



Winter 2018

NEW BEGINNINGS

MOVING UP IN THE COMPANY

One mistake, one bad decision, one police stop, changed a life.

Dion Meadows purchased a handgun legally, registered the gun as required by law, took a gun safety class, got the carry permit, and then made a terrible decision and did not follow the rules.

Ohio law requires that a firearm be carried a specific way while in a motor vehicle. Failing to follow the exact procedure is a felony called Improper Handling of a Firearm. When an employer sees this felony, the perception is that the individual convicted was waving a gun around. Dion was carrying his gun in the glove compartment, loaded, and that is against the rules.

After being stopped for speeding the police searched the vehicle, Dion was arrested and took the plea deal that was recommended by his attorney. Mr. Meadows did not understand the long-term ramifications of a felony on his record.

Brother Mike Murphy saw a lot of potential in Dion. After pre-screening Mr. Meadows and writing an Action Plan, Dion was sent to apply for a job at Busken Bakery.

Busken Bakery was willing to give Dion and several other HELP members a chance. A company willing to overlook his past mistakes and provide a full-time position was all Mr. Meadows needed.

Starting as a Sanitation Worker on night shift Mr. Meadows turned an entry-level job into a career.

Dion showed up reliably, worked hard, learned new skills, and applied for new positions within the

company. Eventually, Mr. Meadows became an assistant manager and later a shift manager for the warehouse.

Recently, Dion took a position as a Baker, where he earns more than double the wages earned when he was hired at Busken. He is in the union, has full benefits and is making enough money that he has been able to start his own clothing line.

Mr. Meadows, pictured to the left with his fiancé (also a HELP member), completed all of the items on his Action Plan and his record is now expunged.

Call to Action: Please patronize Busken Bakery for your next event. The support of companies like Busken Bakery is essential to the HELP Program growing and serving Cincinnati. When you visit, let the manager know you came because they support the HELP Program.



“DION IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF THE HELP PROGRAM WORKING AS INTENDED; EMPOWERMENT, NOT ENTITLEMENT.” - WILSON WILLARD

STORYTELLING

An initiative of Board Member Tom Sparough

“We tell stories,” is one of the slogans of the HELP Program. Since the program’s inception the Dismas Journey events have been the outlet for those stories. Members are given a chance to introduce the community to the damage done from a felony conviction, and share stories of their redemption and return to full participation in society.

Board member Tom Sparough recognized that there was a need to improve the quality of the presentations, and that members who told their stories felt better. “Storytelling is a part of the healing process,” one participant stated.

To fund the initiative Tom wrote a grant to the National Storytelling Foundation. After receiving the funds Tom began hosting regular classes for HELP members on how to tell their stories. The classes were fun, informative and cathartic all at the same time.



Tom Sparough speaking to the Mentor/Mentee meeting

Videos from the storytelling night are available on our website HELPProgramCincinnati.net. Check our website for the date of the next event and come see our speakers in person.

Stories of



We share true, personal stories. We answer these questions by sharing experiences we have lived through, and which now give us insight about life.

New Member Stage

Why do I want to change my life?

Training Stage

What have I done right?

Rising Stage

What have I always been good at?

Achieving Stage

How have I put my words into action?

Thriving Stage

How am I a positive force in the HELP community?

The HELP Program inspires hope in those who have been convicted of a felony, by providing leadership opportunities in a caring community of support as well as the tools, education and resources they need to find and maintain career employment and become fully self-sufficient and contributing members of our society.

