

Hello Everybody! I am Diane Murray, your Area Public Outreach Coordinator. I am a member of District 8.

For those of you who had a chance to read my report online prior to our meeting, you will know that I covered in that the Al-Anon principles that are guide our work in Public Outreach. I introduced my team and the ways we are using the Knowledge Based Decision Making principles in our work and I shared the priorities that we developed to help us choose projects.

Once our meeting is over, the report posted already, along with the one that I am about to give will be posted on the Public Outreach Coordinator page. That way it will be easier to share with those who want to know.

In this time with you, I will focus on our activities over the past 6 months.

It was clear from the beginning that world events were a concern for traditional outreach projects. Working with other public outreach coordinators in the US, particularly the Washington State area, a menu of public outreach activities that could be done in a pandemic environment was created and shared. There is a copy of this on the Public Outreach Coordinator page on our Area website.

Projects:

Together, our team used a brain storming technique to generate ideas for projects that were appropriate. In generating the ideas themselves, we do not judge or evaluate them. In doing so, we simply name our ideas as they come into our heads.

Once we did that, we could see that there were two clear groupings; projects that would cost money to implement and those that were more service oriented. Keep in mind that at this stage we are at the very beginning, before there is any investigation into whether or not these are really doable. Our two groups looked like this:

Projects that will cost money

- 1 Distribute literature to Big Brothers/Big Sisters volunteers and staff
- 2 Digital ad campaign using WSO posters and PSAs for content
- 3 Distribute How Al-Anon Works to prison libraries
- 4 Purchase ad space at airports/movie theaters (travellers aid society?)
- 5 Reach out to Children's homes and crisis shelters – meetings on wheels and literature
- 6 Utilize newspaper outreach options to place ads

## Service oriented projects

- 1 Reach out/educate treatment centers
- 2 Reach out/educate home care workers (through their association?)
- 3 Provide workshops to Al-Anon members to support them in adapting to change and accepting diversity
- 4 Share public outreach menu, PSAs and posters with districts and groups.
- 5 Reach out/educate hospital case managers
- 6 Reach out/educate first responders

We would start with the top 3 in the \$\$ category and the top 4 in the service category to begin to get answers about the feasibility of these ideas. One thing we did see right away was the possibility that, if the digital ad campaign became a reality we could include treatment centers, home care workers, hospital case managers, first responders and other groups in that category.

We developed a project plan in Excel to track our activities. During meetings, we evaluated progress and applied the group priorities and Knowledge Based Decision Making Questions to each project.

## Progress by Project

Distribute literature to Big Brothers/Big Sisters volunteers and staff:

My first attempt of contact was to the Director of Operations, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Florida, whose phone number was on the website under Contact Us. No response was received.

Mindful not to do the same thing over and over and expect a different result, the second contact was to FLABGC, which is a Florida Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, and no response was received from them either.

Digital ad campaign using WSO posters and PSAs for content:

First, I reached out to the other US Public Outreach Coordinators and asked if anyone had had any experience working with a digital ad campaign. I received a reply from Seattle that they had worked with the local newspaper, the online version, and felt that it was successful.

I reached out to the other Florida Public Outreach Coordinators, Florida South Area 10 and Alabama, Northwest Florida Area 64, to ask if they would be interested in joining together if a digital media campaign was selected by our Area. I heard back from the Delegate for Florida South Area 10 that they did not have a Public Outreach Coordinator yet and I heard back from the Public Outreach Coordinator in Area 64 that she would be very interested in working together.

I did research into digital media companies and selected 3 to reach out to for further information. One did not respond to my inquiry. I met with their representative and learned that their least expensive package for managing a digital media campaign was \$5,000 a month.

For the third company, I met with their representative. They had done research prior to our meeting and discovered that there was a special grant program for non-profits. If accepted, it would be \$10,000 a month worth of Ads for free. Based on the possibility that North Florida Al-Anon could qualify for that grant, his team put together a proposal that would utilize the existing budget amount for 2021 and project into 2022 (\$4,000 in 2021 and \$12,000 in 2022).

