

IMPACT Advocate

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# IMPACT Advocate

## Motivation Breeds Success: Spotlight on Mr. Marvin Harris

*"Sometimes you don't know what you want to do with the rest of your life, but through learning about your personality and assessing your skills, you can figure out what you want to do, or what you need to do, to accomplish your goals." -- Marvin Harris*



I am a recent graduate from Mayor Michael B. Coleman's Restoration Academy, which is a rigorous six-month internship program with the City of Columbus that provides work readiness training and temporary work assignments for restored citizens.

I just completed my work assignment at IMPACT Community Action, a place I've been connected to since my release from prison in April 2013. I'm eager to work full time, and I'm taking the steps necessary to achieve my goals. I am a student at Columbus State Community College, seeking a degree in Business Management. I used to think that I was only qualified to perform simple tasks and hard labor; but through IMPACT and Restoration Academy, I've learned more about myself, and now I am pursuing a field where I can instruct, coach and/or teach others.

If you knew me before, you would never think I'd become the person I am today. I started out with nothing, and now I have everything that I need to be successful.

When I look back on my youth, I had been incarcerated in several states, including California, Arizona and Ohio. My first brush

with the law happened when I was 7. I stole a mail bag from the back of a U.S. Postal Service truck. By the time I was 17, I had spent time in juvenile detention camp and the California Youth Authority (now The California Division of Juvenile Justice). I felt damned to repeat this cycle until I could find a way out.

I enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1983 and after three years of active duty, I received an honorable discharge as a E4 Specialist in 1986. Military life seemed to have calmed my inner demons, until I went back home and became addicted to crack cocaine at the age of 21. I began to lead an uncontrollable life, far from the discipline of the military. Between the drug abuse and thug life, I felt like I lost my soul. Then I lost my freedom. Over the years, I was in and out of prison; and on July 7, 2011, I was in prison once again. It was my sixth conviction.

Prison saves you from death, but for what purpose? I was released from prison on Saturday, April 20, 2013. With "gate money" in my pocket and no concrete plans, I was caught in a dilemma. Do I go back to my familiar surroundings or do I try something different? I made it to the public library and found a Narcotics Anonymous meeting online. Ironically, on my first day out of prison, I went to the C.R.A.C.K. House (Christ Resurrects After Crack Kills) for assistance. This inner-city ministry for recovering addicts gave me shelter over the weekend and then linked me to Volunteers of America (VOA), which is a transitional housing program for veterans.

While at the VOA, I heard about IMPACT Community Action and the \$100-per-week stipends they were paying (to take classes)! I made a quick assessment. I earned \$20 dollars a month state pay when I was incarcerated, and now I could earn \$100 a week? This opportunity was worth investigating.

Continued on Page 2—Motivation Breeds Success



COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY

URBAN STRATEGIES

THE CITY OF COLUMBUS  
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

## IMPACT Awarded Choice Neighborhoods Grant

Under the auspices of The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), Urban Strategies, Inc. awarded a five-year grant with an estimated value up to \$1.5 million to IMPACT Community Action to serve as Local Case Management Partner (LCMP) for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI).

The CNI addresses struggling neighborhoods with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation.

As the LCMP, IMPACT will

work with the CMHA to provide comprehensive case management to the former residents of Poindexter Village who choose to return to the new housing development.



IMPACT will help these families and individuals identify the multiple barriers to their self-sufficiency and to assess how they impact 22 life domains, including housing, vocational readiness, child care, food and nutrition, educational needs,

financial resources and others.

During an interview with a Self-Sufficiency Coordinator (case worker), the 22 life domains will be assessed and each domain's impact on that family (or individual) will be prioritized. Armed with this assessment, the case worker will assist each participant with creating an Individual Goal Plan (IGP), which will outline specific strategies to address and overcome these barriers. These strategies will include case management, financial and/or material assistance, and linkage to other programs and services (internal and external).

