



A NEW BEGINNING. A NEW FUTURE.

Organization Description

General Background and Organizational History

TEEM is an interfaith 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in its 29th year of service. Since its inception, TEEM has served nearly 14,000 Oklahomans, most in the Oklahoma City area.

When founded, TEEM primarily served men striving to overcome substance abuse and addiction issues. As the needs of the community changed, TEEM sought to serve a wider range of individuals, opening its doors to sober adults desiring to improve their lives. Throughout its history, TEEM's primary client population has been individuals seeking to rebuild their lives after a period of incarceration.

In 2013, TEEM's Board of Directors made the decision to shift the organization's mission and programs towards best serving individuals impacted by incarceration. TEEM's new mission statement became "TEEM is dedicated to breaking cycles of incarceration and poverty through education, personal development, and work readiness training." With this mission change, TEEM began serving incarcerated individuals pre- and post-release in Oklahoma County through its Reentry Program. TEEM's Reentry Program serves incarcerated individuals through the delivery of a holistic self-sufficiency model centered around education, personal development, and work readiness training.

TEEM has experienced great growth in the past year. In 2015, a new program and new target population was added when TEEM became the managing partner of the Oklahoma County Community Sentencing Program, which serves individuals who are being diverted from incarceration through the judicial system. This addition doubled TEEM's programs (growing from one program to two) and staff (growing from 13 full-time employees to 25). In early 2016, TEEM sold the building it's called "home" for the past 29 years and purchased a larger building in Oklahoma City. TEEM moved its programs and staff to its new location at 1501 North Classen Boulevard in Oklahoma City in July 2016.

Major Milestones Achieved

In its first 26 years, TEEM helped over 12,000 individuals for an average of 462 individuals served per year. In the last 3 years since TEEM's mission change, TEEM has served an additional 2,000 individuals, increasing the yearly average of unduplicated individuals served in some capacity to

667. TEEM's employment rate for participants has also increased. The year-end employment rate for 2015 TEEM participants was 87.4%.

In 2013, TEEM became a subrecipient on a U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration Adult Reentry Training to Work grant. In 2015, the grantee and lead partner, It's My Community Initiative, was awarded another generation of this grant. TEEM was a subrecipient on this grant as well. These grants have been groundbreaking for TEEM, allowing for a redesign of the organization's holistic self-sufficiency model and an electronic system to measure outcomes.

Throughout the years, TEEM has celebrated many achievements. Recent achievements include the creation of a highly successful mentoring program, featuring one-on-one and small group mentoring; an increase in volunteerism and community buy-in; provision of transitional services to over 100 incarcerated women through funding from Impact Oklahoma; expansion of employer partnerships; an award from 7-Eleven® Corporate to provide housing and transportation assistance to participants; new and expanded private and public partnerships; the receipt of a major software gift from Microsoft; and becoming a HiSET® (High School Equivalency Test) testing center.

Current Programs and Services

Research from the RAND Corporation shows education and job training significantly lowers recidivism (returning to prison) and keeps people from being incarcerated. TEEM works to prepare program participants to secure and maintain meaningful employment, thus transforming tax consumers into tax producers and helping ease incarceration costs by reducing recidivism. TEEM's Reentry Services Program serves as a "home base" of support and assistance for participants throughout the most critical stages of transitioning from incarceration.

Securing meaningful employment is vital to a successful transition into society. TEEM takes a three-pronged approach to breaking cycles of incarceration and poverty in Oklahoma by providing individuals impacted by incarceration with education; social service supports; and job training, job search, and job placement. TEEM works to match program participants and employers to ensure the employment relationship is mutually beneficial.

TEEM participants complete cognitive behavior classes (*Winning the Workplace Challenge*, *Thinking for a Change*, and *SAMSHA Anger Management*) as well as job and life skills classes (*Ready for Work*, financial literacy, keyboarding/navigation, and High School Equivalency Test (HiSET®) preparation and testing). In addition, TEEM offers tangible certifications, including OSHA-10, Forklift, Culinary Techniques/ServSafe®, Heavy Equipment Operation, and Welding. In an effort to remove barriers to employment, TEEM also provides direct supportive social services in the form of transportation and housing assistance, case management, and legal assistance (e.g., obtaining state IDs or driver's licenses, expungement, and family law matters) as well as one-on-one mentoring from community volunteers who assist in confidence building and development of prosocial behavior.