

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE ZEALOUS ADVOCACY; HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS, UP-TO-DATE, USEFUL INFORMATION FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF PREVIOUSLY INCARCERATED PERSONS IN ORDER TO CREATE A PRODUCTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT WHERE PERSONS MAY THRIVE, PROSPER AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SELF, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY.**



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs Newsletter – [www.orca.dc.gov](http://www.orca.dc.gov)**

**ORCA: Leaders in Providing Training for Returning Citizens**

By: Lashonia Etheridge-Bey  
As the Office on Returning Citizen Affairs Workforce Development Job Training Program draws to a close we would like to congratulate our clients who successfully completed the program, some of which are working full time jobs, navigating the reentry process and contributing to their families and communities. Because we understand the specific learning objectives of Returning Citizens we are aggressively designing and facilitating career development classes that meet their needs. DCHR has come to ORCA to facilitate a class on Ranking Factors, Resume Writing and Interview Skills. In addition, The Office on Returning Citizen Affairs has started the first two co-horts of The Digital Inclusion/Computer Program. We have decided to take it a step further and facilitate an email class to help Returning Citizens who lack the ability to create an email address, upload a resume and use proper email etiquette when looking for a job.

The daunting task of advancing the plight of returning citizens is improving against all odds. Community leaders, and government officials are partnering with one another to create opportunities for Returning Citizens to learn, grow and become productive citizens. Mr. Nelson of S.E. Welding Academy celebrated the opening of his school at 1103 W St. S.E. in which he will teach AWS Welder Certification to men and women

who would like an opportunity to pursue the Welding Trade. The Office on Returning Citizens Affairs is intentionally engaging in outreach efforts to inform district residents who are incarcerated about the resources that are available to them once they return. In October, The Office on Returning Citizen Affairs and The W.I.R.E. (Women Involved in Reentry Efforts) is going to MCI Jessup to a Woman's Conference. On October 24, 2013 at 6:00 P.M. at Capital Hill United Methodist 421 Seward Square S.E. The Office on Returning Citizen Affairs and the W.I.R.E. is

hosting a panel discussion for Community based organizations who are working with female returning citizens. ORCA is most excited to welcome the Howard University School of Law, Social Work and Divinity who will be working with the Returning Citizens population conducting assessments and assisting with the implementation of the Reentry Initiative. We would also like to give a special honor to the members of the Reentry Commission who were recently sworn in.



Director Charles Thornton, Rev. Willie Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson, and Cordero Sullivan cut the Ribbon at the Opening Ceremony of the S.E. Welding Academy.



Charlie Whitaker of Career Paths DC, Courtney Stewart of The Reentry Network for Returning Citizens, Amin Muslim of Ward 7 Constituent Services and Charles Thornton, Director of ORCA on National Voter Education Day.

## PHOTO GALLERY: OFFICE ON RETURNING CITIZEN AFFAIRS



Participants of ORCA's Career Development Program (Monique Ware, Takisha Hunter, Kevin Morris) with DDOT as they enjoy learning skills and work ethic to help them as they move toward full time employment..



Courtney Stewart, Council Member Tommy Wells, Petrina Williams, Director Charles Thornton, and Louis Sawyer at the swearing-in ceremony for The Commission on Reentry and Returning Citizens Affairs. Mr. Stewart was sworn in as the Chairman.



U.S. Attorney's Office goes beyond the call of duty to collaborate with ORCA to connect Employers with Returning Citizens on Wed., September 25, 2013 at ORCA.



ORCA Clients attend the Resume Writing and Ranking Factors Workshop, Straight From the Source\_ Mr. Willair of DCHR.



## The Staff of the Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs

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## A MESSAGE FOR RETURNING CITIZENS

**Returning Citizens and Residents of the District of Columbia:**

The Office on Returning Citizen Affairs (ORCA) would like to take a moment to acknowledge the termination of Our Place, D.C. services. The staff of Our Place, D.C. has worked tirelessly to aid and assist female returning citizens providing legal services, employment, housing services and more. In an effort to fill the void that will be left by the closing of Our Place, The Office on Returning Citizen Affairs is intentionally and proactively developing a unique, gender specific reentry initiative. The W.I.R.E.. (Women Involved in Reentry Efforts) will be collaborating on this effort with the upcoming Panel Discussion on October 24, 2013.

*Charles B. Thornton*