MEMBER PROCESS FLOWCHART

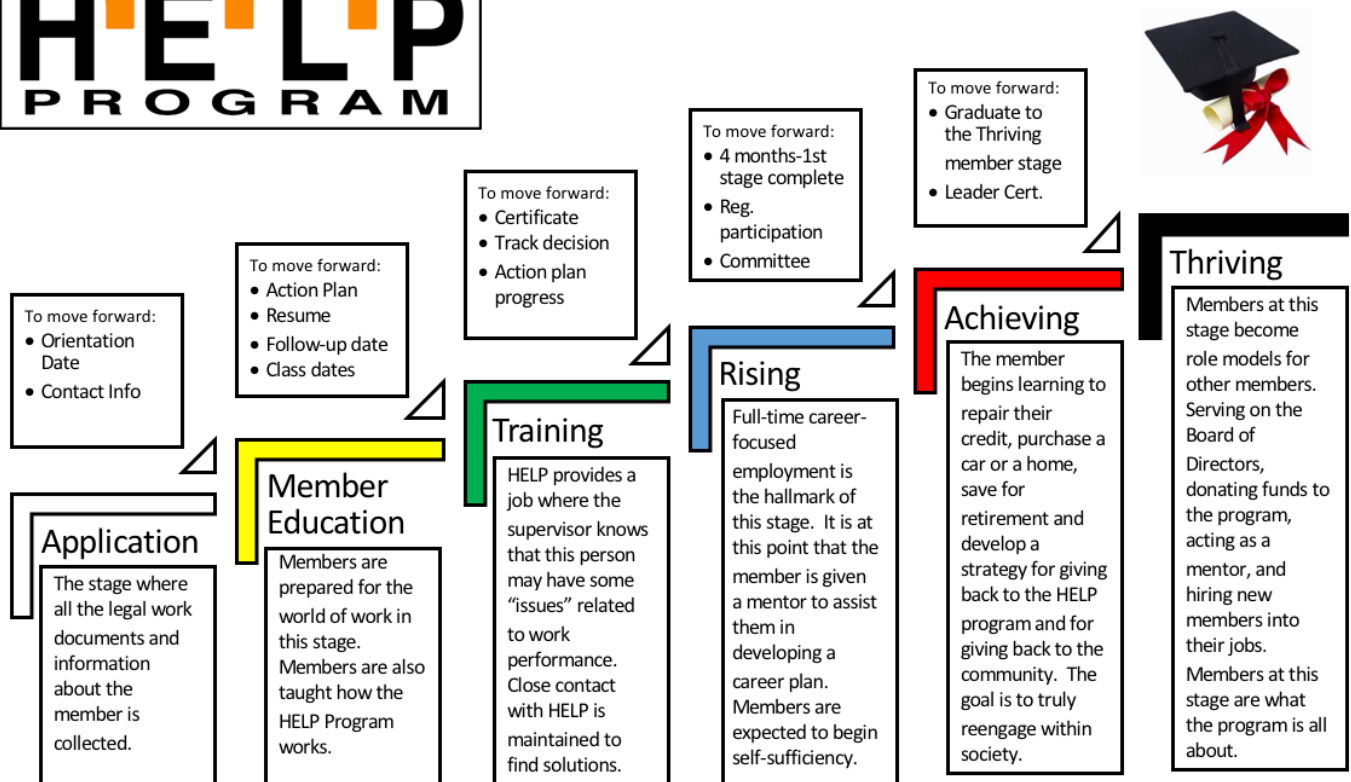
Weakness Identified, Solution Developed!

The HELP Program is about empowerment, not entitlement. The new system assists members is becoming self-sufficient.



Member Process Flowchart

A path from needing help, to providing help.



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Call to Action: The HELP members need coursework and professional development in other areas. If you have experiences and knowledge you wish to share please contact the program about setting up a class! The best way to reach out is by emailing your course idea to Wilson H. Willard III, Board member and Development Director, at HELPProgramCincinnati@outlook.com.

The HELP Program would not exist without the generous support of the individual donors and the support of the following organizations:



The Archdiocese of Cincinnati provides the supportive framework needed to carry out the program mission. Marianist Brother Michael Murphy founded the program.

The Beacon of Hope Business Alliance provides a network of employers committed to providing a second chance for returning citizens. Dan Meyer founded the group and every week a new list of the open positions in BOH member companies is distributed by the dynamic director Katie Schad.



Under the leadership of Tony Stieritz the CCHD provides the funding for a full-time director of the HELP program. Additionally, CCHD helps set up Dismas Journey presentations around the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

The generosity of SFDS cannot be overstated! The parish provides a rent-free home to the HELP program, phone lines, internet service, access to a copy machine and custodial services. The ongoing support of Father Gene and his flock are vital to the HELP Program. Additionally, SFDS provides a large contingent of mentors and volunteers.



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul makes the provision of basic needs to HELP members possible. SVDP provides clothing, furniture, bus cards, food, and emergency funds for basic needs. Dominic Duren, SVDP Reentry Program Manager, is fully committed to the mission of the HELP Program.

You can assist the members of the HELP program by sending a donation to:

The HELP Program
1600 Madison Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45206-1815

The program accepts money, used cars, computers, gas cards, debit cards for UBER/LYFT rides and in-kind services from volunteers. The HELP program also needs additional mentors. Please LIKE -The HELP Program Cincinnati on Facebook.