



resolana

working to empower women to break the cycle of incarceration

April, 2008 Update

Resolana Plans Dedicated Dorm

With an exciting opportunity to expand our services to incarcerated women at Dawson State Jail, Resolana is working hard to meet the challenge.

Warden Keeton at Dawson has invited Resolana to transition its program into a dedicated dorm, a setting in which 54 women in a self-contained living area will be program participants.

Because many activities can take place within the dorm itself, this arrangement will open up the time and space for a gradual, yet significant increase in the range of services that we can offer the women. A setting separated from the general prison population will allow us to establish an empowering social learning environment.



Dancing in the Officers Dining Room at Dawson

We hope to make the transition into the dedicated dorm this summer. In the first months Resolana's primary focus will be on establishing a safe, stable social learning environment. Our long-term goal is to expand our programming into a broad system of holistic gender-sensitive services for the inmates who participate in the dedicated dorm.

Resolana has always been an all-volunteer agency, but with the move into the dorm, we are seeking the funds to add part-time staff.

We hope to hire a licensed social worker (LCSW) who can be a daily presence in the dorm, facilitating group process sessions and helping to establish consistent group norms and an effective peer structure. An LCSW will also be qualified to supervise the future work of advanced clinical interns from UT Arlington's School of Social Work.

In a dedicated dorm, Resolana will have the opportunity to create the kind of learning community evoked by our name. In old New Mexican usage, the word *resolana* refers to the sunny side of the plaza where the village elders would sit next to the "warming walls" of adobe that retained the sun's heat, a place where the community naturally gathered.

Resolana's First Art Salon Scheduled for Late April

Edith Baker, a "Living Legend" of the Dallas arts community, is graciously hosting an Art Salon for Resolana on Sunday April 27 from 2-4PM.

The Salon promises to include some stimulating conversation about the power of art. Our volunteers are eager to contribute their observations about the uniquely powerful experience of art-making inside prison walls.

Brainstorming about a future exhibition featuring art by incarcerated women is also on the Salon agenda.

Dallas Women's Foundation Picks Resolana for EALI Institute

We are delighted to announce that Resolana is one of eight area nonprofits to be chosen by the Dallas Women's Foundation to participate in their Emerging Agency Leadership Institute (EALI).

The Institute is designed to create more effective nonprofits by training their leaders. EALI offers a series of workshops tailored specifically for the needs of developing nonprofit agencies. EALI also provides twelve hours of coaching by a nonprofit consultant. At the end of the Institute, Resolana will be eligible for a capacity building grant.

Resolana board members Rose Villasana and Bette Buschow have been attending presentations focused on topics like board development, fundraising, budgeting and evaluation. "The sessions are incredibly helpful," reports Bette. "We have been learning so much!"

Our community partner, Grace Unlimited, a halfway house for women, was also chosen to participate in EALI.



Rose Villasana and Bette Buschow of Resolana, "our" EALI Consultant Betty Richardson, Jaqueline Hartley and Kathleen Cook-Hunter of Grace Unlimited take a workshop break together.

Fun Fanciful Easter Bonnets Top Dolls Created in DCJ Workshop



US Incarceration

- One in 100 American adults is behind bars, according to the Pew Center on the States.
- If those on supervised release are included, the number rises to about one in every 31 adults.
- About one in 200 US residents is serving a prison term of more than 1 year .
- Drug offenders account for more than half the prison population.

Incarcerated Women

- Texas had 13,799 women under the jurisdiction of correctional authorities at the end of 2006, more than any other state.
- Drug use is the major pathway to crime for women.
- Childhood abuse experiences are now identified as the primary pathway to substance abuse and incarceration for women.
- The number of women in state and federal prisons has been growing at twice the rate of men since 1980. Between 1980 and 2000, the number of female inmates increased 575%.
- In 2006, the incarceration rate for white and Hispanic women increased, while the rate for black women declined.

Student Reflects On Jail Community Service

Before working with Resolana, I had never stepped foot inside a prison and the only time I had seen a prison was what I saw on television and in movies. So I had told myself before going inside not to judge the women or have any preconceived notions.

Once I got inside, I realized that those women in the green and white stripes were the same as I was. We are women who struggled through trials and tribulations. The only difference between us was the way we choose to handle our problems.

I was blessed to grow up with parents who guided me in the right direction and a support system to help me when times were rough. Some of these women lacked the privileges that I had.

I met one young lady named Rachel. When we were sharing stories during a Resolana exercise, I realized that she just

needed someone to talk to. She had been dealt some bad cards in her life, and I think with the right guidance she would not be inside the jail walls.

Through different classes and workshops, Resolana is providing that guidance and lending an ear to women just like Rachel. Rachel was proud to tell me that she was 10 months sober and could not wait to start living life again.

Even though we spent less than two hours inside the jail, I think it meant the world to Rachel and all the other women to have us there.

Laura May

(Laura is a journalism major in her senior year at SMU. Laura donated community service hours to Resolana this spring as part of a class taught by Dr. Rick Halperin.)

UT Arlington Intern An Asset to Resolana

Resolana is very lucky to have the assistance of a talented intern this spring and summer. Nicole Hutches, a graduate student at the School of Social Work at UT Arlington, has been assigned to Resolana for her advanced field placement.

Nicole specializes in Community & Administrative Practice.



Nicole Hutches, our intern from the UT Arlington School of Social Work prepares to enter Dawson State Jail for class.

Nicole has been working to identify qualitative measurements (pre- and post-testing) for Resolana to use with our program participants. These will allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of various components in our programming.

Recently she and Associate Dean Joan Rycraft presented a proposal about the measurements to the UT Arlington Institutional Review Board (IRB). The academic IRB approval we received was necessary before we could request permission from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to utilize the measurements.