From Page 1

## Motivation Breeds Success



Inscription reads:  
*This is a **Round Tuit**. Guard it with your life. Tuits are hard to come by, especially the round ones. It will help you become a much more successful person. For years you've heard people say "I'll do it when I get a round tuit." Now that you have one you can accomplish all those things you put aside until you got this **Round Tuit**.*

I saw a way to make some money; so, I went for the money, but what I got was priceless.

I was enrolled in *Re-Entry Class #27* and this program freed me from the prison of self. Life after the military was difficult for me. I simply did not make the transition from soldier to civilian very well. Addiction dissolves the discipline and regiment of an enlisted man.

The Johari Window experience, which is a key part of IMPACT's Re-Entry program, helped me accept who I was then, so that I could become the person I am now. My great aunt used to say "show me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are." She would be proud to know that I am surrounded by new

friends who want the same things that I do, including another chance to make things right.



Once I completed IMPACT's Re-Entry program, I was enrolled in *Employment Plus Class #55*, which catapulted me to a whole new mind-set. Sometimes you don't know what you want to do with the rest of your life, but through learning about your personality and assessing your skills, you can figure out what you want to do or what you need to do to accomplish your goals. It was almost overwhelming to realize how many things had passed me by while I

was stuck in a time warp. I had been idle for way too long. You can get so comfortable in your lifestyle that you will stay in the most uncomfortable situations even though they're holding you back. Through the Employment Plus class, I set personal and professional goals, and I developed the skills necessary to approach those goals systematically.

I am older and I am wiser. Gone is the mischievous 7 year old, the wayward teen and the undisciplined adult I used to be. My purpose and motivation are clear. The support I've received and skills that I learned will last me a lifetime; and through hard work and determination, I will achieve my goals which will put me in the position to provide "another chance" for someone else.

## Winter Heating Assistance Available A Second Chance

Winter is here and the temperatures outside are dropping. IMPACT's Winter Crisis Program (WCP) remains in full effect to help income-eligible Franklin County residents stay warm.



The WCP provides access to the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) Plus Program, utility assistance up to \$175 to maintain or restore utility service, and assistance with non-regulated utilities. More than 2,120 households have been served by IMPACT

through the WCP, which began on November 1st.

The WCP ends on March 31, 2015. During periods of high demand, IMPACT offers weekend hours to assist working adults. "Super Saturday" is a customer-focused event to provide additional access to the WCP and other home energy assistance programs. IMPACT will hold Super Saturdays on January 17th, February 21st, March 7th, March 21st and March 28th. All Super Saturday events are scheduled from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at IMPACT's office at 700 Bryden Road in Columbus. Customers will be seen on a first come, first served basis.

For more information, call 614.252.2799.

IMPACT's *Re-Entry Work Readiness Program* has a few open slots remaining for its winter session that starts on Monday, January 12th.

IMPACT's re-entry program employs a holistic approach and uses tailored curricula to help restored citizens build emotional intelligence, transferable skills and self-esteem through introspection, course work and group dynamics.

For more information or to enroll, contact Todd Lewis at 614.453.1724.



### Free Income Tax Prep

Starts January 26th  
For more information, call 614.453.1621 or 614.453.1640



### Affordable Care Act

Open Enrollment Ends February 15th  
Enroll at IMPACT!  
For details, call 614.252.2799



## Save the Date!

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, professor of sociology at Georgetown University, an MSNBC political analyst and best-selling author, is the keynote speaker for the 4th Annual Ripple of Hope Awards Luncheon, which is set for **Tuesday, May 26, 2015** at the Columbus Hilton Hotel in Easton.



Sponsorship packages and advertising in the Souvenir Journal are available now. Ticket sales will begin in January 2015.



For more details, visit our website or call 614.453.1624.

