

Final Report for Scofield Bequest Fund
Creating Wounded Healers Project
5.30.2015
Submitted by Madeline Kiser

Jeremiah 17: 7-8

“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord, they shall be like a tree planted by the water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.”

I. Summary of services provided, and spiritual shifts

All agencies and individuals involved with the *Creating Wounded Healers Project*, including the Inside/Out Poetry and Sustainability Program, Southern Arizona Green For All Coalition, and Pima County Adult and Juvenile Detention Centers thank Rincon United Church of Christ and the Scofield Bequest Fund for something more than the generous \$10,000 grant provided July 2014-June 2015.

That something is the flexibility offered to adhere to the general goals and program components described in the initial proposal, while shifting certain elements in keeping with community needs—a *sending out of the roots, as it were, in new directions, when called for*. This flexibility is rare and was uplifting to those of us involved in implementing the grant, enabling us to stay focused on proposal goals while helping us more nimbly weave community across multiple sectors in these dynamic times.

The core of the initial proposal focused on the following three areas:

- 1. Bringing people representing the neighborhoods and backgrounds of incarcerated teens into the Pima County Juvenile Detention Center and Pima County Adult Detention Center to present a narrative of sustainability, tenderness, sacrifice and community engagement—resiliency in a time of climate change—to complement a more materialistic, individual focus.**
- The original vision was to bring in one local Tucson hip hop artist and eco-entrepreneur, Reggie Kennedy of Fingers de Freedom Clothing Company, to teach weekly classes throughout the grant cycle. After a month of initial visits, and in keeping with an increasing emphasis agencies and individuals working with reentering teens are placing on investing in opportunities for them outside, Reggie utilized \$5,000 to 1) create a mobile unit to sell hand-painted t-shirts and other products; 2) set up a sound system for youth to record rap in his main shop, with the goal of teaching youth to be social as well

as economic entrepreneurs. Multiple agencies working with teens refer youth to Fingers de Freedom, because youth are drawn to the informal, artistic spaces Reggie has created.

- Seven youth leaders, not included in the initial proposal, representing a wide range of agencies including Goodwill, the Community Food Bank, Tierra y Libertad Organization and Western Institute for Leadership Development presented in both the jail (four individual visits in July 2014) and detention (one four-member group presentation April 2015), in an effort to convince staff that community-based presentations and educational approaches are uniquely effective.
- In the spirit of creating linkages to community for and with incarcerated teens, a new partnership was formed with two University of Arizona agencies: the Water Resources Research Center and Compost Cats. Four UA interns posted on social media about events linking incarcerated teens to community resiliency projects. One UA Master's student received a stipend for his work.
- Across the country attention is being placed on the need to abolish 23-hour-lockdowns, basically a form of solitary confinement, for juveniles. Grant money was used to purchase books for teens held on 23.5 hour-per-day lockdowns in the jail.
- Vegetables from River Road Gardens and home-baked snacks were brought in weekly to detention and the jail, with the message that people creating healthy community want to include those who are incarcerated.

2. Spreading the good news about Rincon and need for involving the faith community in creating a resilient region in a time of climate change

- Rincon United Church of Christ was credited in numerous community meetings (Southern Arizona Green For All Coalition, Community Water Coalition, Pima County Reentry Coalition, staff meetings in detention and the jail) throughout the year for being a catalyst for creating programming for incarcerated teens focused on community engagement in a time of climate change and opportunities to serve—a Green Pipeline of teaching and service, bridging inside and out.

3. Engaging Rincon seniors and other seniors

- Over 100 paintings by wife of former Rincon member Frank Ashcroft, Lina Gadehla Ashcroft, were gifted to both teens and staff in detention through a series of weekly raffles. Before being given away, paintings were walked throughout the jail and detention, a mobile gallery.
- Reggie Kennedy presented twice (between services, December 2014; and during services, January 2015) to Rincon members. Congregation representatives visited his store in March 2015. Subsequent correspondence and contact with members took place as well.

- Madeline Kiser presented between services December 2014, and subsequently shared writing from Rincon members who wrote anonymously for incarcerated teens and adults. Three members subsequently shared anonymous writing and ideas with teens.
- In the original proposal emphasis was placed on engaging seniors, at Rincon and beyond, in visiting and corresponding with incarcerated teens. Given the limited time staff in both detention and the jail have to clear visitors, emphasis was placed instead (for now) on bringing in youth neighborhood leaders as guest speakers, once staff in both sites expressed interest in the Green Pipeline.