

Roots2Reentry

Program Model Framework

“I thought that getting out of prison would be overwhelming. But when I got out and had support from Roots2Reentry, things fell into place. I did everything the opposite from what I was doing before I got locked up.”

-Roots2Reentry Participant

Asian Prisoner Support Committee

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THE BRIDGING GROUP



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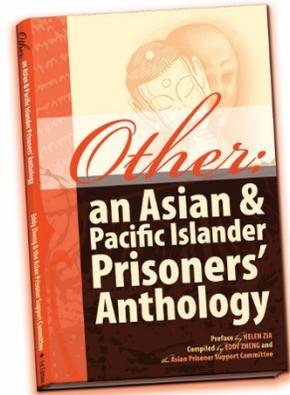
Table of Contents

Statement of Need	3
Asian Prisoner Support Committee (APSC)	3
Program Model	4
Core Concepts and Practices	5
Key Collaborative Partners	6
Staffing the Program	7
Eligibility and Recruitment	8
Program Components	9
Case Management and Life Planning	9
Support Groups and Community Immersion Activities.....	12
Evaluation and Lessons Learned	15
Program Evaluation	15
Lessons Learned.....	18
Appendix Toolkit	20
Appendix A: Roots2Reentry Recruitment Flyer	21
Appendix B: Roots2Reentry Introduction Letter.....	22
Appendix C: Roots2Reentry Intake Form.....	23
Appendix D: Roots2Reentry Locator Form	25
Appendix E: Roots2Reentry Pre-Release Assessment	27
Appendix B: Roots2Reentry Post-Release Assessment	30
Appendix C: Roots2Reentry Strengths Assessment.....	31
Appendix D: Roots2Reentry Community Immersion Calendar of Events.....	34
Appendix E: Roots2Reentry Pre-Program Participant Survey.....	36



STATEMENT OF NEED

The Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community is one of the fastest growing populations affected by mass incarceration. During the prison boom of the 1990s, the number of AAPI people in the incarcerated population grew by 250%.¹ In Oakland, CA, several AAPI groups experience disproportionately high arrest rates, including Pacific Islanders who have the highest arrest rate of any racial/ethnic group in the city at 140 per 1,000, Cambodians with an arrest rate of 63 per 1,000, and Laotians with an arrest rate of 52 per 1,000.² Southeast Asian communities also experience high rates of recidivism, with over 40% of Southeast Asians arrested in Oakland committing crimes of “greater seriousness” within two years.³ Furthermore, Asian youth are more than twice as likely to be tried as an adult than White youth in California.⁴ AAPI people are officially categorized as “Others” in the California prison system, a fitting description for a population that is so often overlooked. In addition, the formerly incarcerated AAPI population in Oakland includes Southeast Asian families who experienced extreme violence, war, and genocide. Studies indicate that 40% of Southeast Asian refugees suffer from depression⁵ and 70% are found to have post-traumatic stress disorder.⁶ For these reasons, California’s AAPI community—which grew by 56% between 2000-2013—is a crucial stakeholder in state and local criminal justice reform efforts.



ASIAN PRISONER SUPPORT COMMITTEE (APSC)

Founded in 2002, Asian Prisoner Support Committee (APSC) is based in Oakland, CA and works primarily with people incarcerated at San Quentin and Solano State Prisons and with people who are returning to Alameda and San Francisco Counties after incarceration. In particular, APSC engages the Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Among the people involved in APSC



activities, approximately 75% are Southeast Asian or Pacific Islander, about 50% committed their crimes when they were juveniles (and charged as adults), and about 80% are “lifers” (people sentenced to a life-term, usually with the possibility of parole consideration).

APSC is one of the only organizations in the nation with a mission to provide culturally competent services and support specifically for currently and formerly incarcerated AAPI people and to raise awareness about the impact of mass incarceration within the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

¹ Gupta & Ritoper. “Briefing Paper on the health Impacts of Criminalization on APA Children & Families.” 1/2006. AAPIP.

² “Widening the Lens on Boys and Men of Color.” Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAAPIP), June 2013.

³ “Widening the Lens on Boys and Men of Color.” Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAAPIP), June 2013.

⁴ Males, Mike et al. “The Color of Justice: An Analysis of Juvenile Adult Court Transfers in California. 2000.

⁵ Nicholson, B.L. (1997) “The influence of pre-migration and post migrations stressors on mental health: A study of Southeast Asian refugees.” Social Work Research. Vol 21(1), 19-31.

⁶ NIH, National Diabetes Education Program, 2006. Silent Trauma: Diabetes, Health Status, and the Refugee: Southeast Asians.



