



Left to right: Graduates Walter Tinsley, Aaron Grice and Tracy Robinson with Acting Chairman John Tuttle

the Green sheet

Relationships key to success

York Reentry Program holds graduation

The Board's court-based York Reentry Program graduated three parolees last week from its intensive supervision program designed to help offenders with substance abuse issues.

"The success of any offender or program depends on the people and relationships," said acting chairman of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole John Tuttle. "This program has been fortunate to have the leadership of Judge John Kennedy and the late Chairman Lloyd White. They have fostered excellent relationships between agents, providers and offenders."

The theme of relationships rang true throughout the ceremony.

Walter Tinsley has been on parole since January 2014, but it wasn't his first time on parole. Tinsley thanked Reentry Program Agent Bill Meneses for his support throughout the program.

"A lot of offenders tell me they don't want to go back, and I ask them what is your plan not to," said Meneses. "Most of them can't answer that question. But Tinsley said I don't want to go back and here is my plan to stay out."

He has remained sanction free during his entire period of supervision.

When asked what made the difference this time Tinsley said, "A former parolee was in prison with me. I saw the good things he was doing when he got out. I said when I find him, I'm jumping on his coattails." Tinsley did just that, and the former parolee has been instrumental in his recovery.

Tinsley said the death of a family member and his wife's continued support were instrumental in his change of

behavior. "One day I made the decision that I am changing today," he said.

"I kept him focused. He knows what he did was wrong and I know he wants to change," said his wife Tracy, who proudly attended his graduation. "I've been by his side all the way."

Tinsley wants to help people. He works full time to support his family, but he also finds time to volunteer at the Chad Baker Recovery House to help individuals obtain employment.

Graduate Aaron Grice has been in and out of the system since he was 14 years old. He's now 49. "When I was released before, I got a job and worked a lot," said Grice. He thought this would keep him out of trouble. Grice didn't realize that he

needed support to recover from his addiction, not just a job.

"Bob Allen saved my life," Grice said. "For the first time in my life I believe in myself." Grice was referring to the founder of Life's Beacon Center recovery house. Allen, an ex-offender, established the program to help "those who are seeking a second chance in life and are willing to utilize a hand up and not depend on a hand out."

With Allen's assistance, Grice has established an ex-offender mentoring support group in Lancaster County, and he is enrolled in school to become a barber.

The third graduate, Tracy Robinson, prides himself that he has zero sanctions or violations since his release from prison. At age 59, he has been in the system since he was

11 years old. "Like Walter, I just made the decision to change my life," said Robinson. He has kept to that decision and is starting a cab company.

The York Reentry Program began in 2005, based on the model developed by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, for parolees who have a history of substance abuse or addiction. The Reentry Program provides intensive supervision and treatment over four phases, lasting approximately 12-18 months. The Board also established reentry programs in Lackawanna (2008), Berks (2009), Dauphin (2013), Allegheny (2014) and Philadelphia (2014) counties.

The graduation was held at the Valencia Ballroom in the City of York and was part of the York County Treatment Courts graduation ceremony, which included drug, DUI, mental health and veteran's courts.

ASCRA agent recognized



ASCRA Agent Chad Renner of the Lancaster Sub Office displays his award from the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board in December. The award was given to him in recognition for his work in the community with offenders.

Teen Challenge honors Board staff

In December, Parole Agent Byron Rice and Interstate Probation Services Director Margaret Thompson were recognized by Teen Challenge at their holiday banquet in Rehrersburg. President and Executive Director Reverend Joseph Batluck, Jr. recognized Agent Rice for his ongoing support of offenders in the program. He recognized Director Thompson for assisting with the transfer of offenders to their program through the Interstate Compact.

Staff graduate from leadership program

Yarnell Gorba, parole manager in the Bureau of Offender Reentry's Specialized Services and Community Outreach Division, and Paul Walters, director of Case Analysis in the Office of Board Secretary, graduated from the commonwealth's 2014 Emerging Leader program (ELP).

The ELP is designed to tap into the talents of commonwealth employees who exhibit leadership potential. The program uses the Seven Pillars of Leadership model to develop character, communication skills, the ability to put people first, use of ethics, critical thinking, vision and strategic planning, and collaboration.