

Matthew 25:36 Prison Ministry is a part of Red Mountain United Methodist Church's social justice ministry. Our primary goal is to help women who are incarcerated at Perryville Women's Prison in Goodyear, AZ, to develop insights and behavior that will lead to financial independence, successful personal relationships and, above all, to avoid returning to prison. To that end, we have reduced the Arizona recidivism rate which ranges from 43 – 60% down to less than 6% among our pen pals who have become returning citizens. We began building relationships through a pen pal program. Several have been part of our public speaking program, sharing their stories and helping us raise funds to educate through offering GED scholarships while the women are in prison and through training scholarships after release in programs that will prepare them for living wage jobs with health benefits. To date we have funded 100 GED scholarships and hope to fund 60 more this year. In addition, we have funded 7 Peer Support training scholarships through our collaborative work with Arizona Women's Education & Employment in Phoenix. Matthew 25:36 Prison Ministry feels one of the most significant challenges women with a felony record face upon release is a living wage job.

ASU Criminal Justice intern's primary task will be to research job opportunities for persons (primarily women) with a felony record in companies in the Tucson – Phoenix – Flagstaff corridor. However, we feel the primary emphasis needs to be in the Phoenix area. The research intern will work with Sallie Klum (Red Mountain United Methodist Church's coordinator of this collaborative work with ASU), who will help the intern focus on identifying companies, setting up appointments with human relations departments and other significant personnel, designing dialogue for conversation, and other relative information that is needed. The intern will need to have a car and appropriate driver's license.

Upon research completion, the intern will provide Matthew 25:36 with a list of identified companies, job descriptions, contact person(s), phone numbers, email addresses, and any other pertinent information.

Matthew 25:36 Prison Ministry will provide a \$1,500 stipend for an ASU Criminal Justice Student Intern. We can also help to defray gas expenses up to a maximum of \$500 reimbursement for related mileage.

If this research yields significant results and time still permits, other opportunities could include:

- Research and assistance with grant writing to fund more community partnerships
- Research with ensuring a legislative presence related to incarceration advocacy, prison reform, etc. to keep our church informed on an effective response.