PROGRAM MODEL

Roots2Reentry

APSC's Roots2Reentry Program provides case management, peer support, and weekly community immersion activities for formerly incarcerated people in Alameda County. This work includes: reentry planning while in prison, case management and life planning, healthcare coverage enrollment and access to care, support in finding a job or enrolling in school, immigration information and advice, and transportation assistance. Rather than approaching reentry as an individual issue, APSC works with both formerly incarcerated people and the broader community—engaging local businesses, community-based organizations, immigration attorneys, government agencies, and policymakers—in efforts to create sustainable jobs, community support, and culturally competent health and human services.

Roots2Reentry Program Model



CORE CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES

Inside/Outside Model

Service must be in a continuum that starts in the correctional facility and continues when people come home. In doing so, program staff can begin building relationships with program participants prior to their release. The development of this relationship is key to building trust that will help to ensure that participants stay engaged in the program after they are released from the correctional facility and helps to ensure participants are linked to essential community resources after they come home.

It Takes Time to Build Credibility and Trust

Building credibility and trust with and within a correctional facility takes time. It may take significant time, and even years, for a program to develop a presence in a prison or jail that has credibility and trust both with the staff of the correctional facility and, even more importantly, with the community of incarcerated people within the correctional facility.

Ground Program in AAPI Ethnic Studies and Cultural Practices

Building the program to help participants increase their knowledge about AAPI culture, immigration/refugee history, health, and racial justice helps participants to more fully understand not only their own life circumstances but the cultural context that places their road to reentry differently than other cultural groups. Much of this work is accomplished through APSC's ROOTS (Restoring Our Original True Selves) Program, a weekly class held at San Quentin State Prison that is grounded in an Ethnic Studies curriculum.

AAPI Community Leadership

The program must incorporate leadership from the AAPI community in every aspect of the program including design and development, implementation, and evaluation efforts. This leadership should begin and be rooted in leadership identified among AAPI incarcerated individuals inside the correctional facility along with AAPI people who are formerly incarcerated and living in the community after release.

Collaborations with Other AAPI Community Partners

An AAPI reentry program must include collaborations with other AAPI community organizations. These collaborations provide a key program asset that helps to break down stigma within the broader AAPI community around criminal justice involved people, decreases the sense of isolation that many AAPI individuals feel when returning to the community after incarceration, and provides additional key support services for individuals.

Peer Support Model

People learn and trust more deeply when surrounded and supported by their peer role models. This is especially true for traditionally disempowered and marginalized communities such as those who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Establishing the Roots2Reentry program on a peer-based support model allows the program to provide critical investment in leadership and empowerment opportunities for formerly incarcerated people that in turn upholds many of the program's core concepts including assurance of cultural competency, breakdown of patterns of isolation and the establishment of credibility and trust among participants and staff.



KEY COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

APSC has developed relationships with many community partners to better support the Roots2Reentry participants. The following is an overview of some of their key collaborative partners.

Asian Health Services

A community health center that provides comprehensive health care services and youth leadership development. AHS provide APSC with office space and connects APSC with AAPI youth for community immersion and mentoring activities.



Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

A national organization that advances the interests of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans by empowering communities through advocacy, leadership development, and capacity building to create a socially just and equitable society.



Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO

A leading labor organization that is the first and only national organization of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers, most of who are union members, and allies in advancing worker, immigrant and civil rights.



Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA)

A civil rights organization that advocates for systemic change that protects immigrant rights, promotes language diversity, and remedies racial injustice. CAA provides APSC with fiscal sponsorship through its Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality network.



The Spot Youth Center



The Spot is a multi-service youth center open to all youth with a focus towards API youth ages 14-24.

The mission of The Spot is to support the success of youth and young adults by fostering their emotional, physical, and spiritual health through holistic, coordinated, youth-driven resources and opportunities. The Spot provides APSC with office space.



Red Bay Coffee

An Oakland-based coffee roasting business that hires many formerly incarcerated people and provides job training including APSC program participants.



