



RIVERSIDE HOUSE
Guiding offenders to become productive citizens

**RIVERSIDE
REENTRY
2.0**

*Support Riverside
House Campaign*

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Cleveland Bell III
CEO of Riverside House

Why Do We Serve Others

Why does Riverside House exist to serve others?

One of our former volunteers was from a small town and the product of a broken marriage. While extended family members lived close by, this man still made some poor decisions and was introduced to the wrong people. This led him to a life of addiction, joblessness, homelessness, and crime.

In 1969, this man was in the Dade County Jail, arrested for robbery and possession of narcotics. He overheard some of the inmates in the cell discussing a group that met in the chapel every Tuesday. One of the people leading the group was a former drug addict named Jerry. Out of curiosity, this man decided to go and hear Jerry share his story, which was impressive, to say the least. Jerry was the first person he had met who had successfully beaten his addiction.

Each week that this man went to the meetings, he noticed that Jerry, after giving his testimony, would meet with others who wanted to talk in a separate room on a one-to-one basis. He also noticed that when the guys would come out of that room they would sometimes have tears in their eyes, which made him wonder what was happening in that room. This man then decided after several weeks of attending the meeting that he would go into that room. To his surprise, the first thing that Jerry asked him was if he would like to receive Jesus Christ as his Savior. This caught him completely off guard. Jerry gave him his first introduction to God through His Son Jesus Christ.



After being released from incarceration, this man joined forces with a pastor who worked with different churches mentoring individuals who were in recovery from drug addiction. Later on, he was invited to speak at a women's group, where he met a very influential lady and, subsequently, her husband. This generous couple encouraged this man to obtain an education and helped fund this investment in his future. This couple's generosity continued to pour forth both in funding for recovery services for others and providing experiences and contacts across the country, developing necessary leadership skills that he would lean on in the future. He eventually volunteered at Riverside House, serving others who had similar experiences and showing them that it is possible to turn your life around. This man is Cleveland Bell III, the CEO and Executive Director of Riverside House.

As a result of Cleveland's involvement at Riverside House, he and his team have provided reentry services and support systems to those who had a journey similar to his. Some additional ministries and support organizations that partner with Riverside House include KAIROS, Celebrate Recovery, Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, and the International Community Corrections Association (ICCA). All of these services, as well as our generous community partners, have enabled Cleveland and his team to give back exponentially to over 10,000 clients who have passed through Riverside House in the past 45 years. Cleveland's goal is to ensure that this vital community resource remains in place for years to come.

Who we are

Our Mission

Riverside House exists to guide men and women convicted of crime into becoming productive citizens through a nondenominational, faith-based approach.

Our Vision

The formerly incarcerated are good citizens and neighbors—productive, educated, with strong family and spiritual values, playing an equal role in contributing to a safe and vibrant community.



The Problem

Despite the fact that the prison population and crime overall has decreased since its height in the mid-1990s, the majority of Americans still believe that crime is increasing across the country. About 60% of Americans say there is more crime in the U.S. than a year ago [2017], it is an 8% drop from last year and the lowest percentage to say crime is on the rise since 2004.

However grim their outlook is on criminal activity, most Americans do believe that the approach we need to take in combating crime in our country is to employ greater efforts toward fixing the social and economic issues that contribute to the problem of recidivism. By focusing efforts on bettering education, employment opportunities, and exploring public housing options for those re-entering the community from prison, we can work toward safer communities and a lower rate of repeat offenders.

Guiding a person to become, and remain, a productive global citizen isn't always as simple as giving them a second chance and setting them free. We must provide them with a foundation and the opportunity to access resources as they work through the trials and tribulations of learning a new way of living life.

When these challenges of re-entering society are combined, it immediately becomes clear why it is critical to provide these individuals with the proper guidance in addressing such imperative life issues.

Employment – Many of the individuals leaving prison need assistance with the most basic of tools to allow them to secure employment, including obtaining proper identification, transportation, job skills training, professional attire, and even access to an internet-connected computer to conduct a job search. When a person is released into our society without these basic tools, their likelihood of obtaining lawful employment diminishes greatly. Employment gives people the confidence to improve other areas of their life and keeps them from returning to a life of crime. In 2017, 55% of our residents graduated with employment secured. As of October 2018, 71% of our residents graduated with employment secured.

