

Westside opened in 1993 as a community work release center combined with SISU/parole.

IDOC leased the building known as Westside Community Correctional Center for the purpose of;

Male work release program

Service parolees and electronic detention clients

Assist in monitoring electronic Detention offenders

Housing for electronic monitoring offenders who lost their housing (known as lost host site) because of the malfunction of the electronic monitoring equipment, telephone number disconnect, family disagreements which terminated their housing site, and chronic violators of the electronic monitoring program. EM offenders were told to return to Westside ATC Department of Corrections because Crossroad (Safer) charge IDOC a head count for reentering their facility..

1994 (Entering of Female Offenders) the director made the decision to institute Westside to become coed where Wing 4 part of the building became a female community work release center. Westside successfully ran the coed program for six years. In 2000, the decision was made to transfer our female population to Fox Valley thus dislocating our female offenders from their family and children living on the West and South Side of Chicago. What, I feel is unfortunate about this decision is that IDOC approved three male work release (ATC) centers to operate in the city of Chicago and did approve a female ATC (work release).

In summary, I am asking the board to look into how best you can again utilize Westside leasing space and program to provide the services once rendered. PLEASE GO BACK TO THE THREE IN ONE FORMAT WHERE FEMALE, MALE AND PAROLE OFFENDERS WERE SERVICED IN ONE FACILITY. THIS IS COST EFFECTIVE WHICH IS WHY WE ARE HERE.

In understanding the cost effectiveness of implementing electronic monitoring, there is a factor that should be address and that is community impact. In some areas of Chicago and surrounding suburbs there is a possibility of a high concentration of EM offenders. Therefore, the landlord needs to be notified of an offenders request to be housed on their property and not leave it up to the lease holder. In many cases, the lease holder rarely notifies that someone not on the lease is living in the owner unit. This may also help prevent incidents that may occur, including gang violence, complaints from homeowners as loitering and traffic of individuals, and the number of electronic monitoring offenders in a multi-unit building.

Offenders paroling from Westside ATC have participated in intensive substance abuse treatment 7:30am -11:00am Mon-Friday, before discontinuing our GED instructors from

Roosevelt University offenders acquired their GED certificate, Life Skills certificates, parenting, and TASC. Offenders become employed and have savings to help prevent applying for public assistance restoring self-esteem. ATC staff plays a big role in providing a base for our offenders. The type of support the offender may not get from family and surrounding influences while on Electronic Monitoring. Employment is hard with a background so imagine the thought process of the offender sensing, will he hire me with the monitor on my leg? Or what about the offender that may lose his job he has currently at Westside because of this decision. This may result in high or higher recidivism rate and more police patrol which will cost more money.

Dear Employer,

As you might have heard or seen the current news of Governor Quinn planning to close several correctional facilities throughout the state with three being the Tamms Super –Maximum Security Correctional Center, The Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro and our Southern Illinois Adult Transition Center in Carbondale. As a counselor for the residents and a union representative for staff I have observed staff and residents since the announcement. There is great uncertainty of the future.

Let me give you a little history of the SIATC. It was established in 1971 and has had thousands of residents, hundreds staff members and three center supervisors since then. All the residents have been non violent and non-sex offenders with most of them being first time offenders. The residents have benefitted a great deal working in the City of Carbondale and the surrounding area. They have been cooks, maintenance men, carpenters, plumbers, farmers, brick layers, builders and factory workers. They have volunteered throughout the community working at some of the local churches, the food pantry and during some of the street festivals sponsored by the City of Carbondale and/or Southern Illinois University. One of the most recent times the residents have volunteered to help the community was during the record setting flood of 1993 residents helped sandbag homes and businesses. They have also helped clean up during the May 8<sup>th</sup> Microburst that hit Southern Illinois and helped sandbag again this spring when flood waters threatened homes.

