

Submission Date: February 14, 2008

Priority: of



# Ted Stevens

United States Senator for Alaska

## Please Note:

- Fill out one request form for each request
- This form (and any attachments) can be returned via:

Fax - (202) 224-2354

Mail - The Honorable Ted Stevens  
United States Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510

- Requests are due by February 15, 2008.

## FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: Coordination of the Alaska Prisoner Re-Entry Coalition (AKCPR)

Project Location: Anchorage (with statewide services)

## Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

Alaska has "birthed" the Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry (AKCPR). The purpose of the coalition is summed up in its mission- to support the success of individuals who are released from the Alaska Correctional System by developing a: network of community and faith based organization and government agencies; system of referrals;

forum for the exchange of information; and

supportive environment for ex-offenders re-entering the community.

The coalition is created for the benefit and support of faith based and community organizations, government agencies, and individuals committed to reducing recidivism. The need for re-entry services for ex-offenders is great. The following narrative substantiates this need.

Related Appropriations Bill: None

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$125,000

Total funding to complete this project: \$275,000

Number of years to fund this project: 3

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: 0

## Matching funds from local and private entities:

Nine Star Education and Employment Services and AKCPR agencies will provide cash and in-kind match as stated in the budget (attached).

If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

No prior funding

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: None

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: None

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

## Check all that apply:

- A change in the current law is necessary in order to proceed with the project. (If so, attach language and a list of laws that need to be amended)
- Bill or report language is needed. (If so, attach requested language)

## Project Justification Overview:

Over 2,550 correctional inmates are due to be released from the custody of the Alaska Department of Corrections this coming year and 2,869 are on parole/probation with few comprehensive services available to them upon their re-entry into Alaskan communities.

A clear indicator of the re-entry need is stated in a January 2007 report from the Alaska Judicial Council that within three years after release from their sentence on a 1999 offense:

- 66% of all offenders in the sample had been re-incarcerated at least once, for a new offense or a probation or parole violation.
- 59% were arrested at least once for a new offense.

There are community resources that are not harnessed or organized, but available to begin to meet the need. The current, loosely structured cooperative effort on the part of concerned Alaskans engages in prisoner re-entry activities. AKCPR partners deliver the support services needed by the ex-offender and the Prisoner Re-entry Coordination project attempts to link ex-offenders to the right support services. Led by Nine Star, AKCPR partners currently find job placements and training for ex-offenders. The proposed Prisoner Re-entry Coordination project provides the coordination, follow-up and database management currently lacking.

Ex-offenders need referrals to the appropriate sources for support. Faith based, social service agency, do not often have a means to connect their services to ex-offenders. The proposed Prisoner Re-entry Coordination project uses a client referral specialist to help AKCPR members connect ex-offenders with community wide resources, track placements, recruit volunteers, connect agency personnel, and arrange follow-up services for clients. Community based organizations, faith based entities, and others doing re-entry activities need the consistent benefits that come from a centralized system of 1) tracking, 2) referrals, 3) job development, 4) OJT preparation, 5) job shadowing, 6) tax information, 7) vocational training, 8) bus passes, 9) life skills coaching, 10) academic instruction, and 11) computer

*Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry (AKCPR)      Fiscal Year 2009 Project Request Narrative*

skills advancement. This project is designed to be particularly cost effective because it **takes advantage of resources already in place** but in need of coordination. It is the goal of this project to bolster Alaska's re-entry activities for three years, **proportionately reducing the federal dollars needed annually** and establishing a means of non-federally supported sustainability by year four.

The Alaska Prisoner Re-entry Coordination Project personnel coordinate support services for ex-offenders as they are released into the community. The Re-entry Coordination Project staff member coordinates the work of agency staff, community volunteers, and Nine Star's AmeriCorps Members.

The Coalition needs coordination because 1) agency staff need a vehicle through which to exchange information; 2) a unified effort can stretch resources; 3) a database needs to be established to track re-entry activities, services, and results; and 4) volunteer training is essential to the Coalition's sustainability efforts.

Support service dollars are imperative to the successful re-entry of youth and adult ex-offenders because most are released into the community with virtually no financial resources. Such items as a bus pass, first month's rent, and fees for birth certificates and licenses seem impossible to obtain for most newly released felons. The purpose of this project is to build the capacity and strength of the Coalition through coordination in an effort to **bring about a system of re-entry services that are self-sustaining**. Already underway is a cooperation of multi-organizational, faith and community based initiative directed at re-integration. The Coalition has grown from 16 initial partners to over 70 active agencies participating as members. Though Nine Star spearheaded this Alaska-wide effort to place ex-offenders in jobs and stabilize their lives, there is support from the Department of Corrections, the Mayor's office, Veteran's affairs, Department of Labor, the Wellness Court, native entities, faith based groups, and individuals concerned with re-entry issues.