Distribute How Al-Anon Works to prison libraries:

I started by contacting other Public Outreach Coordinators. I asked them if anyone was, or had anyone, worked on this project before. And to the Panhandle and South Florida Areas, I asked if they would be interested in this project. No one had prior experience and they said yes, they would be interested in learning more.

Then I did internet research. What I found was that it was advisable to work with an existing effort that did this job. I found University of Central Florida, Florida Prison Education Project, Books Behind Bars, serving 80 institutions in the North Florida area. I called the college and got an email address for the person who headed the project. I sent a detailed message and received no reply.

I contacted the World Service Office and confirmed that books ordered for prisons would come directly from the printer and that I would complete an order form, pay for them and fax the information in. This was important because the Department of Corrections website indicated that books needed to either come from an existing program or the printer.

After receiving no reply from the Books Behind Bars coordinator, I decided to try a different approach. I called the main phone number of the Department of Corrections, explained what information I was looking for and was directed by the operator to the Department of Institutions. I left a detailed message requesting assistance.

Within 48 hours, I received a call from Chaplain Messer at Jefferson Correctional Institution. They house 800 inmates. He explained that he had just read the email and would like to receive copies of the books for his library. When I asked what email he was referring to, he shared that an email had been generated to all of the chaplains at prisons in the state explaining that we had books for them. I asked how many copies he needed, he said 2.

In this moment two things happened in my mind. One was that I did not know how yet, but I would find a way to get this guy his two books! The other was the realization that I should not be afraid about how many chaplains would be calling me and asking for assistance because my Higher Power was in charge. Whatever happened, I just needed to do my part. So I took a big breath, asked him a lot of questions and let him know I would be in touch.

I received three more calls in the month that has followed my contact.

A few days later I heard from Chaplain Ehlers at Walton Correctional Institution. They house 1200 inmates and he requested 10 books.

Next, it was Chaplain Smith at Everglades Correctional Facility. They have two facilities, housing 2200 inmates total. He asked for 10 books.

The last person to call was Chaplain Harrison at the Hernando County Correctional Facility. They house 400 female inmates and she would be grateful to receive as many books as we could send.

Looking at our service map, I could see that two of the requests were out of our area. I reached out to both areas to give them the information and ask them to take those.

I now had two in our service area and a situation where this was not actually an approved area project. I reached out to the Districts (1 & 5) and found love and support there! Our District 1 Representative, Katy, felt certain that she could meet the needs of the facility located in her district.

The last facility was located in District 5. I happened to have a visit to their district meeting scheduled already so after I gave my presentation, I was able to discuss this directly with them. To my delight, one of the Group Representatives named Janice agreed to work with me to meet the needs of the facility in her area. She was able to gather 6 books on her own and I provided 11 copies to add to hers. We met again on Friday, the 11<sup>th</sup> of this month. She will be taking the lead from here and I will provide any support that she needs.

Finally, during my research, I learned that prisoners in Florida are issued tablets. They contain some preloaded content. If a state level review board approves it, there is a chance that

books can be added to the tablets. After learning this, I reached out to the World Service Office to see if it might be possible to get the electronic version of our book in bulk for free for this purpose. I have not heard back from them yet.

Share public outreach menu, PSAs and posters with districts and groups.

In the last six months, I have given presentations to five out of our thirteen district's meetings. I have demonstrated how to find and use the posters and public service announcements on the World Service Office website and demonstrated how to find and use the Menu of pandemic ready public outreach options on the North Florida Area website.

So five down, eight to go.

So there it is, all of the efforts that your Public Outreach Coordinator and her team have made for the Area since we began in January.

We are in the process of determining what project we will be recommending to the Area World Service Committee meeting later this year, but I wanted give you a complete picture of our process and what we have learned along the way.

Important points brought up during the Q&A:

- Grants may be a violation of our Seventh Tradition.
- One of our districts is having great results with in person visits to treatment centers.
- Clarification that Public Outreach is investigating only at this point and does not have a recommendation at this time.