Our residents at the Southern Illinois Adult Transition Center have benefitted from the skills at the local businesses to become productive citizens in society. In 2011 the center paroled 32 residents back into society and none of them have return to the Illinois Department of Corrections. This is due to your openness to train them, our programming and their attitude. We would like to thank you for supporting the center. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (Staff at the center) would like to ask you one more time to help support our cause to keep the center open. If you could please write, call or email the following officials:

State Senator Gary Forby  
[senatorforby@yahoo.com](mailto:senatorforby@yahoo.com)

State Representative Brandon Phelps  
[bphelps118@gmail.com](mailto:bphelps118@gmail.com)

State Senator David Luechtefield  
[sendavel@midwest.net](mailto:sendavel@midwest.net)

State Representative Mike Bost  
[mikebost@hotmail.com](mailto:mikebost@hotmail.com)

State Representative John Bradley  
[repjohnbradley@mychoice.net](mailto:repjohnbradley@mychoice.net)

State Representative Jerry Costello II  
[staterepcostello@gmail.com](mailto:staterepcostello@gmail.com)

Thank you for supporting the Southern Illinois Adult Transition Center residents and staff members.

The mission of The Southern Illinois Adult Transition Center (SIATC) is to reduce recidivism by supporting, through a full spectrum of services, the efforts of people with criminal records to become employed, law-abiding members of the community. From the beginning, The SIATC's philosophy is that good programming is good security and good security is good programming. In practice that means that residents who are active in programs create far less security problems than those who are not, and where there is structure and order, programs can be effectively implemented.

The ATC is 64-bed capacity and is located in the heart of Carbondale and close to the Southern Illinois University Campus. The facility and the programs are designed for offenders in work-release status transitioning from secure custody and preparing for parole. The security system within the facility enables staff to monitor residents' living, common and recreation areas and streets in the area around the facility.

History has shown that adult transition centers work to provide within the guidelines of appropriate custodial care, a continuum of programs and services for the male offender, who transitions from an institution to an adult transition center, to the community and discharge from parole that addresses the unique medical, social, psychological and educational needs of the committed male.

### **Inmate Programs:**

#### **Academic:**

- ABE (Adult Basic Education) classes available to residents of facility
- GED (General Education Development) programs available in community
- College education available through the Southern Illinois University in Carbondale or the residents can attend John A. Logan Community College in Carterville, Illinois.

#### **Vocational:**

- Available in the community

#### **Other:**

- Life Skills
- Substance Abuse
- Anger Management
- Leisure Time Activity
- Chaplaincy
- Library
- Community Work Crews
- Health Education
- New Inmate Orientation
- Pre Start
- Parenting
- Job Interviewing Skills
- Resume and Release County Community Resource Information
- Community Service Projects
- Mental Health
- Individual counseling
- Group counseling

Thirty two residents were released in 2011, 5 out of the 32 have successfully completed their parole term and have been discharged from the Illinois Department of Corrections to become successful citizens. Currently none of the 32 parolees have returned to the Illinois Department of Corrections and are building on their future to become positive citizens in today's society.

All of the 32 have been recommended for early discharge from parole due to meeting and exceeding goals, objectives and expectations. Some goals were meeting a minimum 35 hours of primary programming per week, being enrolled and participating in counseling, no major or minor disciplinary reports, completing their Individual Program Contract and they contributed a volunteer project with the Southern Illinois Adult Transition Center or the Community of Carbondale.

Offenders at the S.I.A.T.C. can also obtain their Adult Basic Education or General Education Diploma while at the center through the Southern Illinois University at the resident's expense. He can also participate in vocational training with S.I.U. or John A. Logan again at his expense. While at the center to qualify for early discharge an offender must obtain and hold employment and have stable host site to parole to which can be a parent's home, spouse or friend that have a positive influence on the offender.

While at the center all residents have 320 hours a month of contact availability counseling which includes but not limited to Center Orientation for new residents and refresher course for all residents, extradition information, needs assessment, positive remodeling, building close family relations, financial obligations, bridges from prison to society, parole terms and expectations and employment. In addition to general topics individual and group counseling can cover a vast array of topics including cognitive behavior, stress reduction, anger management, parenting skills, basic health, sexual transmitted diseases, negative activities readjustment and survival tools in society.

Most residents at the SIACT have substance abuse problems that originated from the pre or early teens and have built to a life threatening and/or productive problem. The center offers completely free outpatient and intensive outpatient programming through the Southern Illinois Regional Social Services located in Carbondale. Currently the center has 10 residents participating in group outpatient substance abuse treatment and two residents are in waiting to register. All counseling at SIRSS is completed by certified alcohol drug counselors. CADC programming requires over 480 hours of training with required clinical group experience. In 2011 residents participated in 673 hours of outpatient substance abuse counseling.

