

inside & out

“This place changed me”

Julie Looman, a recent KPEP graduate, completed the program successfully, though it took her more than one try. “This was my second time at KPEP and my family gave up on me. They all just washed their hands of me.”

She’s a young, single mother with a 9-year old son. She’s also in recovery from a 13-year meth addiction.

Julie admits that she entered KPEP with an attitude that she would do only what she needed to do to get through the program, but left feeling that “this place saved me.” Successful Thinking was really the key to putting it all together for Julie.

“I was the type of person to just leap forward in my actions. I didn’t think, and after several classes I started realizing that I need to think about what I’m going to do before I do it.” Seems like a simple idea, but it’s a concept that is often foreign to the average KPEP resident.

When comparing her experiences at KPEP with the time she spent in jail, Julie notes that “If I had been sent here first, I don’t think I would have gotten in trouble again. At KPEP I was able to bring my problems out and work on getting my son back. I think I had to hit rock bottom to do it. When I got here that’s when I realized that I had to grow up. This was my last chance to make it right not only for me but for my kid, and he’s the most important.”

Julie credits the effectiveness of the group meetings with Laura Marlatt as one of the keys to her turnaround. “She made me realize that I needed to be open with everything around me and tell the truth instead of hiding it, because every story I told was a different story. I was hiding the truth from myself.”

Julie says that she also felt supported in her relationship with Case Manager Janet Alatalo. “On my first day, Miss Janet looked at me and said ‘You will make it’, and that made me feel that if she has confidence in me, I need to have confidence in myself. I brought my problems to her a lot and she tried to help. I think that the main thing that helped me get through here was that I found someone I could connect with.”

While employed full-time with Sweetwater Donuts, Julie has been living successfully outside of KPEP for one year now. “My main focus is being with my son and being a mother. I was a nurse’s aid for six years and I loved that job but I can never be in that field again. Now I really want to be a mechanic and do something with my life. I’m going to try to get financial aid and go to school and become a mechanic. I like knowing that I can do that kind of stuff.”

“There were bad times and sometimes I would hate KPEP but it saved my life. This place changed me.”



Julie Looman talks about her experiences at KPEP during her visit to the Kalamazoo Olmstead Facility.

INSIDE:

- *Program Update from the Director*
- *Community Service Award received*

Director's Program Update

At the recent Michigan Association for Community Corrections Advancement (MACCA) Conference, Dennis Schrantz from the Michigan Department of Corrections spoke to all of the attendees. In his remarks, Dennis commented on how pleased he was to see the commitment to staff by the various agencies in the quality of the training that we were providing at this event. Dennis stated to the group that they should not take this for granted because it is not necessarily the norm in this industry.

One of the real positive outcomes of the ACA accreditation process is the emphasis on employee development and training. KPEP has always had an excellent pre-employment screening and new employee orientation program. We always met the state requirement for 20 hours of annual training. The ACA requirement doubled that number to 40 hours of annual training. This forced us to develop a plan of action on how to provide staff with enough training opportunities while staying within a training budget that couldn't double accordingly. We welcomed this challenge and have a plan in place for the current year that will enable all employees to meet or exceed this new requirement.

Training is just one way we hope to maintain a quality staff. We work hard to pay competitive wages and benefits. We give all employees dollars they can use for a wide range of benefits that include insurance premiums as well as child care and medical co-pays. We have a very generous employer contribution into a 403(b) account. The entire management team also works diligently to provide a quality and positive work environment, sometimes not an easy task in this business.

Our expectations of staff are also high. We expect that staff conduct themselves in a professional, ethical manner at all times. We are to be role models in both appearance and behavior at all times. Failure in this area may result in disciplinary action or loss of employment. This is a responsibility I take very seriously. It is a commitment I have to all employees of this organization. No one wants to work with someone who is either not doing their job or otherwise behaving in an inappropriate manner.

One would think that in this economic climate we would have a waiting list of people to work here. This is not the case in some of our facilities. We are in constant need of staff. One of the problems is that many applicants cannot pass our basic reading and writing tests. Some of the folks failing have college degrees. It is a constant struggle. In spite of this we are committed to holding the standard high.



Staff member recognized

Jordan Becklin, Security Supervisor and Community Service Coordinator at the Kalamazoo Olmstead Facility, tells about the recognition he recently received on behalf of KPEP.

"I received an award from the Eastside Boxing Association for my help in providing KPEP residents to assist with their non-profit boxing events at Old Central High School. Over the past year and a half I have worked with many non-profit organizations in the community, but have had an especially close relationship with the Eastside Neighborhood Association and more specifically its branch, the Eastside Boxing Association. Curtis Isaac, who runs Eastside Boxing, wanted to honor me and KPEP for our help with putting on the boxing matches.

"Eastside Boxing is a great place for young people to learn values and hard work and our relationship with them is crucial for us because it gives our residents an opportunity to perform community service and to help a great organization. On September 9th, before the match at Old Central began, I was presented with a plaque that reads 'In recognition of your outstanding support of the Eastside Boxing Association and youth of Kalamazoo.'

"We are all very appreciative of the work of Eastside Boxing and are glad to play a part in it."

On the Move

July 1, 2006 through September 30, 2006

Hired:

Sharon Spencer

Lindsay Archey

Patrick Kettring

Lance Barbre

Justin Hoard

Part-Time Resident Coordinator

Part-Time Resident Coordinator

Part-Time Resident Coordinator

Part-Time Resident Coordinator

Part-Time Resident Coordinator

Berrien County Facility

Kalamazoo Olmstead Rd.

Muskegon County Facility

Calhoun County Facility

Kalamazoo Olmstead Rd.

Promoted:



Elizabeth Hosnedl
Group Facilitator
Berrien County Facility



Morgan Boss
Full-Time Resident Coordinator
Kalamazoo Olmstead Rd. Facility



Jason Jackson
Full-Time Resident Coordinator
Berrien County Facility



Jordan Becklin (left) receives a recognition award on behalf of KPEP from Curtis Isaac of the Eastside Boxing Association.

Need a hand? Just ask!

KPEP provides volunteer assistance to local nonprofits, senior citizens and handicapped persons. We can provide volunteers to perform a variety of community service tasks—whatever the need, just ask us.

In Kalamazoo County call: Jordan Becklin at 269-383-0444 or Cynthia Tall at 269-383-1386

In Berrien County call: Clotte White-Johnson at 269-926-1284

In Calhoun County call: Ashley Wood at 269-963-2085

In Muskegon County call: Lisa Romero at 231-726-2733



Results

4th quarter:

July 1, 2006 through September 30, 2006

Average Daily Count	227.2
Admissions	526
Successful Graduates	323
Jobs Obtained	194
GED Tests	21
GED Certificates	0
Substance Abuse Graduates	
Residents	248
Weekend Intervention	38
Resident Income	\$337,730.35
Rent Paid	\$130,647.17
Court Costs/Child Support Paid	\$109,592.66

Lawn & Yard Care

- *spring and fall clean-up*
- *mowing*
- *light landscaping*
- *snow removal*

KPEP Lawn Service

Free Estimates - Call Jason McCune at 269-383-0444



ACA Accredited



KPEP operates residential and non-residential programs for adult offenders as a community-based alternative to incarceration. We offer the opportunity and structure for men and women to take personal responsibility in their lives.

KPEP

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