

## Caliber Associates, Inc.

### Field-Initiated Research

#### Type of Applicant

Profit organization

#### Project Title

"Research and Studies Related to Social Services Provided by Faith Based and Community Based Organizations"

#### Project Period

October 2002 to February 2004

#### Focus of Research/Project

Kairos Horizon Communities in Prison.

#### Description of Project

Kairos Horizon Communities in Prison is a residential rehabilitative program for prisoners and their families that seeks to address the whole person by offering mental, spiritual, and emotional support. This program grew out of the Kairos Prison Ministry, which serves more than 20,000 incarcerated people annually. KHCP is a year-long program that fosters the development of three participant goals:

1. Personal responsibility,
2. Family responsibility, and
3. Employability,

(and does this through volunteer-led programs including informal mentoring, anger and stress management, family relations and fatherhood, financial management, addiction recovery, and education. Prisoners in the program also participate in daily devotionals and their choice of religious services.)

#### Research Project

The goal of this project is to enhance the knowledge of the effects of prison-based residential ministries on prisoners and their families and on the success of re-entry into society through an evaluation of Kairos Horizon Communities in Prison. The project team is a partnership between an expert research and evaluation company with an experienced faith-based prison program. The project will provide information on State-level agencies, the role of the FB community in prisons, and best-practices for FBOs serving prisoner populations.

#### Goals of the Research

Results and benefits expected include:

1. Synthesis of literature and contribution to the existing knowledge base regarding the effects of FBO prison programs, plus suggestions for future research.
2. Direct suggestions for the Florida Department of Corrections and Department of Children and Families.
3. Information useful to the Federal government working to increase FBO partnerships with state and community entities providing social services.

#### Research Questions

1. What are the goals of relevant State agencies and systems for inmates nearing release and their families? (i.e. what are the goals of Departments of Corrections, Human Services, and Correctional Institutions?)
2. How does a faith-based program operate in the prison setting? (i.e. what are the best-practices of Kairos Horizon residential communities?)

3. What are the effects of the faith-based program on its participants and their families, both in prison and post release?

#### Sub-Research Questions and Hypotheses

N/A

#### Methodology

Phases include:

1. *Literature review*: of past evaluations of faith-based prison programs and *goals assessment* of the State agencies, prisons, and faith-based programs. Goals assessment will be done through interviews of officials at the various organizations.
2. *Evaluation design*: to determine description of how the program is implemented and the ways it can address goals. Design will specifically evaluate the implementation of several "best practices" used by Kairos:
  - a) collaboration between departments of corrections and human services to offer support services,
  - b) holistic programming to provide an integrated approach,
  - c) efficiency of reaching out to prison populations when they are most receptive to change,
  - d) credibility of sincere volunteers,
  - e) importance of families to foster change in inmates,
  - f) involvement of inclusive faith traditions, which attract people and encourage tolerance.

The evaluation data will be collected through interviews and data collection on participants and other stake holders, using several different outcome measures to see program impact.

3. *Data collection and analyses*: data for research question 1 will be collected through interviews with key agency staff at the three Kairos sites. Data for research question 2 will be collected from program and corrections staff for qualitative analysis. Data for research question 3 will be collected from program participants and two comparison groups. The comparison groups will include a matched comparison sample from the general inmate population and a sample from the program waiting list. All sample members will meet the program criteria: 8th grade education, no criminal conviction that requires segregated housing. These last data will be on outcome measures to show impact of program on participants while in prison (their behavior and interaction with family) and after release (their behavior, employment, use of social services, and family relations). This data will be collected through interviews with key stakeholders, self-reports from program participants and comparison samples, and review of official data sources.
4. *Report writing and information dissemination*: will include an official final report with best-practices, issue briefs and a PowerPoint presentation for a wider audience.

#### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:

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#### Limitations

1. It may be difficult to collect good individual-level data on comparison groups.
2. Selection bias because participants choose to be in the program and may be more motivated.
3. Follow-up period for the research may be too short to get good outcome measures, especially since individuals may never be released from prison during the time of the study. Proposal suggests several strategies to try to address limitations.

(Reader's limitation: Caliber and Kairos are closely allied for this project, which suggests potential bias toward positive results.)

#### Background

With growing numbers of incarcerated people, and increasing numbers of children with one parent in prison, society must look for ways to enable inmates to re-acclimate to society successfully. One approach is to address problems before inmates are released, and faith-based programs that do this have demonstrated some impact in preliminary studies. There has been a little bit of work done on evaluating faith-based prison programs.

#### Additional Pertinent Background Information

Other models that will be examined in the lit review include

- Prison Fellowship (VA)
- InnerChange Freedom Initiative (OK)
- Miracles Prison Ministry (WI)
- Christian Jail Ministry (MD)
- Good New Jail and Prison Ministry (VA)

#### Geographic Location

The majority of the program data will be gathered at the Tomoka Correctional Institution, which is near Daytona Beach, FL, but draws from a statewide prison population. Some additional data will be gathered from the Horizon Interfaith Dorm at Marion Correctional Institution, Marion, OH, and the Allred Unit, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Wichita Falls, TX.

#### Grant Award Amount

\$236,633