



## September Feature:

### **Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce: Previously Incarcerated Individual**

The Previously Incarcerated Individual Taskforce was started about three years ago with a vision to bring previously incarcerated community members and employers together. The goal was to increase the employment of those persons coming out of incarceration. The taskforce has since grown to include employers, community organization representatives, workforce professionals, members of the corrections field, as well as individuals who have experienced incarceration themselves.

After a period of information gathering and understanding, the taskforce has now moved into an action phase. Subcommittees have been formed to focus on engaging employers, supporting previously incarcerated individuals, and communication within and outside of the taskforce. The Previously Incarcerated Individual-Focus Subcommittee is working to join forces with the Communications Committee on a strategy to house and share the resource information. They are also striving to connect a skilled workforce with employers and are thinking creatively on ways to make these connections happen.

The Employer Engagement subcommittee is working to engage in conversations with employers through trainings focused on the value of workplace diversity, the impact of adverse childhood experiences on individuals, and the benefits to the businesses and the community that employing justice-involved individuals could produce.

Membership to the taskforce and subcommittees is open and new ideas and creative solutions are valued. Please visit our Workforce Development, Inc. landing page for additional information or to connect with committee chairs directly:

<https://www.workforcedevelopmentinc.org/connections/prev-incarcerated/>

*Submitted by: Mary Eichten  
Probation Officer Specialist, Olmsted County  
Communications Taskforce Subcommittee Chair  
Previously Incarcerated Individual Work Group*