer the successful suburbanite living the American dream. Instead, she was labeled a felon sentenced to nine months at Alderson Federal Camp.

It was this incarceration that led to her recently released book, "Diamonds...Beyond The Wall". A collection of poems and essays,

Miss Veronica 's goal is to inform, to enlighten, to inspire, and to possibly change the mind set of readers who think negatively of everyone who has been to prison. She views those with criminal records who are striving to be productive citizens after their release as "Diamonds" who have value, who have worth—deserving of a second chance.

As a member of the CSI team, Miss Veronica works with many "Diamonds" daily. She knows first hand of the barriers and many challenges they face continually. For that reason, she has pledged to give a portion of the sale from each book back into the community to help remove some of those barriers and challenges and ultimately help reduce recidivism .



Visit Ms. Veronica's website to find out more about her efforts and to purchase a book.

[www.crusade4hope.com](http://www.crusade4hope.com)

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED TO:**

**Empowering and giving hope to people entangled in the criminal justice system by helping them access services and opportunities they need to build new lives**

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**Editor-In-Chief: Veronica Everette'**

## North Carolina Holds First Second Chance Lobby Day



On April 26, 2011, the first Second Chance Lobby Day, "I'm For Second Chances", was held at the North Carolina General Assembly in Raleigh. Over 200 formerly incarcerated individuals and organizations supporting and working on behalf of those with criminal records attended this event. This was a time in which during designated time, constituents could lobby their state representatives to cite reasons why "a second chance" is important to them, the community, and the economy.

CSI worked to coordinate this event along with other North Carolina Second Chance Alliance partners. CSI would like to thank the North Carolina Justice Center (especially Bill Rowe, Ajamu Dillahut, and Louisa Warren) for their help in coaching along the legislative process. As a result of this lobbying effort, the group hoped the legislative body would support several issues, namely:

- Certificates of restoration rights
- Ban the box policy for jobs
- Funding for reentry plans that provide housing, employment, substance abuse, and transportation services
- Reappointment of the Legislative Study Commission on Barriers Facing People with criminal records
- Improved opportunity for expungement in NC
- Eligibility for individuals with a felony control substance conviction for Work 1st and Food and Nutrition services programs.

It is evident that the legislators are hearing and acting upon those who favor the second chance initiative that allows formerly incarcerated persons to be able to apply for professional licenses that convicted felon are not currently able to obtain.

These are the comments of a local supporter who sent an email to CSI .

".... Just read an article about the possible passing of law allowing the formerly incarcerated to obtain a license for whatever trade they desire. This is absolutely incredible! I am very excited at this possibility. I am not a formerly incarcerated person, but I did work in DOC for 4 years and for 4 years I watched wonderful people come back to prison because they could not find gainful employment that would support their families. "



North Carolina Representative Garland Pierce speaking to Second Chance Lobby Day attendees