



## ***Nine New Facilitator-Leaders Trained in Bradenton, FL on August 6***

This enthusiastic group met at FIT headquarters from 8 AM until 4 PM to review materials and train to use them effectively as certified facilitators. On the left are Jamel and Ruth Smith of Ocala, FL. Jamel is Senior Chaplain of Lowell Correctional Institution, the largest women's prison in the United States. Jamel and his wife work as a team in volunteering of their time. The remaining ladies all hail from Lakeland, FL. They represent various women's residential and recovery centers in the Lakeland area and will supplement our work which is already being done there.

Having a large proportion of teachers, the group was particularly interested in the hand-outs and teaching aids that are available.

The FIT ministry is an all-volunteer operation with the exception of a small office staff.



## ***St. Matthew's House to host September 10 Leader Training.***

St. Matthew's House, Naples, FL will host the training for several of its staff to start implementing the FIT program in their Shelter Program. St. Matthew's House's mission is to provide a spiritual environment that is both compassionate and disciplined, as well as to provide housing for the homeless and food for the hungry. It was founded as a feeding ministry, and now provides emergency housing for those suffering from homelessness and recovery from substance abuse disorders, handled by the Justin's Place Recovery Program for Men and Women. The Naples shelter can house 174 men, women, and women with children, and the Immokalee shelter can house 44 men, women, women with children, as well as single fathers and married couples. FIT congratulates St. Matthew's for showing leadership in this critical but oft-neglected area and need. Here are some interesting facts from their website.

*St. Matthew's House receives at least one call each week from the hospital with a patient who has no place to go. Homelessness continues to be a pervasive problem throughout this country and Naples is no different. The reality of homelessness in Collier County is measured each year through the homeless count. It is expected that we actually have about 2,000 homeless in our county, as they work hard to be unseen. The life expectancy for a chronically homeless person is 44 years of age for men and 40 years for women. It is the only segment of the population where women are not expected to live as long as men. The chronically homeless often have one or more serious and disabling health conditions, including mental health and/or substance abuse disorders. In 2007, 15 people who were current St. Matthew's House residents or past residents passed away, and those ranged in age from 22 to 54. Quick Facts: St. Matthew's House was founded as a non-profit homeless shelter and feeding ministry in 1988. St. Matthew's House has been over capacity at its main shelter since June of 2005. St. Matthew's House averages over 43,000 client-nights in its emergency housing each year. St. Matthew's House is the ONLY emergency housing and food ministry in all of Collier County.*

~~~NOTE: Training Session is open to all. Apply online.~~~

**News** **FL DOC CANCELS ALL PRE-EXISTING PROGRAM APPROVALS**  
We have been informed that all previously-approved programs, including ours, have been canceled by the Florida Dept of Corrections and are being replaced by a single secular program that the state has adopted. We learned about this informally from a good source on Friday, August 19. This change will have little to no immediate impact on us as the provision to use our program for sentence reduction has rarely ever been chosen by the individual state facilities. It does also not directly relate to approvals from courts, counties, DCF, or county jails. FIT had been on the official approval list since 2009. We wanted everyone to know as soon as possible. Our middle name is "integrity" and we make it a point to not make any false claims.

**Q&A** **Why do some classes start with 15 and end up with 5?**  
There are any number of reasons for this and this is not in itself a sign of failure. In nearly every setting, we are subject to the host institutions and what they will permit. Even when the institutions provide a perfect setting for us, the instability of our clients and demands upon them leads to high attrition rates.

**Why are the institutions FIT is in constantly changing?**

Here are some of the reasons: Sometimes the FIT program is more stable than the host institution; host institutions close; administrations change; and people favorable to FIT programs come and go as well as those who are not favorable.

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Have a question you want answered? eMail it to [fit@100hour.org](mailto:fit@100hour.org).

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**Next Leader Training is Saturday, September 10 in Naples, FL**