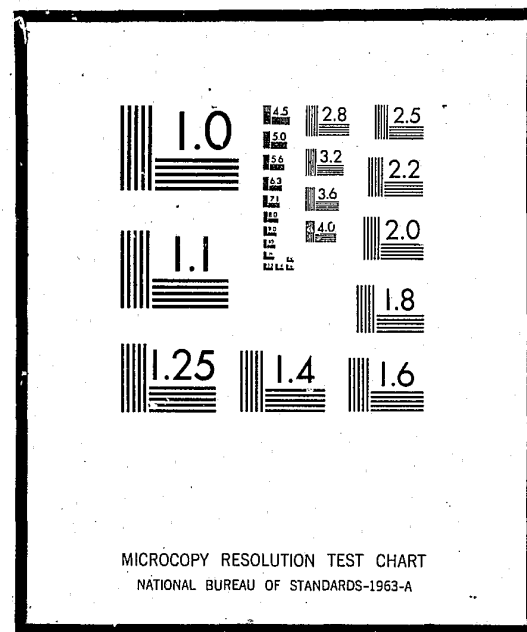


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## EXEMPLARY PROJECT VALIDATION REPORT

Project Candidate:

NORFOLK FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION, INC.  
Massachusetts Correctional  
Institution  
Norfolk

Submitted to:  
Ms. Mary Ann Beck  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration  
National Institute of Law Enforcement  
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Washington, D.C. 20530

January 10, 1975

16675

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## 1.0 Introduction

At the request of the National Institute, Abt Associates conducted a short-term validation study of the Norfolk Fellowship Program at Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Norfolk. This report presents the results of that study and is intended to assist the Exemplary Projects Advisory Board in evaluating project achievements and assessing the potential for project replication.

Documents that were utilized in preparing this report include: two program evaluations conducted by the Research Unit of the Massachusetts Department of Correction, the preliminary findings of a third study being completed by the Department of Correction, annual budget reports, monthly newsletters, and miscellaneous descriptive program materials. Site visits were conducted on December 11-13 by Professor John E. Conklin of Tufts University's Department of Sociology and a member of the Abt staff.

During these visits, interviews were held with the Director of the Norfolk Fellowship Program, members of the Board of Directors, relevant institutional officials (including the Superintendent of Norfolk), inmate and other staff members of the project, approximately thirty-five inmate program participants, and six outside volunteer members. Where quantitative data were not available to describe a particular program facet, the observations of the interviewers were verified by reports from a number of independent respondents.

The first section of this report provides a general review of project development, operations, and organization. Section Two considers the Fellowship Program in light of the Exemplary Project selection criteria. The concluding section summarizes overall project strengths and weaknesses, and examines the future

development of the program. Included in the Appendix is a brief description of Project Youth, a second special program operating from the Norfolk Institution. Although not a formal candidate for exemplary status, at the request of the Institute, the program was reviewed to present up-dated information for screening purposes.

#### 1.1 Project Development

The Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Norfolk is one of five state correctional institutions. The current inmate population is slightly above 600 and approximately 35-40% of this number are black. Offenders committed to this institution are not restricted by type of offense, but are generally considered nonassaultive with tractable behavior.

The origin of the Norfolk Fellowship Program coincides with the beginning of Reverend Robert L. Dutton's tenure as Protestant chaplain at the prison in 1957. Following Sunday chapel services, Reverend Dutton began inviting inmate attendees into his office for coffee and religious discussions with himself and his wife. Visiting ministers to the chapel would occasionally bring laymen with them; their participation in these discussions evoked an enthusiastic response from both the inmates and the lay attendees. The participation of church laymen at Sunday chapel services evolved into a weekly event that expanded into meetings on other evenings. This voluntary organization was entitled "The Norfolk Protestant Fellowship."

By 1960, the Norfolk Fellowship was firmly established as a nonsectarian discussion and "fellowship" group. Inmates were attracted to the program either through chapel attendance or a desire to meet men from "outside the walls", who were termed outmates. As the program developed, the administrative duties

of Reverend Dutton required an amount of his time that far exceeded his obligations as part-time prison chaplain. Hence, the Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc., was chartered in 1963, to insure the continuation of the program by providing financial support for Reverend Dutton and his wife who served as an administrative assistant.

#### 1.2 Project Operations

As the number of inmate and outmate participants has increased, several aspects of the program have been modified while new components have been added. The gathering of inmates and outmates following Sunday chapel services still exists. Essentially, this is a coffee hour function that is open to any individual, whether or not he is a regular Fellowship participant.

The principal activity of the Fellowship is the two hour discussion group session that occurs every Thursday evening. These meetings consist of ten informally organized discussion groups, ranging in size from twelve to twenty people (including both inmates and outmates). Each group is headed by a Moderator (usually an inmate member), who acts as an informal leader and arbitrator of group discussions. One of the ten groups serves as an orientation group to familiarize new Fellowship members with the program before assignment to one of the nine regular groups. (A new member is allowed to choose the group he wishes to join, as each group has a distinctive reputation of its own.)

Inmate attendance at Thursday evening meetings averages slightly over 100 (of the 132 inmate members.) Outmate attendance averages around 25 on the evenings when only men are allowed to attend. Since 1973, women have been allowed to participate on the first and second Thursdays of each month. The inclusion of women

brings the average number of outmates present on these Thursdays to 40. Approximately 8 ex-inmates also return to Fellowship meetings and family members of an inmate will occasionally be allowed to attend.

"Social Education" was initiated in 1964 and is essentially a modification of the Thursday evening meeting on a much smaller scale. Forty men, 10 of whom are outmates, are divided into four groups which meet two Tuesdays a month. The purpose is to encourage the development of a lasting and in-depth relationship between inmate and outmate. Program materials state that the groups focus on the analysis of emotions and the discussion of socially acceptable expressions of personality. Members must have a high level of commitment to these groups, and be a Fellowship member for at least one month before joining a Social Education group.

Following a suggestion by Superintendent Philip Picard in 1967, Reverend Dutton requested institutional approval to allow selected ex-inmate members to occasionally attend Fellowship activities. Two years later, Project Re-Entry was established to enlist the ever increasing number of ex-inmate Fellowship members to share their experiences with inmates and to establish guidelines for the continuing inclusion of ex-inmates in the program. Participation in Project Re-Entry was limited to ex-inmates who had been Fellowship members for at least one year; who had been on the street successfully for at least six months; and were not known to have any pressing personal problems. Permission to return required the approval of the Director of the program, the Norfolk Superintendent, the Department of Correction, and the Parole Board.

Initially, the ex-inmate members worked exclusively with pre-releasees to help them make the difficult transition to the outside world. At the present time, there is no specific focus

for Project Re-Entry as only a small number of ex-inmates have maintained interest in Fellowship activities within the institution.

