

**Press Release**  
formerly  
**ReEntry Coalition of Whatcom County**  
**'Restorative Community Coalition'**  
**Nov 5, 2013**

“After 7 years of researching the social issues of crime, safety, and services in our community, we have recognized the underlying problem and reorganized, changed our name and our mission.” says Irene Morgan, founder of the ReEntry Coalition of Whatcom County.

What is the new **Restorative Community Coalition's** mission? “We are **an action oriented coalition advocating for restorative, economic, systemic and social change.** The goal is to bring all types of people and organizations affected by crime to work together, so that we can cut costs, reduce stress, and unite to solve problems at their roots rather than treat the symptoms as best we can.”

The Coalition is clear that restorative solutions starting with early childhood education, prevention, trauma therapy and behavior modification therapy are most valuable. Current diversion and intervention programs like teen, drug, veterans, mental health, and homeless courts have shown a very high return on investment for all of our citizens. And Restorative Justice is a special method of solving problems at their core, for it has been shown that it can help take people out of the expensive jail system, which is simply cycling them through.

We have some events coming up that will explain, highlight and begin the process of building a community to work on solving, not just patching the problems.

- 1) November 14, Movie - **“Concrete, Steel and Paint”** - 6:30 PM, with discussion following at Crown Plaza Suite 200, 114 W. Magnolia. It is a positive, progressive approach to a process of healing the hurts that come from the effects of crime and punishment. Suggested donation \$7.00

- 2) November 20, 5pm at Crown Plaza Suite 200, 114 W. Magnolia, we are holding an Open House to share our new vision to build a **Restorative Community Action Plan** that can help us reclaim our economic freedom and bring opportunity to our children. Bring your ideas.
- 3) Nov. 21 – Panel, **‘Choices and Consequences’**, of former incarcerated citizens, event from 6 to 8 pm, Fairhaven Auditorium at Western Washington University. The panel will answer questions from our Service Learning Students about their experiences in our prison system. The event is sponsored by Dr. Perry - Department of Communication Studies, Dr. Julie Helling – Center for Law, Diversity and Justice, Dr. Joanne DeMark – Leadership Development Specialist LEADS, and Uniting Creatives.

The Coalition has been working with dozens of students from WWU, WCC and Charter College to research the issues, manage our organizational structure; our web presence and social media to bring awareness to the public regarding the vast waste of our Criminal Justice system.

As a result of the demand, we have been talking with many officials and people from the law and justice field, and we are beginning to team up with important organizations like Animals as Natural Therapy, Hearts Toward Home, Uniting Creatives, Blue Skies For Children, Maryanne’s House, Explorations Academy, Stand Up Whatcom, Garden Street United Methodist Church, Unitarian Fellowship, and others.

Debbie David is serving as our transition President, as we connect with the greater community to expand our membership and our Board of Directors. Current Board members are Joy Gilfilen, Megan Osterhout, Irene Morgan, Terry Weber, Eve Moss and Dr. Tara Perry.

The Coalition is seeking collaborators and invite application and nominations to help us shape a new coalition of non-profits,

corporate, public and private citizens groups to address the broad spectrum issues using new approaches to restoring community health.

**Contact us at:**

**360-354-3653**

**[www.whatcomrec.org](http://www.whatcomrec.org)**

**[www.reentrycoalition.com](http://www.reentrycoalition.com)**