For over 40 years the Southern Illinois Adult Transition Center has also worked with the Southern Illinois University with grants so that grad and undergrad students in Social Work and Rehabilitation can work with the center's residents and that the students can gain experience. Internships are a large part of the Clinical Services at the center by assisting the residents with employment, social skills, education and life skills. In 2011 the SIU interns (Grad & Undergrad) had over 3500 clinical hours working with the residents.

15 Brenna George

My name is ~~Brenda~~ Brenna George. I am a Correctional Counselor at Westside Adult Transition Center. Too many of the offenders who come to us have no concept of living legal. They have been involved for too long in situations where breaking the law is OK. These offenders are going to be released back into our communities. At Westside we house them in a controlled environment that prepares them to return to society, giving them the tools necessary to function so that they can avoid criminal behavior.

DOC says it would be cheaper to close the ATCs and release some of the offenders into electronic monitoring. I don't know whether it is cheaper or not, but I do know the well trained and experienced staff at Westside, and the work we do with offenders can't be replaced by an electronic bracelet.

We provide structure and guidance necessary to direct these individuals from incarceration to community through in-house and community based programs. We work to reform the offenders' thinking patterns to promote positive behavior. Offenders may have social, environmental and mental health concerns that feed anger issues and low self esteem. They have histories of drug addiction and gang activity. At our program we provide counseling and a daily discussion on where they have gone wrong in the past. We give them direction and information on how to get on the right track, including medical care, substance abuse counseling, and family reunification.

Many of our offenders have a history of being academically low functioning, high school drop outs or kick outs. We have residents who have never filled out a job application. Some don't have a state ID, a birth certificate or social security card. We enroll them in academic programs, employment preparedness, vocational training. We give them job placement assistance and training on budget management.

Westside provides all that for the sake of improving the offender's sense of worth, to empower them to be able to navigate in society to get what they need and what their families need. This helps the ex-offender, but it also helps our communities. Think about an ex-offender who returns to the community with employment skills, a job, the savings from what he made while working in the ATC. Now think about that same offender if all he has is a release document, bus fare and an electronic monitor to keep him at home. Who is more likely to reoffend and cause harm to others?

Of course the ATC is not a cure-all for criminal behavior, but it is definitely a positive start. The ATC resident has a better chance of avoiding criminal behavior by using the tools we gave him. Let's not risk community safety and more lives to save a buck. Let's continue to invest in reform by investing in the ATCs.

The majority of our incarcerated adults don't understand or disregard the concept of living legal as they are generally living or involved in situations where breaking the law is ok. The Westside Adult Transition Center has a very important part to play in a system that housed the incarcerated in a controlled environment and prepares them to return to society with the tools necessary to function within avoid criminal behavior.

The adult transition center has well trained and experienced staff that understand the offenders that they work with and cannot be replaced by an electronic monitoring system because the EM system fails to provide the structure and guidance necessary to direct these individual from incarceration to community through in-house and community programs that will reform the offender's thinking patterns to promote positive behavior. These offenders have various social, environmental and/or mental health concerns where they have missed receiving the basics of social etiquette. Most are academically low functioning, high school drop outs or kick outs, no job skills, gang banging, drug addicted and angry with low self esteem. Many have never completed a job application. They don't have a state ID, birth certificate or social security card and do not understand the importance of these in items in our society.

Our program at Westside ATC provides counseling that allows these offenders to have a daily discussion on where they have gone wrong and gives them the information and direction on the how to get on the right track.

Offenders learn how to get a birth certificate, SS card, school records, State ID, enroll in an academic program, to participate in programs for employment preparedness, vocational training, job placement assistance, medical care, substance abuse counseling, family reunification, budget management and other issues.

All that the ATC provides is for the sake of improving the offender's knowledge and since of worth to empower them to be able to navigate within society to get what they need avoid the harm to others, while keeping our communities safe. It is better in our communities when an offender returns with employment skills, a job, and a check because he has save a few hundred to upwards of thousands of dollars because he was allowed to go to work. This also allows the State to get some money back. It is also better than releasing the offender from incarceration with a just release document, bus fare and an electronic monitor to stay at home.

Without the ATC, we are putting the community at risk by releasing offenders to society without the intensive preparation. The offender loses the hands on counseling and guidance on the how to live legal. Without the proper guidance and supervision the offender will definitely go back to the same criminal behavior that placed him in the Department of Corrections. Of course, the ATC is not a cure-all for a criminal behavior. But it is definitely a positive start to improved social interaction. At least the resident from the ATC has a better chance of learning how to return to society avoid criminal behavior as he has actively utilized the tools he has learned in the ATC to improve his life without hurting others in our communities, while under the watchful eye of the ATC staff. Let's not risk community safety to save a buck.