Activities of the Norfolk Fellowship Program are not contained solely within the prison. An important segment of program activities is conducted on the outside to strengthen outmate participation and to continue relationships developed between outmate and inmate when the inmate becomes an "ex". Monthly meetings termed "Regional Meetings" are held at two locations (until recently four) in Massachusetts. Outmates and their families attend, along with ex-inmates and their families. Attempts to involve the families of current inmates at these sessions have met with relatively little success.

Two semi-annual conferences and a yearly picnic complete the outside activities facet of the program. These events attract a large number of Fellowship participants, both ex-inmates and outmates. The introduction of the furlough system into Massachusetts correctional institutions several years ago has also made it possible for current inmates to attend these functions.

### 1.3 Project Organization

The Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc., is the incorporated structure that operates the Norfolk Fellowship Program. The Foundation is administered by a nine member Board of Directors. Four of the nine are officers elected for a one year term. The other five are directors elected for three year terms on a rotating basis. Board meetings are convened on a quarterly basis, and an Executive Committee (4 officers, 2 directors) meets when necessary. Elections to the Board occur at the semi-annual fall Fellowship conference. The present Board of Directors is composed of seven outmates (long-term Fellowship members), one ex-inmate and one

inmate (the first elected to the Board).

The function of the Board of Directors was originally perceived as that of a fund raising organization that would enable the Duttons to continue their ever increasing Fellowship activities. However, as the program has developed, the Directors have assumed an advisory and policy-making role. Since Reverend Dutton plans to retire within the next three years, the Board is now pursuing an active role to insure the continuation of the Fellowship and to recruit a new Director.

The role of Director of the Fellowship has been one that Reverend Dutton has allowed to evolve coincidental to project growth. Essentially, he serves as program mentor, administrator and liaison to institutional officials. Mrs. Dutton has actively aided him as an informal assistant director. The Duttons have taken numerous responsibilities upon themselves as program administrators. Extensive correspondence is maintained with former inmate and out-mate participants. An emergency loan fund is available for any ex-inmate in need of aid.

Originally, inmates were assigned to staff the Fellowship office at Norfolk. Their duties ranged from clerical tasks to janitorial work. However, since the termination of institutional work assignments for inmates, all staff are now volunteers. At present, there are two inmate staff volunteers. One inmate, called the "Paper Man", handles clerical responsibilities and organizes the Moderators' meetings held each Thursday evening, before the regular group sessions begin. The second inmate, called the "People Man", is responsible for explaining program purposes and functions to new inmates. If an inmate expresses a desire to join, the People Man will place his name on the waiting list. (The waiting list currently has approximately sixty names.) The People Man also serves as



an informal liaison to Reverend Dutton for communication of inmate complaints or problems.

A full-time, paid staff member was hired for the first time in 1970. Initially, this was made possible by significant gifts that the program had received from various churches. The award of LEAA funds from 1971-1974 enabled the program to continue to support this position. The individual acted as an Administrative Assistant, whose duties included managing the complex daily tasks that arise when a program functions within a correctional institution. When LEAA funds were terminated, this position was cancelled.

Two part-time staff serve as consultants to the project. One is an outmate who has been involved in the program over ten years. He acts as "Outmate Coordinator". His function is to facilitate the continuing relationship of inmate releasees with the program.

As a man becomes eligible for parole release, the Outmate Coordinator discusses his release plans with him, and encourages him to continue contact with any outmates with whom he has developed a relationship. The Coordinator also interviews the outmates that the inmate indicates a desire to see on the outside. The purpose is to insure that the outmate is willing to maintain the relationship and that he does not have any family problems that could prove disruptive to a newly released inmate. Also the outmate is advised that he must serve as a friend, and not as a constant critic, to the releasee. If an inmate is simply transferring to another institution, the Coordinator will attempt to maintain contact through correspondence and the monthly Fellowship newsletters.

The other part-time staff member is an Assistant Deputy Superintendent of Norfolk. He has been active in the Fellowship for several years and is paid for the many hours a week he contributes to program

activities on his off-duty time.

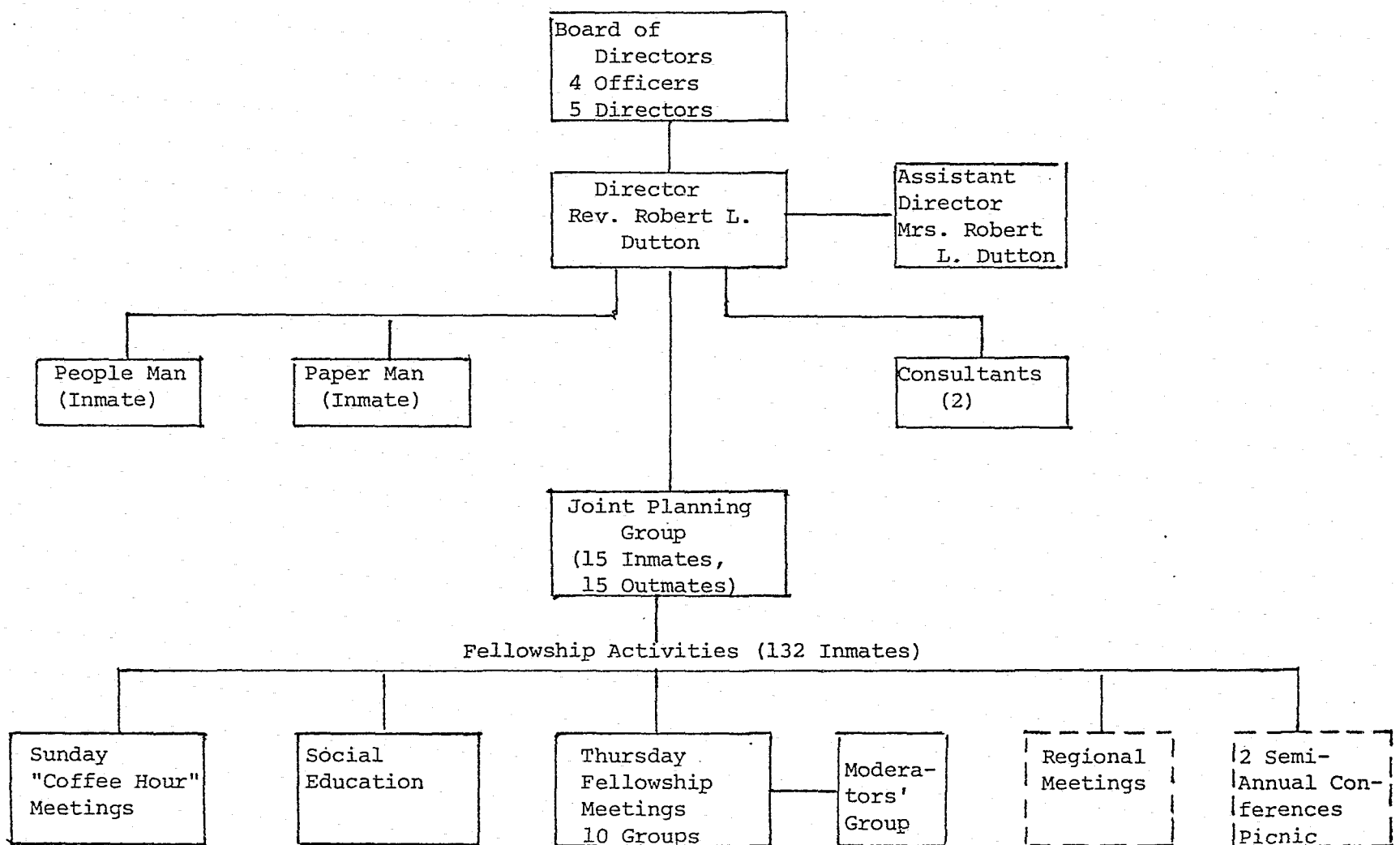
Inmate pressure for greater participation in program policy decisions resulted in the establishment of the Joint Planning Group in 1972. The Joint Planning Group meets one Saturday a month and is composed of fifteen inmates and fifteen outmates. Recommendations for program changes are submitted to the Program Director and the Board of Directors. It was from this group that the request for the inclusion of female outmates originated.