Nicole also provides technical assistance to Resolana and helps with government grant research. She regularly helps facilitate our Grace & Grit class at Dawson State Jail and is working on program development for the dedicated dorm.

Note from Inmate Expresses Gratitude

I started a class with Resolana at Dallas County Jail in August 2007. I was amazed at the curriculum taught in these classes. I was honored to meet Bette and the other ladies that volunteer their time to women inmates like myself.

I feel that Resolana brought light to the end of a dark tunnel for me. I have learned so much about life in general from these classes. I have also learned how to overcome life as a drug addict taking these classes. The classes have shown me that there is more to life than doing drugs to run from a problem or to hide some type of pain I was dealing with.

In November 2007 I was sentenced to 15 months in state jail. I am now an inmate here at Dawson State Jail where I am currently involved with Resolana again.

There aren't enough good words to describe the way I feel toward the Resolana volunteers. I can't show them how much I appreciate them showing me the true meaning of "life"! I'm sure every other lady in this program would

say the same thing.

I have used everything I have learned from these classes to prepare myself for life outside these walls. I would like to thank Resolana for helping me through the toughest times of my life. I don't know how I could have made it without them.

Thank you Resolana for everything,
Darra

March 2008

Dawson State Jail

Inmates Participate in Art Exchange

During the last week of April thousands of creative people will be exchanging international messages of global peace and good will through the medium of art.

Various organizations and individual artists of all ages participate in the Global Art Exchange by creating a piece of art expressing their vision of global unity. The Global Art Project matches participants across the United States and seventy other nations – individual to individual and group to group—and each pair exchanges their art.

Working with artist Mary Maddux, women at Dallas County have already created the piece below and the Dawson ladies will soon do another. The art will be sent to the Art Department of Alverno College in Milwaukee, WI. We are eager to see what Resolana will receive in exchange.



Keepin' Busy . . .

In the last half of 2007 Resolana:

- Offered 2-3 classes or workshops per week at Dallas County Jail (DCJ) and also at Dawson State Jail.
- About 40 hours of volunteer time were logged weekly as we provided those sessions.
- At DCJ, where jail rules limit class size, Resolana offered a total of 50 sessions which had 505 attendees, comprised of 139 different women.
- The Dawson program included 30 sessions with 480 attendees (also representing 139 different women).
- Four women who attended classes at county jail and were sentenced to do state jail time transferred into our classes at Dawson State Jail.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!!

As Resolana transitions into the dedicated dorm, there will be many new opportunities to lead workshops, step meetings and classes at Dawson. If you are interested in learning more about the possibilities or arranging a visit to see what volunteering in a jail is like, please email contact@resolana.info.

Dawson State Jail volunteers must complete a three-hour TDCJ training session. If you are a Resolana volunteer but have not taken this training, we urge you to send the TDCJ volunteer application to Huntsville ASAP and plan on attending the next TDCJ training at Hutchins State Jail in May.

Download the volunteer application form at the link <http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/pgm&svcs/pgms&svcs-vlntrcoorcom.htm> Or visit the Opportunities page on the Resolana website to learn more. www.resolana.info/opportunities.htm



Resolana's programs depend on the contributions of many wonderful talented volunteers. Above, yoga instructors Douchka LeCot (left) and Zed Zaremba (middle), gather mats, assisted by SMU students, Emily Ewbank (back) and Laura May (right).

Pilot Art Class Begins At Dallas County Jail

A women's drawing class taught by Rebecca Briley, a college art instructor, was introduced at the end of March as part of an arts initiative at DCJ.

As a pilot, the class will help us to assess if the transient county jail population is stable enough over a four week interval to teach incremental drawing skills.

Rebecca is a regular volunteer who speaks passionately about art's impact on incarcerated women:

"Tell prospective volunteers about our chance to make a difference -- because we do. We see that each time we check in. Women come in, weighed down by never-ending legal problems and exhausted by the environment. We talk a little, bring out the materials, and an hour later it has all changed. You can see the change in their faces and hear it in their voices when they leave."

We were excited to see Resolana and the Dallas County Jail arts initiative featured in the Winter newsletter of the Texas Commission on the Arts. Check it out at:

www.arts.state.tx.us/artstexas/08winter/jail.asp



Ways You Can Help Without Going to Jail

1) Resolana needs help staying in touch with our regular class participants when they leave for other facilities or for home. We'd love to stay connected, but we're so busy with classes that we make really lousy correspondents.

Would anyone be willing to send birthday cards and encouraging postcards? (We track addresses and birth dates and can even recruit inmates to create some of the cards in art workshops.) Letters would be awesome! Please let us know if you're willing to help with correspondence.

2) Are you good at asking for help? We could use you to do just that.

We need people to help us find small business or corporate donors -- for example, a local market that would donate food or flowers for our Art Salon. Or a printer who will give us a discount on our small literary magazine

3) Resolana is expanding its Board and is looking for energetic candidates, especially those with capacity building experience.

4) Every financial gift makes a difference. Send yours today! (It's tax deductible.)

resolana says a heartfelt "THANK YOU!" to all our friends and volunteers.

We are especially grateful to:

NORTHAVEN United Methodist Church for its generous Human Development Fund grant

JIM HUNT for connecting us with two great Yoga teachers & for the donation of yoga mats

PAT & MARY and the Dallas Women's Foundation for EALI and BETTY RICHARDSON for encouragement & guidance

EDITH BAKER for her generous spirit and gracious hospitality

NICOLE HUTCHES for untiring support & enthusiastic vision and DR JOAN RYCRAFT for going out of her way to make it happen



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