Advocating to Keep Westside ATC Open – Brenna George, Correctional Counselor II

There are many people who hope that their dreams will one day come true. But for artist, Jonathon Romain, his dream of becoming a successful artist has turned into reality.

Romain has been commissioned by organizations such as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Kraft Food, The National Black Prosecutors Association, Cook County Bar Association and The Food Network Channel to name a few. Romain exhibited at the worlds most prestigious African American Museum of art, The Studio Museum of Harlem in New York City in a group show titled "Black Romantic". Michael Kimmelman, art critic for the New York Times, singled out a few artists that he considered to be at the "high end" of the artist that were showing and Romain was among the ones mentioned.

Not bad for a young Black man who, along with the majority of those around him, once believed that mediocrity and frustration might follow him for the rest of his life.

Against formidable odds, he graduated from high school and went on to earn a Bachelor's of Science in Psychology from Bradley University in Peoria, IL. It wasn't easy, Romain, like many Black children, never knew his biological father. His step-father, a man who loved and treated him like his own son, died when Romain was only fifteen. At that point, positive male role models became a rare and precious gift.

Perhaps that is why today, Jonathon Romain, known from New York City to Los Angeles, is a motivational speaker for inner city youth. He tells them that the road to success may be elusive but not impossible, especially if one is willing to study, commit and focus on the ultimate rather than the immediate.

Romain knew that he had a gift for art at a very young age. But it was only after years of struggling that he realized what his divine purpose was.

When talking to young people, he invites them to view his life as an example of how important it is to persevere, no matter what the obstacles.

"My work is as diverse as my life's experiences. I try to capture the soulful and stirring essence of my subject whatever it might be. Behind every face, every object and every place there is a story, an undeniable story that is waiting to be told. I try to tell that story with the stroke of a brush."

Featured in local and national newspapers, including Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Defender, Chicago Tribune and N'DIGO, as well as Black Entertainment Television and several Chicago affiliate television stations, word is getting around that this artist, whose primary works are oil paintings and pencil drawings is a man on the move.





# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

DATE 4/10/12

SUBJECT MATTER: WEST side collection closing

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: MARGARET A. DAVIS RN MSN

Title: Resident

Firm / Business or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 3120 W. Lexington City: Chgo State: Ill Zip: 60612

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

-----  
**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

DATE 4/10/12

SUBJECT MATTER: Closure of Westside ATC

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Felix Rodriguez

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm / Business or Agency: H.A.S.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION:  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

TESTIMONY:  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**

send up 1st please

Ben



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

DATE April 10, 2012

SUBJECT MATTER: Closing of Westside Adult Transition Center

IDENTIFICATION:

Name: MERTICE IRELAND

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm / Business or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION:  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

TESTIMONY:  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

WRITTEN COMMENTS:

To the Department of Corrections.  
Loose site of the mission to solve a budget problem. As a new resident of the state this is a disappointment to see you "jump ship" on making the communities safer, protecting the citizens, and reformation of those matriculating outside the law.  
If the establishment of the Westside Adult Transition Center was needed it is still needed.



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

DATE 4-10-12

SUBJECT MATTER: Closing of Westside ATC

### IDENTIFICATION:

Name: DR. Terry Solomon

Title: Executive Director

Firm / Business or Agency: ILLINOIS African-American Family Commission

Address: 2925 S. Wabash City: Chicago State: IL Zip: 60616

Email: T.Solomon@aafcc.org

POSITION:  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

TESTIMONY:  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

WRITTEN COMMENTS:



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

DATE 4/10/12

SUBJECT MATTER: Witness

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Chaplain Richard Crittenden

Title: Chaplain Westside A.T.C.

Firm / Business or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 3321 N. Oakland City: Chicago State: IL Zip: 60634

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION:  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

TESTIMONY:  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

WRITTEN COMMENTS:



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT MATTER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: EDWARD EMERSON

Title: CRC II (SHIFT COMMANDER)

Firm / Business or Agency: IDOC - WEST SIDE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: EdEmerson59@yahoo.com

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

-----  
**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**