Institutional officials at Norfolk have no direct control over program activities. The program has established an excellent reputation, which is necessary in order to maintain the activities of a program that brings in many outsiders each week. The program is limited to 60 outsiders at any one time but exceptions are made due to the program's reputation. The Program Director keeps institutional officials informed as to changes in activities or policies, he solicits advice from appropriate institutional administrators, and regularly and willingly follows institutional policies. Figure 1 summarizes the overall organization of the Fellowship.

Figure 1

Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc.

Organization Chart



----- : Outside of institution

## 2.0 Selection Criteria

### 2.1 Goal Achievement

A statement by the Board of Directors of The Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc., in September 1972 states the following purposes of the program:

The Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc., maintains a program called the Norfolk Fellowship in which people from the community enter into meaningful communication with inmates and former inmates of the Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Norfolk.

The objective of the program is to create an atmosphere of fellowship, one that fosters mutual understanding, acceptance, and respect among the participants. The result is to enhance in each person a feeling of selfworth as part of the process of growth towards greater social maturity. It is expected that this program thereby contributes to meeting correctional objectives.

The current President of the Board of Directors regards this statement as a general set of purposes rather than a series of specific and measurable goals. He feels, however, that if all or some of these things actually happen in Fellowship activities, there will be a reduction in recidivism rates, as well as an improvement in the post-release situations of Fellowship inmates. Beginning with the issue of recidivism, the remainder of this section discusses a number of important correctional goals that appear to be served by fellowship activities.

#### Reduced Recidivism

Quantitative evidence examined in detail in Section 2.3 "Measurability" shows a decline in recidivism rates below expected levels for those

who are involved in the Fellowship program. How this effect is produced is somewhat less clear. Although program activities may well have resulted in the commission of fewer offenses on the part of former participating inmates through the support and understanding referenced in the program's statement of purpose, at this time, only impressionistic judgements are available to support that suggestion. The Director of the program and the President of the Board of Directors are confident that the program has such beneficial effects on released inmates, especially on those who have had prolonged contact with the program up to their release and then maintain that contact on the outside. Ex-inmates who have remained active in the program through participation in Regional Meetings and Project Re-Entry, also testify to the law abiding adjustments of Fellowship Participants.

#### Citizen Involvement and Public Education

Two other correctional goals that have been addressed are one proposed by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals in its 1973 report on Corrections: the increased use of citizen volunteers in corrections and the education of the public in matters of corrections. The use of outmates in the ten Fellowship groups and the four Social Education groups opens the institution to outsiders, providing an informal check on institutional conditions. Moreover, outmates learn that inmates are "people, not animals," a statement frequently voiced by inmates who spoke with the validators. As a result, a constituency for a more enlightened correctional policy is created by the Fellowship program.

Outmates in the program do not attempt to convert inmates; in fact, one seemingly useful interchange observed by the evaluators involved a black inmate and a white woman each telling the other about similarities in the problems they were currently facing in their

lives. Outmates act naturally, speaking as they would to friends. Their lack of professional expertise in "helping clients" seems to be a valuable ingredient in the Fellowship process.

#### Inmate Re-Integration

Outmates not only establish contacts with inmates within the prisons, but they continue those contacts after inmates are released. This continuity in the relationship is one of the unique features of the program, one which is missing in many institutional group counselling programs. Through the post-release contacts between ex-inmates and outmates, one of the most elusive goals of corrections is often achieved: the reintegration of newly released inmates into the community.

The Outmate Coordinator speaks with inmates who are about to be released on parole or on furlough, learns with which outmate that inmate is comfortable or friendly, and then speaks to that outmate. Sometimes all three will gather for a conference during the regular Thursday night meetings of Fellowship groups. During these meetings, plans are made for the difficult transition from prison life to outside life.

After inmates are released, outmates establish contact either in person or on the telephone, offering advice and presenting alternatives for the parolee to consider. Sometimes the outmate assists the parolee in finding a job or a place to live, but more commonly the outmate helps the ex-inmate do these things for himself.

The recidivism study to be examined later suggests that participation in the program on the outside contributes more to reduced recidivism than participation while in prison, although it is of course in prison where the initial affiliation with the program is

established. In sum, Fellowship offers the inmate contact with a supportive outsider, which may relieve boredom, provide a positive role model, and permit open communication with a non-inmate who has no ties to the prison administration or the parole board. To the extent that inmates can spend time outside prison walls prior to release, looking for jobs and places to live, the importance of outmates in the adjustment of new parolees may be diminished. However, the support offered ex-inmates by someone who has known them within the institution is not likely to be developed in fourteen furlough days a year: the maximum number offered to eligible Norfolk residents. Moreover, the Fellowship program provides out-of-state inmates with contacts in the local community as well as sponsors for furloughs.

Finally, in most correctional institutions, inmates only see the failures return, either for a new crime or for a parole revocation. This may work a subtle change on inmates who may come to feel that adjustment on the outside is nearly impossible. The Project Re-Entry component of the Fellowship provides positive role models -- inmates who have succeeded on the outside. Nevertheless, although inmates did mention the usefulness of contacts with ex-inmates, it seems that many inmates were less appreciative of their presence than some returning ex-inmates had hoped; apparently a number were surprised at the resentment they encountered and soon dropped out of the program.

#### Institutional Change

Active participants in the program constitute about one inmate in five in M.C.I., Norfolk. The Fellowship program as a whole, and the ten Fellowship groups and four Social Education groups in particular, provide many inmates with a positive source of group support and an object of intense loyalty. Many inmates with whom the validators spoke expressed a strong allegiance to their discussion groups and a defensiveness about the program; they suggested

that they had found something valuable in the program, that they identified with it and resented any outside evaluation that might reflect negatively on its activities.

Through the simple coalition of inmate and outmate, the program has opened up the institution to the outside, exposing inmates to new life styles and exposing outmates to new life styles as well. The Fellowship has also succeeded, through the efforts of the Joint Planning Group, in having women admitted to two Fellowship meetings each month. Although this change has elicited mixed reactions - some feeling that inmates may be more interested in establishing relationships with female outmates than in attending to the group discussion - the general view is that the overall effect on the institution is beneficial, making it seem on at least two Thursday evenings a month, more like the outside world.

Yet another possible beneficial effect on the institution, may be an improvement in race relations at M.C.I., Norfolk. Fellowship groups are mixed racially and ethnically (except for one entirely Spanish-speaking group, where language seems to be the primary rationale for separateness). One group observed by the evaluators involved a very supportive exchange between a black inmate and a white one; in another group, blacks and whites, both inmates and outmates, (to the extent that the evaluators were able to distinguish inmates from outmates), were clearly unified in their approach to a particular issue.

## 2.2 Replicability

The Fellowship program clearly addresses a number of problems of common concern to correctional personnel across the country. The primary and explicit problem is how to help inmates help themselves develop a law-abiding life style, that will prevent their return to



prison. An instrumental goal is to facilitate the inmate's reintegration into the community. The program also provides a positive source of group identity for inmates, provides positive role-models (both ex-inmates and outmates) for inmates to emulate and educate and involves citizens from the outside in the problems of corrections. Adequate documentation exists on the operation of the program, although more information is needed to answer some specific problems that might be faced in any replication effort. Five issues relevant to the program's generalizing are discussed below.

#### 1. Administration

That the Fellowship program has existed for 17 years, has survived a number of superintendents, and has remained strong at a time of turmoil in the institution, while still growing in strength and accommodating a wide variety of opinions, speaks well for the leadership of Reverend Dutton. In a conflict-laden institution such as a prison, being able to gain and maintain the support of the inmate population, the administration of the institution, correctional officers, the Department of Correction, the Parole Board, and outside volunteers suggests that to replicate such a program requires a leader who moves gradually and is flexible, yet is able to identify the points at which change can be introduced into the prison. Such leadership may be difficult, although not impossible, to find elsewhere.

With the forthcoming retirement of Reverend Dutton, the question of replicating Reverend Dutton's leadership has been raised within the Fellowship program itself. (Job description for new Director included in the Appendix). If the success of the program is due primarily to qualities only possessed by Reverend Dutton, not only can the program not be replicated elsewhere; it cannot even survive at Norfolk. The President of the Board of Directors is optimistic

that the Fellowship program will survive the change in leadership. Still, the blend of qualities necessary to continue (much less to begin) such a program must not be underestimated. the Director must retain the respect and support of inmates and institutional administrators; he must also be an aggressive recruiter of outmates, with contacts in the community that will bring volunteers to the program and maintain their interest.

One issue that arises in the search for a new Director, and also for those wishing to replicate the program, is whether or not the Director should be a Chaplain. Such a person would have contact with local churches, which have proved to be the most reliable source of outmates to date. Such a person also has some credibility with inmates and administration alike, with the former because the "protection of the cloth" guarantees confidentiality and with the latter because he is seen as a nonpolitical individual. However, having a Chaplain as Director may also make the program appear to be sectarian, even if it is not. Three inmates who were not members of Fellowship said that one reason they did not belong was that they were Catholic and the group was Protestant. All of these inmates had been at Norfolk for long periods of time.

In balance, however, the history of the Fellowship under Reverend Dutton suggests that administration by a Chaplain may bring to such an effort an unparalleled level of dedication and commitment.

## 2. Location and Outmate Recruitment

One problem with establishing volunteer programs within state prisons is the frequent isolation of such institutions from population centers. Norfolk is in a small town 30 miles from Boston. Many of the volunteers in the program are white middle class and middle-aged residents of the suburbs and towns surrounding Boston. Many of the

inmate members of the program are young black males from urban areas, especially Boston.\* Both in terms of understanding urban life styles and in terms of being nearby when support is needed by a new releasee, outmates appear to be less well suited than they might be for achieving the goals of the program. A number of black inmates with whom the evaluators spoke mentioned the need for more black outmates in the program, although a few also mentioned that one of the valuable aspects of Fellowship was that for the first time in their life they had prolonged exposure and conversation with white people.

In addition to location, a second element that may have influenced the composition of outmates is the fact that the program originated in a Protestant group headed by the institution's Protestant chaplain. Although it is now nonsectarian, churches continue to be a major source of outmates for the program. Attempts to recruit outmates by giving talks and presentations at various community social organizations have proved relatively fruitless. The current policy is to not send a speaker to such a group under some member of that group has attended a Fellowship meeting at the institution and has thus shown some commitment to the program.

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\* Of the 132 active inmates in the Fellowship program 19 are Spanish-speaking, 71 are black and 42 are white. Recidivism studies suggest that the program has a greater impact on blacks than on whites, although no reasons for this are suggested. The proportion of blacks in the program is somewhat higher than the proportion of blacks in the institution as a whole. Also, as we shall see in the following section, Fellowship members spend more time in prison than the general population of prisoners in the institution, they include a disproportionately large number of sex offenders and a disproportionately small number of property offenders. A comparison of the ages of Fellowship members with the ages of all convicted offenders is not available. One interviewee suggested that the program probably worked best with those over 25 years old, since younger inmates were more peer-oriented and more likely to brag about their crimes, rather than manifest concern with going straight.

There are now a few local university students in the program, but the staff feel that while they may attend meetings at the institution, they will be unable or unwilling to provide the followup assistance that makes the program work.

Most of the current outmates were either recruited through churches or heard of the program from acquaintances or fellow workers who were recruited through churches. Thus a "snowball" effect is produced, with churches providing the core and new recruits being attracted through the salemanship of long term participants.\*

More than a desire for an interesting night out at the institution is needed for Fellowship to have a beneficial effect; the key is in providing followup. Although Fellowship is not theological in nature, nor is anything of a religious or sectarian nature mentioned in groups, Reverend Dutton feels that such sustained caring may be most easily found among committed church members.

