RHD is on the air
Client-hosted radio show climbs to new heights

There are 48 steps in front of George as he rises unsteadily from his wheelchair. There is no elevator in this old building at Tufts University, and the radio booth that hosts RHD Boston's weekly radio show is on the third floor.

And so, 48 steps – and each one of them looks like a mountain as George grasps the railing with his left hand and RHD art instructor Shawn Morrissey steps behind him to help.

"Let's go!" George says. "I don't want to miss it!"

With Morrissey's help, George starts to climb.

"Hello, everybody! Welcome to Outside the Lines radio! My name is Kenny and we're having a great time today!"

The steel prison door swings open and a security guard waves Toni Bonvillian into Jefferson Parish Correctional Center in Gretna, Louisiana just across the river from New Orleans. Bonvillian, the director of Reach-In C.A.R.E., is a regular visitor to the jail. She's working to make sure the women who are there can leave as soon as possible – and make sure they don't come back.

"The women we see here need us so desperately," Bonvillian says, as she waits for a guard to escort her to the second floor where her weekly group will meet. "They're hungry for this support. There are no programs like this for them."

A guard watches outside a small window as six women in orange jumpsuits file into a room to meet with Bonvillian and Reach-In C.A.R.E. staffer Sidney Garmon. A representative from RHD's corporate offices has been allowed to observe the program from the inside, an extraordinary step by the jail that illustrates RHD's corporate offices has been allowed to observe the program from the inside, an extraordinary step by the jail that illustrates RHD's ability to "enhance the quality of life for the women, promote and support individual recovery and to reduce recidivism."

Reach-In C.A.R.E. is just one example of the many RHD programs that focus on returning citizens, promoting reintegration into society through programs that focus on job skills and life skills.

RHD is also a pioneer in the development of socially conscious, for-profit enterprises.

With the support of Reach-In C.A.R.E. director Toni Bonvillian (L), clients like Kim have found a bright future outside the walls of Jefferson Parish Correctional Center: Through intensive case management, substance abuse education and motivational engagement, RHD's Reach-In C.A.R.E. helps returning citizens cut recidivism and move forward in a positive direction, putting behind them a lifestyle that often led back to jail.

This year Reach-In C.A.R.E. was nominated for a National Criminal Justice Association award for the nation's Outstanding Criminal Justice Program by Joseph Watson, executive director of the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and the criminal justice administrator for the state.

Gay LeBlanc, director of programs at the Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority, a praised Reach-In C.A.R.E. for its work to "enhance the quality of life for the women, promote and support individual recovery and to reduce recidivism."

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Other RHD programs focusing on this mission include: Brothers' Keepers Hope Improvement is a general contracting business that provides employment to marginalized populations; Ardella's House is a service and advocacy organization committed to helping women with criminal justice histories; I'm FREE (Females Reentering Empowering Each Other) provides gender-specific and responsive services including housing and therapeutic counseling; Partnership for Employment matches job-ready participants from the Philadelphia Prison System.

Everything they can for you.

Reach-In C.A.R.E. (Correction, Addiction, Recovery, Empowerment) provides services to adult women at Jefferson Parish Correctional Center who have been arrested and/or convicted of offenses directly related to their use of drugs and/or alcohol. In addition to substance abuse education and motivational engagement strategies for treatment, Reach-In C.A.R.E. provides intensive case management services to women who participate.

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**REACH**

from front page

with available jobs at a variety of businesses.

In only its second year, REACH in C.A.R.E. emerged from an effort between RHD and Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority to find a way to close existing service gaps by developing a program that targeted the women who were in it. It’s an innovative approach that Bonstain says can be easily replicated in other jurisdictions with the cooperation and support of a local correctional institution. In Jefferson Parish, [PCC assistant deputy administrator] Capt. Edward Olsen has partnered with and supported REACH in C.A.R.E. since its inception, and Sheriff Newell Normand has worked closely with the PCC to provide services to the female inmates.

“I’d seen the way women struggled when they came in here, and we had a lot of frequent flyers — coming in all the time, coming right back out as soon as they got out,” said Cindi Lachney, psych coordinator and assistant health service coordinator at Jefferson Parish Correctional Center and a staunch advocate for REACH in C.A.R.E.’s presence at PCC. “Now we’re seeing women actually have a chance to succeed. They need this help; they need it desperately. But just from word of mouth, I got a lot of women asking how they can get into REACH in C.A.R.E. just about from the day it started.

“It’s REACH’s program, but I take a lot of pride in being able to assist it and watch it grow. It’s just fantastic; it’s like we’ve been waiting for Toni’s program to come to life.”

While women can be referred to the program from Lachney’s office, 95 percent of the women at PCC’s unit in REACH in C.A.R.E. The 35 slants signed from July 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002 still reported on a total of 510 arrests during their lifetime. Of those, 20 engaged in substance abuse treatment post-release and 31 attended community support groups post-release. Of those, none have been re-arrested on an original charge.

“They saved my life,” said Kim. “Their dedication, the way they care about you; when I’m having a tough time I know I can always call Kayla and have someone to talk to.”

Cheronne was found that the program was a great opportunity to get help while she was in prison. She found that the support she needed there. REACH in C.A.R.E. provides face-to-face personalized attention to the community, and Cheronne found that the program was a great opportunity to get help while she was in prison. She found that the support she needed there. REACH in C.A.R.E. provides face-to-face personalized attention to the community, and Cheronne found that the program was a great opportunity to get help while she was in prison.

“We just got out of jail last March, and we felt so much better, and we felt the support from the group. And we just had such a great team of people that helped us. We felt we could go on and do something. We felt we were going to do something positive. We were able to get the help we needed and the support we needed.”

“The first time in my life I’ve gone 12 months without getting in trouble,” said Karen, who was part of REACH-in-C.A.R.E’s first group. “I never had support like this. I don’t know where I would be without it. I don’t think I would have made it through without it.”

“I had an atmosphere around me that was all negative, and I needed support that was positive – and I found it,” said Cheronne. “Right when you get out of jail, there’s so many things that you’re supposed to do, and it’s easy to fall trapped. They take the pressure off you, when I’m having a tough time I know I can always call Kayla and have someone to talk to.”

“Because I feel like I can do it on my own, they’re there for them. They help you transition to a more productive life.”

*Continued on next page*

**Warm embrace: With support fromc unfairly suspected Alika Bright IV, Karen de-Termined and turned her back at her attack at REACH in C.A.R.E. client.**

Cheronne said she first joined a REACH in C.A.R.E. group “just to get out of my cell and have something to do,” but soon found the support she needed there. REACH in C.A.R.E. provides face-to-face personalized attention to the community, and Cheronne found that the program was a great opportunity to get help while she was in prison.

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I kept thinking: How are they going to get this done? But then it all came together. It’s a great environment, and it’s a place where you can keep busy and feel like you’re doing something healthy.

Nick, a Lodge client
At RHD, we build relationships that last by always putting our clients first.

This was a busy spring for One Step Away. Philadelphia’s most noteworthy program that we are proud to publish and support. One Step Away threw its annual Knock Out Homelessness fundraiser, drawing celebrities like Phillies all-star Darren Daulton and Cher. One of the highlights of the night was a knock-out as a Philadelphia 76ers star.

In anticipation of our Knock Out Homelessness event, Matthew Saad Muhammad, the former light heavyweight champion, came to us to offer to help out. He was unbelievably generous and gracious, signing autographs, posing for pictures, and meeting our One Step Away clients who were visiting the Studio at Lower Merion Vocational Training Center during a recent visit. Matthew Saad Muhammad is not only one of the finest men in history, but also one of the nicest.

We’re always thrilled when it works out that way at RHD – when we get to live into what we see, do the work we try to serve our clients, and ask what can they do to help us. These are the relationships that last, that we build on, and that keep RHD such a vibrant and growing place to be.

If you’re interested in learning more about what we do and how we can help you meet your needs in your community, or finding more information on One Step Away and Knock Out Homelessness, visit us at www.rhd.org.
Providing health care to underserved areas, the Family Practice and Counseling Network celebrated the grand opening of the East Side Health Center in York April 26. RHD’s newest health center provides primary care and behavioral health services to all who come, including those who are uninsured and underinsured, and was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration through the Affordable Care Act. Cutting the ribbon to officially open the doors are Reverend Leighton McMillan, York Mayor C. Kim Bracey, FPCN Executive Director Donna Torrisi and Dr. Deborah McMillan. RHD’s Family Practice and Counseling Network also runs three health center sites in Philadelphia.