



AMTC News

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Partnering for Reentry

“We are privileged to work with organizations that bring hope and stability to some of our country’s most vulnerable communities, including those reintegrating after incarceration.”

— ANGELA TURNER

AMTC News

Joshua Becker, Writer & Editor

4465 N. Oakland Avenue
Suite 200
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Phone: (414) 316-4530
Fax: (414) 316-4545

AMTCASSOCIATES.COM

For individuals who have been released from the criminal justice system, transitioning back into society is not easy, by any means. They face a number of significant challenges, among them: financial hardships, barriers to employment, strained family relationships, court fines, child support, housing dilemmas and much more.

At AMTC & Associates, we are privileged to work with organizations that bring hope and stability to our country’s most vulnerable communities, including those reintegrating after incarceration. One such organization is the **Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OICA)**. With 34 affiliates country-wide, it hosts over 120 programs in vocational training, work readiness, education, youth development and healthcare. While each of these is exceptional, we’d like to tell you more about its reentry work in this newsletter.

OICA helps with all of the reentry hurdles listed above by fostering a sense of self-sufficiency. By partnering with OICA and its affiliates, we share in this work by providing high-quality performance measurement systems. AMTC provides data management tools, training and

technical assistance in real time so that objectives are met to their fullest potential. These tracking methods are essential to meeting outcomes. We also provide training and ongoing technical support for evidence-based program models. This translates into transformed lives.

In our first article, we highlight a participant who reintegrated successfully into society with help from an OICA affiliate. In the second article, we focus on what OICA’s reentry programming entails. We also list additional resources for those affected by reentry, as well as introduce two of our associates.

AMTC & Associates strives to maximize the impact of organizations. If your organization shares this goal, then we encourage you to reach out to us. We are here to help!

Angela Turner
Principal





A Real-Life Story

Graduates of
OICA's SOAR program

From Incarceration to Employment

Amir Williams describes himself as “deep in the streets” from a very young age. He spent his teenage years at a school for at-risk youth, which the courts required him to attend. At age 19, he was arrested for armed robbery and spent more than a year in state prison. Upon release, he struggled to abide by probation requirements and was again incarcerated.

Then an experience in the summer of 2018 changed his life forever: his probation officer referred him to a reentry program through **Philadelphia OIC**, an affiliate of the **Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OICA)**. Individuals who have been incarcerated are finding hope and stability through OICA, an organization headquartered in Philadelphia with 34 affiliates around the country. OICA affiliates provide educational and workforce development services to individuals in struggling communities.

Awarded four reentry grants by the U.S. Department of Labor, OICA coordinates programming and oversees its delivery for affiliates involved in this type of work. It is a leader in reintegrating individuals into society by fostering self-sufficiency in every

facet of life: employment, family responsibilities, financial literacy and emotional stability.

Williams was referred to Philadelphia OIC's SOAR program. (See page 3 for a broad overview of OICA's reintegration programming and services, including SOAR.) He had already been in a series of reentry programs, but none had been effective. He was distrustful and detached, which again led to probation issues. The staff at Philadelphia OIC worked with him and the probation officer to form trust.

That summer, Williams enrolled in a housekeeping program through Philadelphia OIC's Hospitality Training Institute. He was on time every day and earned the second-highest grades in the class. He secured an internship that turned into a paying job, and now he is forging a better life.

OICA affiliates provide an array of workforce development functions and programs that are transforming lives. Success rates are high, but not all participants are ready to change their environment or summon the strength to change behavior. Yet OICA and its affiliates are not deterred; they believe everyone deserves a chance.

Why Reentry Programs Are Needed

The Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics released a report in 2018 on a nine-year study of 400,000 inmates in 30 states who were released from prison in 2005. Here are a few key findings that highlight the need for effective reentry programs.

Rearrest Rates

83%

or 5 out of 6 state prisoners were arrested at least once more in the 9 years after release.

44%

or 4 out of 9 were arrested at least one time within the first year after their release. Of those who did not have an arrest in the first 3 years, almost half (47%) were arrested between years 4 and 9.

2 million

is the estimated total number of arrests of the prisoners over the 9-year period. An estimated 23% of the prisoners accounted for half of these arrests.

5

is the average number of arrests per released prisoner during the 9-year period.

Source: Mariel Alper, Ph.D., Matthew R. Durose, and Joshua Markman, "2018 Update on Prisoner Recidivism: A 9-Year Follow-Up Period (2005-2014)," Bureau of Justice Statistics, May 2018, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/18upr9yfup0514.pdf>.

Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OICA) has been awarded four grants sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, amounting to almost eighteen million dollars. These grants are expanding OICA and its affiliates' reentry efforts in a program called SOAR, or "Skills and Opportunities for Achievement and Responsibility." First tested by its affiliate OIC of South Florida, it has now been replicated by ten other OICA affiliates and one program partner. SOAR is based on a program model called Integrated Reentry and Employment Strategies (IRES), to foster a sustainable career path and to prevent future involvement with the justice system. The interaction between these factors is also examined, based on assessments for criminogenic risks/needs.

SOAR can be categorized into five areas, but all are integrated for the greatest impact:

- ▶ **Case Management.** Each participant forms a relationship with a dedicated case manager, collaborating to outline goals by utilizing evidence-based assessments and follow-up.
- ▶ **Education.** The case manager facilitates educational training, including: attainment of a GED, work-readiness and employer-driven trainings, requisite math and reading skills, and others.
- ▶ **Training That Leads to Industry-Recognized Credentials and Occupations.** Participants can receive industry training, with recognized credentials, in many vocational areas.
- ▶ **Workforce Activities That Lead to Employment.** Employment specialists identify current work opportunities and facilitate job placement between employers and potential employees.
- ▶ **Follow-Up Services.** The case managers and participants develop a clear path for future successes.

Jason Whyte is OICA's Senior Director of Operations & Strategy and had this to say about what makes OICA successful: "We are experts in the field of education and workforce development and have been a strong source of support for the communities we serve for more than 50 years. We believe in the people we serve and care about their future. We are in the business of changing lives, and the sincerity of that passion and dedication is evident in the relationships we form with our participants and program partners. When people feel supported, and see that achievement is possible, they will succeed."



Jason Whyte

RESOURCES

for Program Providers
and Reentry Participants

Career Training & Job Opportunities:

- ▶ Career One Stop (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor) for: job training, searching for employment, laid-off workers, workers with a criminal conviction, workers with disabilities, and much more:

<https://www.careeronestop.org/>

To find specific jobs:

[https://www.careeronestop.org/](https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/local-help.aspx)

[LocalHelp/local-help.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/local-help.aspx)

- ▶ The Federal Bonding Program (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor) helps to obtain jobs and pays employers for the first six months of a person's employment. Call this number for the location of the local workforce office/one-stop center: **1-877-US2-JOBS (1-877-872-5627)**

Navigating the Justice System:

- ▶ Justice Center (sponsored by The Council of State Governments), provides information about: The National Reentry Resource Center, courts, law enforcement, mental health, and much more:

<https://csgjusticecenter.org/>

Finding Local Resources:

- ▶ Dialing **211**, in many states, might provide a more direct route to health and human service agency phone numbers (sponsored by the Federal Communications Commission).

Substance Abuse and Mental Health:

- ▶ Find local help through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services):

<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

Or call SAMHSA's National Helpline:

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Meet our *Associates*

Our diverse team delivers fast, relevant results for our clients. Here are two associates who contribute to those efforts.



JESSICA RAMSEY

OFFICE MANAGER &
ACCOUNTANT

WITH AMTC SINCE 2018

EDUCATION: Gateway
Technical College, University
of Wisconsin-Platteville

When did you join AMTC & Associates?

I started my position at AMTC in November of 2018.

What is your educational background?

I have an AAS in Accounting from Gateway Technical College and a BA in Business Administration with a Human Resources Management emphasis from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

What do you find meaningful about working at AMTC?

At AMTC, I am part of helping to prevent poverty through the many programs AMTC works with, and that is rewarding.

What do you hope to accomplish with your work as it moves forward?

I hope to become an asset to AMTC. I want to learn my position inside and out. I desire to be the person others can come to when they need assistance with anything, because they have confidence in my abilities. I want to contribute all of my efforts to ensure that AMTC remains an employer of choice.

Outside of work, what do you enjoy?

I enjoy reading, working out, hanging out with my husband and kids, watching movies, and cuddling with my pets.



BROOKLYNN LAWRENCE-KROL

ADMINISTRATIVE
COORDINATOR

WITH AMTC SINCE 2017

EDUCATION: Portland State
University

When did you join AMTC & Associates?

I joined AMTC in June of 2017.

What is your educational background?

I have a BS in Communication Studies from Portland State University.

What do you find meaningful about working at AMTC?

The dedication that our team has to our clients is inspiring and motivating. Associates at AMTC are committed to meeting the clients' needs and always deliver exceptional work. Taking care in what you do and rising to a higher standard; that is meaningful to me.

What do you hope to accomplish with your work as it moves forward?

I plan to continue to help support associates in the best way possible, as AMTC grows and progresses as a company, as well as consistently working to advance my own professional development as an Administrative Coordinator. I am always striving to be more agile and dependable for the team.

Outside of work, what do you enjoy?

When I'm not working, I love to cook, sneak yoga in when I can and play trucks for hours on end with my two-year-old.