STAFFING THE PROGRAM

Staffing the Program with AAPI People with Lived Experience

Key staff from APSC who work in the Roots2Reentry program are AAPI people who have been incarcerated themselves. The staff includes three formerly incarcerated “juvenile lifers” who have emerged from the prison system and successfully led reentry services and advocacy efforts. Each of these individuals spent over 20 years behind bars and developed extensive leadership skills and experience around reentry services, peer mentoring, group facilitation, and community advocacy. These former “lifers” are in a better position than traditional service providers to engage, train, and mentor currently and formerly incarcerated people to facilitate continued opportunities for leadership and empowerment. Key staff for the Roots2Reentry program include:

- **Harrison Seuga**, APSC Reentry Director
- **Nghiep Ke Lam**, APSC Reentry Outreach Worker
- **Eddy Zheng**, APSC Co-Chair and Soros Justice Fellow



Staff Skills and Training

Staff in the Roots2Reentry program receive formal and informal **training** in three key areas:

- Helping Participants Develop a Life Plan
- Case Management and Documentation
- Effective Group Facilitation Skills and Practice

Effective staffing also requires the following **skill sets**:

- Organizational skills
- Knowledge of community resources
- Supervisorial skills (Project Manager)
- Peer support skills
- Cultural competency in working with formerly incarcerated people
- Ability to promote confidence and self-efficacy
- Patience and empathy
- Knowledge of correctional system
- Understanding stigma specifically related to formerly incarcerated AAPI people
- Knowledge of social justice principles as they relate to mass incarceration of AAPI people



ELIGIBILITY AND RECRUITMENT

Eligibility Criteria

Roots2Reentry focuses on serving AAPI adults and non-AAPI allies, such as individuals categorized as “other,” within the criminal justice system (e.g., mixed race, Middle Eastern, etc.) who are formerly incarcerated and living in Alameda County or currently incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison or Solano State Prison and returning to Alameda County after release.

Outreach & Recruitment

APSC relies on a wide range of outreach and recruitment strategies to engage people into the Roots2Reentry program. Much of these recruitment strategies rely on word of mouth within the AAPI community either inside the prisons APSC services or within the larger Alameda County AAPI community. **See Appendix Toolkit for Sample Roots2Reentry Flyer.**

Additional program recruitment strategies include:

- **Key liaisons at San Quentin State Prison** including facilitators of the ROOTS Program
- **Key liaisons at Solano State Prison** where they are in the early stages of creating a ROOTS program
- **Referrals from Alameda County Probation Department**
 - Direct referrals from Probation Officers
 - Individuals on probation seeking community service hours
- **Referrals from other Reentry or Treatment Programs** in the community (such as drug treatment facilities)
- **Word of mouth** through current and former program participants

Sample Recruitment Card - Solano State Prison



Roots 2 Reentry

Roots 2 Reentry is a support group - for people returning to Alameda County from prison or jail - that focuses on the cultural needs, as well as the assets, of the Asian, Pacific Islander, and “Other” communities.

Topics include:

- ✓ Referrals to culturally competent health care and other social services
- ✓ Educational and employment opportunities
- ✓ Issues of cultural stigma and silence
- ✓ Opportunities to give back to the API community
- ✓ Cultural healing practices and reintegration into the community

Please sign up:

Mail: P.O. Box 1031, Oakland, CA 94604

Email: apscinfo@gmail.com

www.asianprisonersupport.com



PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Case Management and Life Planning

Identifying Immediate Needs

Case management and life planning begins at intake into the program. If the participant is currently incarcerated, this intake may occur inside the correctional facility. If the individual is already released, this intake occurs at the first meeting with the participant in the community. During the intake process, staff conducts an informal interview with program participants to gather some basic personal information including: locator information, date and county of release and participant demographics. Staff then starts to assess what are the most immediate and pressing needs a participant has either prior to release and/or upon release. This information is collected through a **Roots2Reentry Intake and Needs Packet**. *See Appendix Toolkit for Sample Roots2Reentry Intake Packet including: Introduction Letter, Intake Form, Locator Form and Pre- and Post-Release Needs Assessments.*

The development of these intake and assessment tools is an organic process in which APSC continues to refine their Intake and Needs Assessment tools based on the expanding number of program participants who present with a diverse array of needs.

Sample Pre-Release Questions:

- Do you need support letters for the Parole Board?
- Will you need letters of information for transitional housing?
- Will you need employment references and information?

Sample Post-Release Questions:

- Will you need assistance getting your birth certificate, California ID and/or driver's license?
- Will you need transportation related assistance?
- Will you need assistance getting healthcare and health insurance?

Strength Assessment and Life Planning

Once a participant has been released from the correctional facility and his/her most immediate needs have been met, staff meets with the participant to complete an individualized **Strengths Assessment** to support the participant in developing an asset based Life Plan – one that is based



Roots2Reentry Assistance Checklist

- Employment preparation
- Referrals to job opportunities
- Healthcare linkage
- Enrollment in health insurance programs
- Housing assistance
- Food assistance
- