

Greater Barre Community Justice Center

"Creating understanding and resolution together"

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2016 Annual Report for Barre City

The Greater Barre Community Justice Center (GBCJC) addresses conflict and crime by engaging citizens to promote shared responsibility for a safe and healthy community through education and involvement. Using the principles of restorative justice, which provides a way for those who have been affected by crime to have a voice and those who have committed wrongdoing to put things right. Restorative justice encourages responsibility, communication and amends making, ultimately promoting better relationships within the community. The GBCJC has programs at various points along the continuum of criminal justice, primarily delivered by community members trained in the restorative justice principles and process.

This year we served many individuals through our restorative programs:

- Our Restorative Justice Panels comprise 12 trained community volunteers who addressed 83 cases of low level crime referred by the courts, State's Attorney and police. Together, with input from victims, the Boards work collaboratively with each offender to create an individualized plan to deepen the understanding of the impact by his/her actions; to repair the harm to the victim and community; make a more positive connection with the community; and support behaviors that decrease the likelihood of future crimes. The Restorative Justice Panel members volunteered 303 hours. Through their restorative agreements, clients totaled 228 community service hours given back to the Barre community this year.
- Our Safe Driving class is designed to teach about the real consequences of unsafe, impaired or distracted driving and the effects on the driver, his/her family and members of the community, and create a safe driving plan. A panel of victims who have either been injured themselves or lost loved ones during a car crash tell their stories. We gave the class 4 times this year and served 58 people.
- Our Window/Tire Replacement program delivers financial relief to those who qualify whose car windows or tires were damaged by crime in Barre. In partnership with the Barre City Police and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, six people received assistance.
- Conflict assistance is offered to community members who are having quality of life issues and would like help to settle them. Cases are referred from the Barre City Police, City Hall and Department of Corrections. We addressed 4 conflict cases this year.
- Our Family Group Conferencing contract with the Department for Children and Families is going well. We continue to address delinquency cases with youth who, with their extended families, meet with affected parties to create a plan for putting the youth on a more positive track and making amends. Service providers and agency representatives provide information and consultation to the family while the family serves as the primary decision-making and planning group. We also collaborate with Washington County Court Diversion and

Department for Children and Families to address truancy from local schools through the use of Family Group Conferencing.

- Our Restorative Reentry Program, which promotes the principle of “no more victims,” works with people who have significant ties with the Barre community who committed serious offenses and have been released from prison to serve the remainder of their sentence in the community. By establishing and enforcing clear expectations of its participants for positive community behavior, the program helps to interrupt the cycle of criminal offending. Participants engage in a weekly meeting of a Circle of Support and Accountability (COSA) team, made up of three to four trained community members, and the reentry specialist, who guide the core member towards success, while holding him/her accountable. The program also collaborates with the local Dept. of Corrections Probation and Parole Office, Barre City Police and other agencies and organizations. 12 clients have been referred this year for these intensive services, and received the support of 14 community (COSA) volunteers. Our volunteers gave 619 hours of service. We also offered family reintegration conferences, educational workshops, and restorative justice processes to address the crime. We also delivered a jobs class to 29 clients, which guides participants to prepare for and seek employment. Our clients gave back to the community approximately 100 hours of community service.
- Through the collective skills of twenty Community Justice Center Directors around the state, the Community Justice Network of Vermont (CJNVT) promotes the work of the Justice Centers and restorative justice throughout the state. Through the CJNVT, GBCJC Director participated in delivering statewide CoSA trainings, is a board co-chair and worked on other projects.

Our work couldn't happen without the wonderful devotion of our 31 community volunteers. We continue to provide training so that they can do their best work as well as provide the community connections for our restorative responses. The total number of hours our volunteers donated was 1,051. We thank them and all those who support the Justice Center and look forward to continuing our restorative services to the Barre community.

Lori Baker
Executive Director

Board of Directors:

Robert Purvis
Roni Coleman
Mary Anne Owen
Robert Kershaw