Nine Star Education and Employment Services is particularly qualified to house this project because it:

*Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry (AKCPR)*

*Fiscal Year 2009 Project Request Narrative*

1. Initiated the Anchorage Coalition for Prisoner Re-entry (AKCPR) project 2.5 years ago without financial reinforcement.
2. Currently supports the work of the Coalition by managing and placing 25 AmeriCorps Members in partner agencies where they refer, place, coach, teach, and follow-up ex-offenders on their road to independent living.
3. Provides a technical staff which enters and tracks approximately 5,000 Alaskans each year in education and employment pursuits. These skilled staff will create a database to track the coordinated efforts of Coalition members as they serve ex-offenders. This information can be used by all AKCPR partners and the Department of Corrections.
4. Has worked with the Alaska Department of Corrections on academic and vocational work skills development for Alaska's incarcerated population since the inception of AKDOC and has provided training and technical assistance to various groups of AKDOC professionals throughout the years.
5. Currently has seven Career Development Centers throughout the Anchorage area where AKCPR partners refer ex-offenders for successful work readiness training, job development, and job placement—we help ex-offenders *get a job, keep a job, or advance on the job.*
6. Has created training opportunities such as computer skills development and Microsoft Certification, Math for the Trades instruction to prepare workers for union and technical positions, a Customer Service training that is nationally certified, and on-the-job training opportunities.
7. Has a distance delivery system to assist Alaskans living too far from Anchorage to take vocational or academic training and to support statewide agencies in their re-entry efforts.
8. Established a **58% overall job placement rate for its hard-to-serve clients.**
9. Knows our community's resources and the referral processes are in place to support under- and unemployed ex-offenders as they reach for financial self-sufficiency and successful integration into their respective neighborhoods.
10. Is the leading agency in the Anchorage Regional Adult Education Program which includes the Anchorage Literacy Project, the Anchorage School District- McLaughlin, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, and Covenant House Alaska.
11. Practices what it preaches by hiring its own ex-offender clients (who have not re-offended and have become contributing citizens in their communities.)

12. Provides an atmosphere of support for ex-offenders- from the Board of Directors and managers to the skilled staff of committed, consistent, and capable employees and AmeriCorps Members.

13. Has established a flourishing, 30 year history of Education and Employment Services for under and unemployed Alaskans.

#### **Detailed Project Justification:**

The essential government purpose of this funding request is to create a service, **(an eventually self-sustaining service)**, that reduces the recidivism of ex-offenders by coordinating existing services that keep those re-entering civilians in paying jobs. The Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry (AKCPR) is a consortium of Anchorage providers that refers ex-offenders to employment, education, social services and places them in jobs. This proposed re-entry project will strengthen and expand AKCPR activities as individual agencies work with ex-offenders in the Anchorage area. The Project will also serve as a **statewide and national model of sustainability**. Technical assistance will be provided to communities outside of Anchorage that want improved services for ex-offenders.

Today's funding trends dictate **collaboration and sustainability** in all areas of human services. The location of jobs and placement, housing, work training, substance abuse treatment, counseling, and life skills development are most often the responsibility of the private, non-profit sector and religious organizations which provide space, money, supplies and personnel to assist ex-offenders in their quest for stability, employment and eventual self-sufficiency. The U.S. Department of Labor has a long term and current interest in supporting these efforts of ex-offenders. The role of DOL in this project is to provide **seed money** for re-entry services which will lead **to a system of referrals and services** to those released from incarceration. As the Coalition develops, the need for federal dollars will decrease and **within three years it is expected that the Coalition itself will be a self-sustaining entity**.

This proposed project will: a) provide a means to coordinate and broker job training,

education, and social services to ex-offenders; b) design a single database for tracking ex-offenders' placement and participation in services and outcomes from the services ex-offenders receive, and c) provide a single organizational voice that can work with businesses and local governmental and service agencies in supporting ex-offenders as they are reunited with their families and reintegrated into the community.

The Prisoner Re-entry Coordination project relies on 1) the coordination and disbursement of referral information; 2) case management of clients by the appropriate community agency; 3) a centralization of data management so that ex-offender activities can be counted; 4) engagement and training of volunteers; 5) the development of fiduciary commitments from the community to support the on-going sustainability efforts of the Coalition.

The U.S. Department of Labor has already initiated pilot projects in placing ex-offenders, and Nine Star has initiated the Coalition for Prisoner Re-entry (AKCPR) in Anchorage to address Alaska's prisoner re-entry needs. Nine Star seeks funding for the central coordination of the Anchorage process which can extend beyond Anchorage with accompanying technical assistance from the to-be-hired client referral specialist (the project coordinator) to similar volunteer, faith and community based efforts that can emerge in Fairbanks, Soldotna, Wasilla, Nome, Juneau and other Alaskan communities. The match funds for this coordination include travel to additional communities to support this statewide initiative.

#### Primary Measurables & Outcomes of the FY '09 Prisoner Re-entry Coordination Project:

1. Continue the development and expansion of the Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-entry by engaging new agency and business partners, shoring up existing program services, and developing new avenues to support the Coalition members in their re-entry efforts.
2. Manage and coordinate (agency and case management) assistance for 1500+ ex-offenders over the course of the three year project with a variety of support services (housing, education, work skills development, life skills, family re-unification, mental health and substance abuse issues, pre-employment skills, housing, etc.) in their efforts to successfully re-enter the community.