Family Relationships – Family reunification and spiritual development is a leading key to our clients' successful reentry. One in 14 U.S. children has lived with a parent who was incarcerated at some time after the child's birth. Relationships, particularly ones that have been severed during incarceration, take time to heal, repair, and grow, and familial support is a backbone to success. We believe that the spiritual component of rebuilding that support begins with the foundation of God's love. The forgiveness of self, of others, and from others is a major step in boosting anyone's confidence and will to succeed. God's love heals and guides us to be better human beings and family members. Having faith that there is more to life and that the individual can live with peace and prosperity has proven to be an incredible marker in successful reentry. In 2017, 92% of our residents cited having family support. As of October 2018, 96% of our residents cited having family support.

Substance Abuse/Mental Health – The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that about 1 in 7 state and federal prisoners (14%) and 1 in 4 jail inmates (26%) reported experiences that met the threshold for serious psychological distress (SPD) in the 30 days prior to a survey that was conducted between February 2011 and May 2012. It's difficult for anyone to concentrate on anything when your mind is clouded either by psychoactive substance(s) or mental illness. Many ex-offenders struggle with both of these issues and are in need of counseling. At Riverside House, 50% of our residential population has a substance abuse issue and 50% have a mental health issue. Our personalized programs include counseling to address these issues on an individual basis. At Riverside House, we have trained professionals who assist our clients in their recovery and healing as they begin again by being clean of toxic substances and working toward a more positive outlook. By the time of their release, 92% of these individuals are clean, sober, and receiving the mental health treatment they need. Our aftercare program seeks to provide ongoing resources to support their continued recovery.

Housing – Shelter is critical to survival. Recidivism happens because of a lack of basic resources like housing. Unfortunately, due to the high demand for certain public housing, criminal background checks may be used and automatically disqualify ex-offenders from obtaining proper housing. At Riverside House, we provide a safe place for returning citizens to live while they are in transition back to the community. It's vital to their success after prison to have a place to call home while they are working on the other pieces of putting their life back together. Another critical step is helping our clients secure housing upon leaving our program. In 2017, 93% of our residents graduated with housing in place. As of October 2018, 95% of our residents graduated with housing in place.

The Plan

At Riverside House, our goal is to serve 10,000 ex-offenders over the next five years or 2,000 individuals per year, including those who have been out of prison for several years. It is not just critical to serve newly released inmates, but also to provide long-term access to positive lifestyle resources.

The latest Florida Department of Corrections report states that 25.4% of inmates released in 2013 returned to prison within three years, which means roughly one out of every four inmates released returned to prison within three years.

WE CAN CHANGE THIS. OUR PLAN IS SIMPLE.

Give **MORE** people **MORE**
support in **MORE** ways.

There are three ways that we will accomplish this goal.

Offer an Alumni Support Group –

For three years following an individual's release, our non-residential support in-house program will reach out to each individual regularly to check in and offer him or her support as needed. The three years after release are critical because that is the period when individuals are most likely to relapse into a life of crime.

Day Reporting Center –

The Center will be our "brick and mortar" location for our non-residential clients. It will be located on the second floor of our facility and be a place where alumni and ex-offenders can visit to use such resources as our Reentry 2.0 App and computers to conduct job searches and submit employment applications. The Center will be a positive co-working space with access to not only technology, but also to team members who can assist in guidance in a myriad of issues including family reunification, job skills training, spiritual development, counseling, and more.

Launch Community Support Groups –

Community Support Groups are vital to round out the three-part program. While the Alumni Support Group and the Day Reporting Center are in-house components, we also need to be available to, and have a presence in, the community through our Reentry 2.0 Initiative. These outreach groups will be led by a Riverside House team member who will conduct voluntary meetings in a variety of locations on a regular schedule.



Why Now

At Riverside House, 300 people graduate from our programs each year. That's 300 people in the prison system in Miami-Dade County that we guide to become self-sufficient, positive, and productive citizens and family members through a faith-based approach. That's 300 people released into the community who have a second chance at being positively-contributing citizens and 300 chances for our communities to improve. But, it's not enough.

Consider the following statewide numbers.

- Florida has the third largest prison population in the US with over 100,000 in state prison. Thousands more are incarcerated in Florida jails.
- Florida's incarceration rate of 513 inmates per 100,000 adult residents is substantially higher than the national average of 471.
- Inmates serve an average of 5 years in state prison.
- It costs \$18,464 per year on average to house a Florida state prisoner.