In 1971 an orientation program for outmate volunteers was established to familiarize them with the Fellowship programs inside and outside the institution. However, of the 102 new outmates beginning the program, only 27 completed it and seven of those were soon inactive. This program was then discontinued. At present outmates are self-selected. Relatively little is done to train them or attempt to retain them if they decide to leave the program. The

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\* Data gathered by the Duttons show that from fiscal year 1969-1970 to fiscal year 1971-1972 (no more recent data is available), the number of outmates rose from 49 to 102 and the number of active outmates rose from 23 to 41. The proportion of all outmates from the Boston area rose from 37% in 1969-70 to 57% in 1971-72, but there was a smaller increase in the proportion of active outmates from the Boston area. There appears to be a rather high turnover rate of outmates, but no formal data exist on the length of time for which outmates were active in the program. However, it should be emphasized that one of the key factors in the success of the Fellowship has been the dedicated involvement of approximately 12 outmates over a long period of time.

feeling is that with some people the program "clicks" and with others it does not. Possibly at least speaking with outmates who are leaving the program to determine why they are doing so might lead to minor alterations in the program that would help retain more outmates.

### 3. Group Structure

During the on-site visit, it appeared that the format and content of the discussion were less important than some of the structural characteristics of the groups. One fellowship group discusses current events, another examines intimate personal problems, and still another varies the topic from week to week. The topic discussed seems to matter less than the fact of an open discussion in a comfortable and supportive atmosphere. Some inmates indicated that one structural aspect of the groups hindered such discussions, namely the size of the groups. Most groups included about 15 members (ranging from 12 to 20). Inmates who belonged to the small Social Education groups (about 10 members) felt that even such a small reduction in size would provide for more meaningful discussions. This might be considered in replicating such a program. The reason for the rather large groups in the Fellowship program was one that may well be encountered in replicating the program: lack of space within institutional walls.

### 4. Parolee Restrictions

A fourth problem which may be faced in replicating some aspects of the Fellowship are legal restrictions of the activities of parolees. In Norfolk, it was necessary to obtain a waiver of the traditional parole restrictions on ex-inmates of not socializing with other parolees on the outside and not re-entering a prison if one had a felony conviction. The first was necessary so that ex-inmates could attend Regional Meetings; the latter so that they could participate in Project Re-Entry. The approach used by the Fellowship to surmount

these legal problems suggests a general principle to be followed in any replication attempt. Changes will be made most successfully and most permanently if they are made gradually and with full communication to all interested parties. By being cautious in initial recommendations for participants in Project Re-Entry, people who had reservations (e.g., correctional officers) were reassured that such a program would not jeopardize their own role performance (e.g., maintenance of the security of the institution).

#### 5. Funding

The achievement of support for the Fellowship has required aggressive fund-raising from the community, as the Commonwealth's Department of Correction now emphasizes community corrections and de-emphasizes the funding of institutional program. Nevertheless it does seem clear that the program can exist without state or Federal financing as it did in various forms for 14 years before receiving LEAA funds. In fact, such support might possibly detract from the program, which seems to gain credibility with inmates by being "their" program, by having outmates who are giving of themselves and their time, and by being a democratic group with natural person-to-person contacts. By keeping the program non-Establishment (not anti-Establishment), participation may be more widespread and more open.

#### Related Programs

The Fellowship program has been a model for similar programs at other Massachusetts institutions: one at the Worcester County Jail and House of Correction; one at the Middlesex County Jail and House of Correction at Billerica (started by ex-inmates of the Norfolk program); and one at Massachusetts Correctional Institution Forestry Camp at Monroe. In fact, one evening during the site visit, two chaplains from a nearby House of Correction were present to observe the Fellowship meetings and consider the formation of a similar group at their institution.

### 2.3 Measurability

The Fellowship program has been in operation for a long enough period of time (17 years) to test its effectiveness. There is no built-in evaluation component in the program; in fact, the collection of the type of data necessary to test how the group produces its effects might disrupt the groups so that such an evaluation would be meaningless.

Three studies of the Fellowship program have been conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Corrections. One examines participant characteristics and two focus specifically on the recidivism rates of Fellowship members in comparison to expected recidivism rates for releasees with similar backgrounds.

#### Participant Characteristics

The first report was published by the Department of Correction entitled, "A Comparative Analysis of the Participants in the Fellowship Program at M.C.I., Norfolk." The study compared all 141 men in the program from 1969 to 1965 who had been released during that time, with 363 men released from the general Norfolk population during 1960. (This year was chosen because data had been gathered on these men for a separate study.) Because the comparison group was drawn from an earlier year the possibility arises that the general Norfolk population had changed by the time data were collected on the Fellowship participants, in fact, there might even be differences in the 1965 participants in comparison to the 1961 participants, so that lumping all 141 men together obscured some change in characteristics over time.

Comparing the 363 Norfolk men with the Fellowship group (which was broken down by Releasees who were in the program at time of release and Dropouts who were in the program but had dropped out at time of

release, although there were no meaningful differences between these two subgroups), there were no significant differences between the Norfolk men and the Fellowship men on seven of the eleven variables examined: type of military discharge, age at first arrest, number of prior arrests, number of prior commitments, present incarceration for parole violation, amount of good time withheld, and age at present commitment. Although there were no differences between the Fellowship group and the Norfolk group on factors measuring criminal history and institutional conduct, four important differences did emerge:

1. There was a disproportionately large number of blacks in Fellowship;
2. Fellowship members had a significantly longer period of time spent in prison for their present incarceration;
3. Fellowship contained a disproportionately large number of sex offenders, and a disproportionately small number of property offenders; and
4. Fellowship members had a better chance of getting paroled than the Norfolk group.

Unfortunately, this study did not explore other possible differences between the Fellowship group and the Norfolk population, such as motivation to give up crime or desire to adopt a law-abiding life style with a job and a family. This study does answer to a limited extent the question about self-selection into the Fellowship program, but only self-selection in terms of the eleven variables that were explored.

#### Recidivism

The Massachusetts Department of Correction published a paper in 1969 entitled "An Evaluation of the Effect of the Fellowship Program at M.C.I., Norfolk on Recidivism." Here base expectancy rates from the 1960 sample were used to predict expected recidivism



rates for Fellowship members (the 1961-1965 sample). Recidivism was defined as "commitment to a state or federal prison or House of Correction for 30 days or more during the 2 years, 9 month period following release from Norfolk." Base expectancy rates are predicted rates of recidivism for releasees with particular characteristics. In a 1967 paper ("Predicting Recidivism in a Medium Security Correctional Institution," Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science LVIII, September 1967, pp. 338-348), Francis J. Carney of the Massachusetts Department of Correction showed that using certain data about inmates, one could predict significantly different probabilities of recidivism. More specifically, he found eight groups with widely divergent recidivism rates (using in this original study a four-year period to measure recidivism). The eight groups were based on dichotomies of the following four variables, the first two of which were the strongest predictors of recidivism:

1. age at present commitment (under 30 vs. 30 and over);
2. prior penal commitments to state prison or house of corrections;
3. type of offense leading to present incarceration;
4. age at first arrest or length of present commitment.

