



February 2010 Newsletter

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FIT Inc. Receives IRS “Letter of Determination”!

In a letter dated February 9, 2010, the Internal Revenue Service recognized Florida Integrity Training Inc. as a 501.c.3 charitable organization. It ruled that the organization does not pay taxes and that contributions to its mission are tax deductible according to the provisions of law. The effective date is June 4, 2009 – the date of original incorporation.

This is a milestone for us. We will now be able to apply for state sales tax exemption on our purchases, helping your gifts go even farther. The status also opens many other doors, such as eligibility for grants. It is a well-known fact that contributors are more willing to give to an organization approved for tax deduction.

Over 1500 students graduate from a FIT unit in the past two years!

Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of all of our volunteers (we are all volunteers), we have been able to produce more than 1,500 certificates of completion in the less than two year time period we have been keeping records. Units vary in length from 10 hours of instruction for Parenting 101 to 26 hours for Godly Parenting. The standard class length is two hours per lesson, and only contact-hours with a facilitator are counted in the tallies (homework hours are not included). Some individuals completed multiple units, and some completed all of them. All of this has been possible because we are a team effort with many partners who do not care who gets the credit. Our list of dedicated leaders is continually expanding. The table at the bottom of page 2 summarizes the fruits of our labors. Contributors, please note. This is what your donations have helped us to do. You made it possible for us to equip our volunteer facilitators with the necessary books and materials required for the program.



Our people make it happen. Pictured on the left is Ed White, the founder of our organization. Ed started by promoting a 10-hour program called Dad’s Coaching Clinic in the local Lakeland area jail and prison years ago. From this, he encouraged the expansion to an 100-hour program which would meet the Florida Department of Correction’s reentry requirements and asked curriculum developer Dr. Don Pratt to put it together. Ed crisscrossed the whole state raising funds for materials, making it possible. Experience has shown us that our type of program will not be successful without materials in the hands of clients. After things grew to a certain critical level, Ed transferred the operations from his office

to Don Pratt, who set up a personal business to handle day-to-day transactions. After further growth, the personal business converted into the nonprofit corporation that exists today. Through it all, Ed volunteered his time, travelling all over the state to train the new leaders who would facilitate the student groups. Ed is an experienced pastor and school teacher with a master’s degree.

Pictured on the right are Glory Banstetter and Robin Rogari. When faced with the partial collapse of our program last year due to lack of student books, these ladies were instrumental in finding workarounds. It worked. Through their work in fundraising and bringing the community together, FIT Inc. was able to raise \$3,000 for program materials for the Manatee and Sarasota County Jails. Both are skilled facilitators in our local jail and Recently Released community-based programs.





James Paulk is one of our most dedicated providers. He regularly travels across the state to minister to the needs of the men at the Glades Correctional Institution. In December, he graduated two groups of about 25 people each in Insight. He is currently working with new groups in the Insight unit. James is the first person to bring our program to Glades. James is enthusiastic about our program and grateful that “our paths met” so that he could be part of it. He once was a drug user, but you would never know it now. He just wants to give back for the blessings and insights he has received. His wife is also very supportive. She also helps him prepare in any way possible, even though there are times of separation when James ministers.

Don Batterman used part of his vacation time in Massachusetts over Christmas to conduct a leader training session in Rhode Island. Up until then, Gary Whitney was the only FIT-certified deliverer of our curriculum in the Rhode Island prison system. Now five are certified. Don is our “all around” man who helps us in nearly every aspect of our ministry. He regularly facilitates at the Sarasota County Jail, the Manatee County Jail, and the Recently Released community-based program. He facilitates every part of our curriculum and often conducts more than one group at a time in the same facility. Don is the only person so far who has been given access to the Manatee County Jail. Don also helps with the trainings sessions, especially those conducted in Bradenton, FL.



Summary of FIT Graduates in the Past Two Years

REGION	FACILITY	GRADUATES	HOURS
Sarasota	Sarasota County Jail	412	6236
	Manatee County Jail	18	276
	Joseph’s Storehouse	12	216
	Recently Released	52	888
Brooksville	A New Generation	8	134
	Hernando Correctional Institution	171	2046
	Hernando County Jail	449	6708
	Jericho Road	46	896
Lakeland	Polk Correctional Institution	53	530
	Victory Assembly	6	108
	Polk County Jail	104	1154
	Hillsborough Correctional Institution	69	1176
Orlando	Florida Induction Center	13	130
Rhode Island	Adult Correctional Institute	17	306
Palm Beach	Glades Correctional Institution	46	828
Miami	Dade Correctional Institution	16	*
Panhandle	Graceville Correctional Facility	45	738
GRAND TOTAL		1,537	22,370

*contact hours not reported