3. Create and maintain a database for all AKCPR clients served and aggregate their success stories and barrier descriptions in a way that is meaningful to future re-entry coalition services.
4. Make the Alaska Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry self-sustaining through volunteerism, community program integration, and financial continuation without the support of federal dollars.

Secondary Project Outcomes of the Prisoner Re-entry Coordination Project for FY '09:

1. 150+ community and faith based organizations, businesses, and individuals will work together in an integrated system of referrals and services for ex-offenders to use.
2. 500+ ex-offenders will receive assistance with employment services, clothing, housing, glasses, obtaining state ID, education, and/or transportation.
3. 200+ ex-offenders will progress toward self-sufficiency through job placement.
4. 50+ ex-offenders will engage in GED preparation, high school completion, vocational education, ESL skills development, computer skills instruction, and apprenticeship training.
5. 30+ ex-offenders will join substance abuse recovery programs.
6. 50+ volunteers will become coaches and tutors for ex-offenders as they seek to stabilize their successful re-entry process.

Summary Statement:

Coalition Members are currently representing 70+ different entities including native organizations such as the Alaska Native Justice Center, women's organizations like the YWCA, faith organizations of varied sizes, judicial programs such as Anchorage's Wellness Court, and numerous other agencies in Alaska's social service network. With thousands of Alaskan prisoners being released from incarceration each year, and with funding for rehabilitation efforts extremely limited, and because there are many Alaskans engaged in small, but effective prisoner re-entry activities, the need for coordinated prisoner re-entry services is notable. Anchorage has a "young" Coalition for Prisoner Re-entry supported and led by Nine Star for the benefit of community and faith-based organizations. A Prisoner Re-entry client referral specialist is needed to develop a systematic process for using community-wide resources, tracking client placements, and arranging follow-up for clients.

Community-based organizations, faith-based entities, and others conducting client placements will receive continuous benefits from the proposed project's new database. This database will track clients' referral, job development, on-the-job preparation, job shadowing, and tax information, as well as the types of vocational instruction, academic instruction, computer instruction, and support services that ex-offenders receive. This cost-effective project takes advantage of resources already in place but in need of coordination. It can be continued in year four and beyond by the Coalition for Prisoner Re-entry and its primary sponsor, Nine Star Education & Employment Services. This project design also provides for ex-offenders with the bus passes they need for job search, with rent deposits for housing, and with suitable clothes for job interviews among other services. It will strengthen and expand the efforts that are already established for re-entry activities by creating a means for Coalition sustainability which is not dependent on government resources, but supported by individual philanthropists, faith and community based organizations of all sizes, and by the successful ex-offenders when they become financially self-sufficient.

***\*\* A system of integrated services, agency capacity, shared community resources, use of an army of volunteers, plan for sustainability, history of job placement success, coordinated services to ex-offenders, and elimination of the \$90,000 per year cost to house a prisoner in Alaska create the rationale for this project to be funded by the Department of Labor. It is our hope that Senator Stevens will bring forward this proposal for funding.***

## Project Budget Outline

	Project	Match
<b>PERSONNEL</b>		
Project Coordinator (52 wks x \$1,040)	54,080	
Project Data Manager/Support Staff (52 wks x \$300)	15,600	
Fringe @ .1743 (includes FICA/ESC/Health)	12,145	
<b>TRAVEL</b>		
Statewide Technical Assistance (Fbx, Wasilla, Kenai, etc.)		2,000
<b>CLIENT SERVICES</b>		
Client Services (bus passes, fees, rent deposits, etc.)	16,675	1,696
<b>TELEPHONE &amp; COMPUTER NETWORKING</b>		
Office phone charges & cells plus network costs	500	4,000
<b>RENT</b>		
Training and staff space	5,000	5,000
(Approx. 48 meetings & trgs @210 per day		
(Staff space: 416 sq. ft. x 12 mo.)	5,000	
<b>SUPPLIES</b>		
Copying, printing, brochure production, etc.	6,000	6,000
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Bookkeeping services, insurance, etc.	10,000	6,304
(15% Indirect)		
<hr/> <b>TOTALS</b> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>125,000</b> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>25,000</b> <hr/>

**\*Note: Match funds will come from both in-kind and cash match. Nine Star Education & Employment Services and AKCPR agencies will provide this match.**

### Budgets for Years 2 & 3:

Each year as the Project Coordinator assists Coalition partners with capacity building, the need for federal money will decrease. It is unknown which areas of the budget will have alternate sources of funds, but it is assumed that client support, rent, and supplies will be the first line items to diminish. The federal portion of the budget for Year 2 should be reduced by \$25,000 and Year 3 reduced by \$50,000. By Year 4, the capacity of the Coalition for Prisoner Re-Entry should be self-sustaining through private and corporate donations and support.