



# CHARITIES Committee

Tom Meade, Chairman



The RISAA Charities Committee exists to lend a helping hand to others in need, and is a way of giving back to our community.

## THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTION



## OpenDoors

Report by  
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The Rhode Island Department of Corrections reports that in calendar year 2016, 8799 people were committed to the Adult Correctional Institution and 9306 people were released. The RIDOC works with several agencies to support the successful reentry of offenders back into the community. Offenders returning to the community often need assistance with training, employment, housing, and treatment.

**OpenDoors** is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization that provides these supports. Its mission is to "strengthen communities by supporting the formerly incarcerated" OpenDoors provides programming to prepare offenders prior to release as well as follow up in the community after release.

The Reentry Case Management program works with participants up to six months prior to release from prison. Participants are oriented and encouraged to take advantage of support services. Individual plans are created to prepare and support these individuals to enhance their chances for a successful return into their communities.

Housing is often a challenge. OpenDoors offers a comprehensive housing preparedness program to help participants acquire the skills they will need to secure stable housing. OpenDoors also provides 19 units of permanent supportive housing for clients in the community.

Treatment is an important need. Access to Recovery (ATR) is a program to provide 6 months of treatment and recovery support services for people with alcohol and / or drug

addictions.

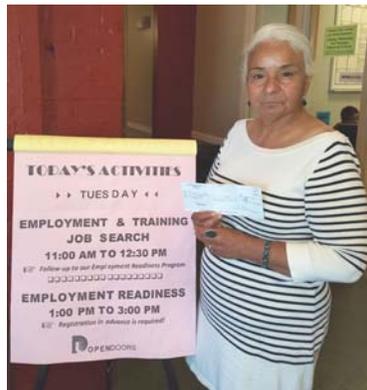
Classes and programs to prepare people for employment are offered inside and outside of the prison. One of the more notable programs is "9 Yards"

The "9 Yards" program focuses on education, occupational training, and cognitive self change for individuals inside the prison. After release, participants will be placed into part-time jobs, provided with housing, case management, mentors, and wrap around services. Participants will receive support for at least six months with the goal of moving them towards skilled employment and higher education. The Providence Journal ran a story on 9 Yards on August 12, 2016.

Participant Jesse Andrews struggled with addiction for almost two decades and had been in and out of prison many times. After release, it was reported he was drug free and employed for over a year. Jesse stated that "Joining 9 Yards was probably the best choice I've ever made. Without this program who knows where I'd be now"

In addition to the number of commitments and releases, the RIDOC reports that it costs an average of just over \$62,000 a year to incarcerate a person. Given the human and monetary costs of incarceration, supporting programs such as OpenDoors makes sense on every level.

To learn more about OpenDoors or to make a donation, please visit their website at [www.opendoorsri.org](http://www.opendoorsri.org).



**OpenDoors Executive Director Solangel Rodriguez accepted the RISAA donation**

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