## IMPACT Board Vacancy Filled

IMPACT Community Action is pleased to welcome **Ms. Sharyn Rigsbee** as the newest member of its board of directors. Ms. Rigsbee, who won 60% of the vote during the recent general election, will represent the North Central communities that include the following areas: Downtown Columbus 43215, Milo Grogan 43201, North Linden 43224, 43229, 43231, Ohio State 43210, and South Linden 43211.



Ms. Rigsbee is no stranger to community service. As Assistant Vice President, Community Outreach and

Volunteer Recruitment for *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio*, she leads volunteer recruitment of all populations for the agency; develops and fosters corporate and community relationships; oversees customer relations and enrollment for the agency's families and volunteers; and assists in program development and marketing.

Ms. Rigsbee's election as low-income representative for the North Central areas will bring the voice of the community to the table.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS



### New Private Sector Members



**Mr. Henry Davis**  
Nationwide



**Mr. Ashon McKenzie**  
Office of the Ohio Attorney General

### New Advisory Board Members

**Ms. Ophelia Arnold**  
Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority



**Ms. Ann Healy**  
Woodforest National Bank



## Creating the Ripple Effect



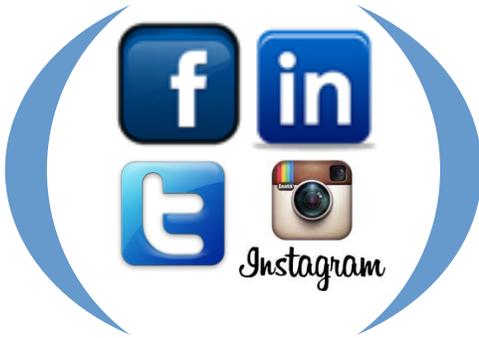
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### Key Events

Employment Plus Enrollment	1/5/15
Re-Entry Class #40 Starts	1/12/15
IMPACT's Free Tax Prep Starts	1/26/15
Mobile Medical Unit at IMPACT	2/3/15
Fifth Third Bank eBus at IMPACT	2/5/15
Winter Crisis Program Ends	3/28/15
Ripple of Hope Awards Luncheon	5/26/15

**"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."**

~Senator Robert F. Kennedy, 1966

Community Action was founded in 1964 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Vision for A Great Society that ushered in Civil Rights reform, Economic Opportunities for all citizens and began the War on Poverty.

*IMPACT Community Action* is one of 50 Community Action Agencies in Ohio that is on the front line in the War on Poverty. Our mission is "to reduce poverty by providing hope-inspiring help and real opportunities for self-sufficiency."

Despite tough economic times and increasing demands for our programs and services, Community Action will never back down or shy away from its commitment to the community.

### Message from the Chief Executive



As we bring to a close the year commemorating the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of an "unconditional" War on Poverty, I find myself reflecting on the progress, the challenges and the opportunities. Community Action was born to revive a dwindling middle class and to empower the impoverished through various programs and services designed to build self-sufficiency. The poverty rate has decreased since the launch of Community Action but a lot of work remains. Fifty years later, the War on Poverty continues and many questions have been raised:

1. Is it even possible to win the War on Poverty?
2. What should be the role of government?
3. For citizens who believe in personal responsibility, should they not pull themselves up instead of depending on government?

All of these questions are valid, and we must struggle to find answers and solutions. Despite the challenges, I am very optimistic about 2015, the hope and opportunity that it promises to bring. We will continue to deliver the much needed programs and services as well as focus our efforts on mobilizing our community toward action. We will renew our efforts to build strategic partnerships, create wealth in our community, and become civically engaged in shaping public policy and supporting leaders who truly represent our community.

As we close the doors of 2014, we open the windows of opportunities in 2015. Through innovation, reform, commitment and transparency, IMPACT Community Action will cast its nets wide, and we will build more alliances and partnerships to better serve the families and individuals who come to us for help, hope and empowerment.

Robert "Bo" Chilton, CEO  
IMPACT Community Action