Carney, in discussing the uses of the Base Expectancy Rates, suggests that they may be used to calculate expected recidivism rates for participants in particular correctional programs; thereby diminishing the impact of self-selection of best-risk inmates to a program.

Two notes of caution are necessary before examining the results of the recidivism study: 1) Fellowship members may still differ from the general population in ways not measured by variables used to calculate the base expectancy rates; and 2) data on which base expectancy rates were calculated is probably outdated, having been collected in 1960. Replication of that study and calculation of new rates would add confidence to the conclusions.

The study found that the overall rate for recidivism among men who were in Fellowship when they were released was 9.2 percentage points lower than expected (37.8% vs. 47.0%). For those who were in the program but had dropped out by the time they were released, there was almost no reduction in recidivism rates (50.7% vs. 51.5% expected rate). Also, Blacks seemed to gain more in reduction of recidivism rates than whites (Blacks reflected a rate 15.2 percentage points lower than expected and whites 6.1 percentage points lower than expected).

Participants who did not drop out, had been incarcerated for a crime against the person, and had been 15 years old or more when first arrested showed the greatest reduction in recidivism rates (18.7% vs. 50.5% expected). However, offenders charged with crimes against property or sex offenses, who were first arrested prior to their fifteenth birthday, and who were members of the program when released showed a higher than expected recidivism rate (58.8% vs. 44.7% expected).

Recidivism rates also decreased more among men who were involved in the program for at least a year, as compared with those involved for shorter periods of time. Rates were also reduced most for those involved with Fellowship both inside the prison and outside, with outside involvement making a greater contribution to reduced recidivism rates than inside participation. Fellowship members who were recidivists were generally

returned to the institution for less serious behavior (often a parole violation) than were recidivists in the general Norfolk population, and stayed on the street longer than recidivists in the general population.

A second and more recent recidivism study (not completed at the time this report was written) used more recent data on Fellowship members. Here a 10% decline in recidivism rates below the expected rate was found. Again, those with greater involvement in the program showed a larger decline. Most other findings were also comparable to the first study. The second study did suggest, however, that the Fellowship was equally effective with property offenders, person offenders, and sex offenders.

In sum, there is clearly evidence to suggest that the recidivism rates of Fellowship participants are below expected rates. Again, however, these studies, as is true of most such inquiries, do not suggest how that reduction is achieved.

#### 2.4 Efficiency

The use of outmate volunteers, ex-inmates, and inmate leaders of groups minimizes the cost of the program. Even if the cost of correctional officers' time in monitoring the incoming volunteers is considered, the cost to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is small.

Possibly the program would gain in efficiency if outmates were trained or at least oriented to the program, and if efforts were made to retain them as outmates. However, the success of the program seems to arise from the "naturalness" of inmate-outmate relationships. Training outmates as quasi-professionals might well undermine the credibility of outmates as "average citizens", an essential aspect of the program. Outmates now self-select themselves into and out of the program. One attempt at an orientation program to familiarize outmates with the program was soon discontinued, as

only one in four completed the orientation. The Duttons feel that the program is something that "clicks" only with some people, and for those with whom it does not "click", participation is soon discontinued and should probably not be encouraged anyway, since a strong commitment is required.

Apparently, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts strongly favors the Fellowship program, but it is not financing it. While this is in part due to a recent emphasis on community corrections, the Commonwealth may also correctly feel that the Fellowship program will be able to secure private funding, as it did prior to 1971, when LEAA funds were first made available. Combining the figures for the last five fiscal years (1970-1974) and looking only at private funds donated to the program, we find the following breakdown of sources of income:

Churches	37.5%
Fellowship members and individual contributions	32.9%
Private funds and foundations	26.8%
Other sources	2.8%

Most of the expenses of the program over the last five years have been salaries and fringe benefits of the Director, the Administrative Assistant, and consultant fees. Telephone and mail expenses, as well as office expenses, were additional costs of the program. The budgets for fiscal years 1973 and 1974 appear in Appendix B. Total expenses have averaged around \$50,000 per year.

Aside from the operating deficit for the current year, the projected financial needs of the program are:

1. Director's salary	\$20,000
2. Full-time assistant	12,000
3. Two full-time outmate/ inmate coordinators who also recruit and cultivate outmates	20,000
4. Part-time consultants on group processes and social maturation	3,000
5. Rental of community facilities, use of part- time secretary, office expenses	7,000
TOTAL	<u>\$62,000</u>

The first two items represent an increase over past expenses, due to the impending retirement of Reverend Dutton and his wife.

#### 2.5 Accessibility

The Fellowship program is accessible to outsiders who wish to visit and consult with members of the program for purposes of replication. The program will soon have a new Director, however, Reverend Dutton will be available for consultation in the immediate future.

### 3.0 Summary of Project Strengths and Weaknesses

#### Major Strengths

- Contacts with citizens from outside the institution;
- Continuity of relationships with outmates, fostering the goals of inmate reintegration;
- Use of ex-inmates in Project Re-Entry as positive role models;
- Strong inmate support of the program and positive group loyalties;
- Mutual support of inmates by each other, by outmates, and by ex-inmates;
- Public education through experiences of outmates;
- Recidivism rates of former Fellowship participants lower than expected rates.

#### Weaknesses

- Unclear about how recidivism rates are affected by the program;
- Program success may be highly dependent on the energy and commitment of the Duttons (while certainly not a weakness in general, this must be considered a potential constraint to replication);
- Outmate characteristics do not correspond closely to those of participating inmates (although in some senses this is a strength, minority participation could be increased);
- Inmate perceptions of the Fellowship as a sectarian program may inhibit participation;
- Absence of formalized records which might provide useful management information.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

The Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc., and its series of programs -- including Fellowship group meetings, Social Education groups, Regional Meetings on the outside, and Project Re-Entry -- appears to be achieving some of the most difficult to attain of all correctional goals -- reintegration of the inmate into the community, widespread and dedicated involvement by citizen volunteers, and reduced recidivism rates. At the same time, the program has managed well a difficult problem in organizational change: how to gain the support of inmates, the public, and the prison administration, as well as the Department of Correction and the Parole Board. It remains to be seen whether these successes can survive an organized replication effort in its current setting as well as in other correctional institutions.

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## APPENDICES

- Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc. Comparative Financial Statement for the Fiscal Years ended August 31, 1974 and 1973
- Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc. Position Description
- Letter from Outmate
- Memorandum: Project Youth, Norfolk Correctional Institution

NORFOLK FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION, INC.