In Miami-Dade County alone:

- 1,576 inmates were released between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018
- 1,971 inmates were released between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017

Costs are rising, our prisons are overpopulated, and with legislation struggles, the most viable first step to a solution is the prevention of recidivism.

Here are some first-person testimonials from clients of Riverside House who have been positively impacted by our programs.

As I was in my prison cell for my last charge, which was income tax fraud, I ended up having a moment I call, 'coming to myself' when I recognized that I wasn't helping my children or myself by committing crimes. During my time at Riverside House, I have begun to work hard toward being a law-abiding citizen all the time, as well as becoming a better father for my children.

– Timothy

At this point in my life, I am grateful for the help that I have received, and I am praying that God blesses me in spite of, and not because of, my past wrongs. Thank you, Riverside House, for helping me see the beauty in God's work." – Maria

I can write about many more moments here at Riverside House, but I will acknowledge the following: with all the positive and difficult challenges, Riverside has been a place for building my life again. It has provided a roof over my head and helped me regain any extra confidence I needed in myself." – Mr. Harris

I am very appreciative of Riverside House for allowing me to learn how to become responsible, honest, and build a better work ethic. My case manager and others helped me to become a better man. – John

What Riverside did for me was teach me that before I look anywhere else, I have to look at the man in the mirror."

– Desmond Meade, Class of 1997

I am the woman I am today because I stopped by here. Had I not been here, I probably would have been lost.

– Lisa Jackson, Class of 2009

If Riverside worked for me, I'm pretty sure that it will work for everybody. You just need to pay attention to the teachings and the instructions. If you do that, you'll be successful when you leave here. – Roberto Sanchez, Class of 1998

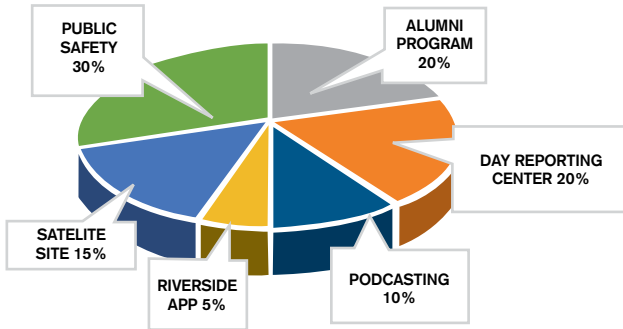
This halfway house helps you acclimate yourself to going to the regular world. – Mario Torres, Class of 2007

The Cost

While the Riverside House residential program is federally funded, our non-residential (i.e., aftercare) support is privately funded. It costs between \$30 and \$40 per person to provide services as weekly in-person meetings, 24/7 contact availability, and run the Day Reporting Center.

Become a Riverside House Ambassador Today

Endowments from private donors are needed to fund our goal of supporting 2000 individuals per year as good citizens and neighbors who play an equal role in contributing to a safe and vibrant community. With your support, we can be the difference in reducing recidivism rates, which ultimately will make our communities safer as well as lower our economic and non-economic costs.



Riverside House Reentry 2.0 Program

Alumni Program	\$ 71,400	Day Reporting Center	\$ 71,400
Podcasting	\$ 32,700	Riverside App	\$ 17,800
Satellite Site	\$ 53,500	Public Safety	\$ 103,100

Our annual goal is as follows:

Riverside Houses' Annual total goal is to obtain a minimum of \$ 350,000 in donations from our ambassadors.

DONOR LEVEL	DONATION	GOAL	DONATION TOTAL
Bronze	\$200	450	\$90,000
Silver	\$500	185	\$92,500
Gold	\$1,000	80	\$80,000
Diamond	\$2,500	15	\$37,500
Platinum	\$5,000	10	\$50,000

Grand Total: \$350,000

Consider breaking down into monthly recurring donations. For example, \$18 a month per individual in recurring donations is \$216 per person per year. 450 donors X \$216 = \$97,200 per year.

Other Methods to Assist Riverside House

We need volunteers with the following abilities:

VOLUNTEERS

Spiritual Skills

- Bible Study
- Women's Counseling
- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Parenting Guidance

Housing

- Fair Housing
- Security Housing
- Public or Transitional Housing Programs

Employment Skills

- Introduction to technology
- Resume Writing, Interview Etiquette
- Further Education Guidance
- Career Development Plan