Comparative Financial Statement for the Fiscal Years ended August 31, 1974 and 1973

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>Increase or (Decrease)</u>
From - Memberships	\$ 7,424	\$ 3,993	\$ 3,431
Individuals	1,874	515	1,359
Churches	17,371	6,454	10,917
Funds and Foundations	7,200	1,068	6,132
Interest - Savings Acct.	525	54	471
Other	502	362	140
Sub-totals	34,396	12,446	22,450
From - Correction Dept.	22,496	39,129	(16,633)
Total Receipts	<u>57,392</u>	<u>51,575</u>	<u>5,817</u>
 <u>EXPENSES</u>			
Salaries	26,540	32,768	(6,228)
Travel	1,471	2,169	(698)
Annuity	839	1,118	(279)
Rentals	2,375	1,500	875
Health insur. premium	373	504	(126)
Fellowship meetings	1,663	1,705	(42)
Communication	1,980	1,865	115
Office supplies, incl. postage	1,244	1,432	(188)
Payroll taxes	960	973	(13)
Aid to former inmates	200	378	(178)
Long-range Development - fees and expenses	7,637	1,836	5,801
Depreciation	379	343	31
Other operating expenses	411	736	(325)
Total Expenses	<u>46,077</u>	<u>47,332</u>	<u>(1,255)</u>
Balance to NET WORTH	<u>\$ 11,315</u>	<u>\$ 4,243</u>	<u>\$ 7,072</u>

NORFOLK FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION, INC.

Comparative Balance Sheet

At August 31, 1974 and 1973

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1973</u>
Cash - Checking Account	\$ 1,827	\$ 4,499
Cash - Savings Account	20,334	6,109
Notes Receivable	500	500
Equipment	3,756	3,538
Less - Depreciation	<u>936</u> 2,820	<u>530</u> 2,958
TOTALS	<u>25,481</u>	<u>14,036</u>
 <u>LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH</u>		
Christmas Program Donations	160	60
NET WORTH	<u>25,321</u>	<u>14,006</u>
TOTALS	<u>\$25,481</u>	<u>\$ 14,036</u>

NORFOLK FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION, INC.

Position Description

Title: Program Administrator

REPORTS TO: NFF Board of Directors

GENERAL ACCOUNTABILITY:

The incumbent is responsible for managing the program of the Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc. (NFF Inc.) in the Norfolk Correctional Institution. This includes the day-to-day involvement inside the prison as well as those regional service in the community.

DIMENSIONS:

The program encompasses approximately 200 inmates, 150-200 outmates, plus 150 former inmates.

Annual budget is between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

NATURE AND SCOPE:

The NFF Inc. maintains a program in which people from the community enter into meaningful communication with inmates and former inmates of the Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Norfolk.

The objective of this program is to create an atmosphere of fellowship, one that fosters mutual understanding, acceptance, and respect among its participants. The result is to enhance in each person a feeling of self worth as part of the process of growth towards greater social maturity. It is expected that this program thereby contributes to meeting correctional objectives.

The incumbent is hired by and reports to the NFF Inc. Board of Directors both informally in monthly Executive Committee meetings and more formally at quarterly director meetings.

The incumbent manages the program both directly and through a staff of inmates and part-time consultants. The program currently includes regular Thursday night two-hour group meetings of inmates and outmates at the Institution; every other Tuesday night meetings of smaller Social Education groups aimed at more in-depth, closer relationship building; a fellowship period open to all inmates each Sunday morning with outmates present for informal conversations; two monthly meetings in the community at Foxboro and Melrose; plus semi annual all-day conferences held to provide greater opportunity for continuity of relationships plus a chance to update the Fellowship on the latest in Corrections.

In addition to running the above programs, the incumbent is expected to recommend from time to time changes in the program to meet the changing needs of inmates and former inmates. Currently there are monthly meetings of a Joint Planning composed of inmates, outmates, staff, and Board members which provides a forum for all segments of the Fellowship to air needs and thus contribute to the Director's shaping of the program.

The qualifications for this position are compiled on a separate list.

The Director is expected to both propose the annual budget required to manage the program and to spend the funds within guidelines established by the Board.

The incumbent writes and sends out the periodic COMMUNICATIONS letter and NEWSLETTER. He also is expected to build relationships with Department of Correction and Department of Parole administrators.

SPECIFIC ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. To manage the NFF Inc. program within broad guidelines set by by NFF Board.
2. To recommend changes in the program to the NFF Board and propose budget requirements to support the program.
3. To build relationships with Department of Correction and Department of Parole administrators.
4. To find, manage, and replace staff and consultants as necessary.
5. To maintain good communications within the organization and between the organization and outside people and entities.
6. To participate in fund raising and public relations activities.

QUALIFICATIONS  
for the position of  
Program Administrator

Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc.

HUMAN RELATIONS

The successful candidate will have demonstrated his love for people. He will be experienced in human relations, and have shown past leadership ability. He will be able to relate to inmates and ex-inmates, lay volunteers and corrections personnel. He will be willing to spend time dealing with personal behavioral needs. The ability to speak Spanish would be of help.

ADMINISTRATION

The successful candidate will have demonstrated his ambition. He will have experience with volunteer organizations, and have a demonstrated ability to initiate and carry out plans. He should be able to pull diverse groups together. Familiarity with correctional systems and social service agencies is highly desirable. Prove flexibility in dealing with changing circumstances is also desirable.

RECRUITING/FUND RAISING

The successful candidate will have demonstrated his selling ability. He must be able to promote the concept of fellowship to inmates, ex-inmates, lay volunteers, correction officials, churches, and sources of funds. He must have proven ability in written communication.

PERSONAL

The successful candidate will, during the course of a personal interview, have demonstrated many of the following personal characteristics; warmth, sensitivity, high intellect, a non-political nature, good verbal communicating ability, an understanding of people, a diplomatic nature, and a feeling of belonging in connection with Fellowship programs.

488 W.Center St.  
W.Bridgewater  
Ma. 02379

Abt Associates Inc.  
Cambridge  
Ma. 02138

Dec. 13, 1974

Dear Ms. Blue,

I am writing to you as it is your name that I remember. I remember your name because you came to us with blue shoes on at the season of the Christmas Carol.

You may recall that Rev. Dutton told you that I write better than I talk. It could be true because, when confronted with an immediate rebuttal, I am apt to lose my train of thought.

At our meeting I made the statement that I felt if the Fellowship failed it would be because people did not care and not because of money. Charlie took issue, pointing out the need of money for salaries etc. Later on he made that Quote about when people give money they give little but when they give of themself they give all. It could be that he picked that up from one of our meetings while he was in prison.

The point that I wanted to bring out was that I deeply feel that the most important things that the Duttons and others had given to the Fellowship can not be considered of monetary value.

To be sure, the Duttons have to have a means of living but that is not the answer to the success of the Fellowship. We might come up with much money and hire people with exceptional professional training but if their prime interest is not the love of their brother in the fellowship of man, the undertaking does not have any point. This is what has made the Fellowship unique. Penal systems have been hiring professionals for years. Being a Chaplin in a prison put Rev. Dutton in a position to do what he has done. It is his love of fellow man that has made that spark of caring burst into flame, in the hearts of other people.

Now that it has been shown what can be done by people that care, I think that this type of program can expand. It will require funding for supplies and support for those that can not work as volunteers. Success is in the hearts of people caring.

Yours truly,

*Albert B. Cook*  
Albert B. Cook

MEMORANDUM: PROJECT YOUTH, NORFOLK CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

1.0 Introduction

In December, 1974, in conjunction with a formal review of the Norfolk Fellowship Foundation, Inc. (Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Norfolk) a brief on-site review of Project Youth was conducted. This memorandum describes the development, organization, and operations of that project. The discussion is based on available project documentation as well as interviews with the inmate founder of the program, the two inmate members, and associated institutional officials.

1.1 Project Development

Project Youth is aimed at exposing juvenile delinquents or potential juvenile offenders to the consequences of crime and a criminal record, in order to deter them from criminal behavior. The program is the result of eleven years of planning and attempts at implementation by Henry P. Arsenault, currently an inmate at Norfolk Prison.

Mr. "Hank" Arsenault, was sentenced to death by the electric chair in Massachusetts in 1955. Through his own juvenile experiences, Hank believed that criminal associations and criminal behavior patterns were established at an early age. Hank felt that by relating his personal criminal history to youths he could enlighten them to the consequences of criminal behavior, and ultimately deter their own involvement. When his sentence was commuted to life in 1957, he began soliciting support from appropriate officials, both within and outside the prison, to enable him to counsel juvenile delinquents.



By early 1967, following an eleven year letter campaign, Hank had aroused a substantial amount of publicity and interest. Several meetings were held with the Commissioner of Corrections, the Norfolk Institution Superintendent, the Norfolk County District Attorney and Sheriff, a Boston Juvenile Court Probation Officer and various other officials to discuss the possibility of operating an inmate-run juvenile counseling program. On June 1, 1967, formal approval was granted by the Department of Correction and various Boston District Courts. Adjudicated juveniles were referred by juvenile judges to Hank for between one and six informal counseling sessions. A probation officer transported the youth to and from the prison. The juvenile was locked in a cell with the inmate for the session. (Inmates are not incarcerated in cells at Norfolk; these cells were used to hold newly-arrived inmates prior to their classification.) After each session, reports were prepared by the inmate and sent to the court to aid in disposition of the juvenile's case.

In the first year of operation, over 300 youths were counselled by Hank. An important component of the initial program was the continued communication between Hank and the referred juveniles. Hank maintained an extensive correspondance with juveniles that he had counselled, sometimes writing over 100 letters a week.

As the caseload grew, the need for additional inmate-counselors became apparent. Counseling sessions were averaging two hours each, with four sessions being held for each juvenile. As a consequence of the caseload demands, five other inmates were selected by Hank and approved by institutional officials to aid in the counseling program. With the addition of more inmates, Project Youth began sending inmates to high school speaking engagements and engagements with the police and the Youth Service Bureau.

## 1.2 Program Operations

The counseling sessions of Project Youth were discontinued six months ago. Inmate staff believe this is because juvenile institutions are closing and the use of halfway houses are increasing -- dispersing the client population and minimizing court referrals. Speaking engagements by inmates outside the institution have also stopped because of the restricted use of "white paper transfers," a procedure by which inmates were allowed to be released for speaking engagements. Currently any speaking engagement must be held during an inmate's furlough time. Because of this restriction, most speaking engagements are now held within the institution approximately three mornings a week. The engagements are conducted by the two current inmate members of the project and the audience group is usually high school students. The response from the high schools has been enthusiastic. The two Project Youth inmate members are normally scheduled to speak to groups several months in advance.

A typical morning speaking session lasts about two hours, with an attendance of approximately 30-40 junior high or high school students. Each inmate briefly describes his criminal history leading up to his present imprisonment. The futility of engaging in criminal activities is stressed. The inmates discuss their life in prison and describe the dehumanization that occurs and the lack of opportunities to improve vocational skills or educational levels.

The effects of a criminal record on finding employment and making friends are discussed. Several points are repeatedly emphasized:

- the romanticizing of crime by the media;
- the ability to gain more income from legitimate activities and increased educational training;
- the effects of the peer group in pressuring individuals to engage in illegal activities.

An active question and answer session follows the inmates' talks.

## 1.2 Project Organization

The Community Services Director of Norfolk Prison serves as the official coordinator of Project Youth. As Community Services Director, his responsibilities include the supervision of inmate-run programs and the scheduling of all speaking engagements, whether inside or outside the institution. At the present time, only two inmate members are participating in Project Youth. (Hank serves as an informal advisor but removed himself from active participation in 1972 when his case was retried.)

The two inmate members, with the aid of Hank, select other inmates for participation, subject to institutional acceptance. The inmates have developed a set of guidelines to use in choosing the inmate participants. These criteria were formulated to insure that the inmate would add to the effectiveness of the program and, at the same time, the individual would be readily approved for participation by the institution. The candidate must ultimately be approved by an Assistant Deputy Superintendent.

To be selected, an individual must indicate an interest in working with juveniles and demonstrate a commitment to the Project Youth members. An individual will not be considered if he is: a homosexual, a drug user, a sex offender or the Project Youth staff are not convinced the candidate is sincere in his motives. The inmate must also have been previously approved by the Furlough Board for furloughs and not hold a reputation as a troublemaker in the institution.

## 2.0 Project Summary

Project Youth claims to have "counseled" over twenty thousand juveniles in its seven year history. However, a significant proportion of this population includes audiences at speaking engagements.

Through the many speaking engagements Project Youth has had over the years, a large number of students have been exposed to the realities of crime and prison life. However, this is a random exposure to students who are not necessarily high-risk adolescents or adjudicated delinquents as the project originally anticipated.

Institutional officials at Norfolk believe the program is a positive and beneficial one for both student and inmate alike. There is currently a backlog of prospective inmate candidates which the Assistant Deputy Superintendent has not yet approved. A lack of time to review the candidates was cited as the reason for the delay.

The inmate members of Project Youth, including the founder, are sincerely dedicated and highly motivated individuals. Project Youth has committed them to the notion of juvenile deterrence from crime and all plan to continue in juvenile work if released from prison. The publicity attracted by this program, the first of its kind, has apparently been instrumental in the development of similar programs.

**END**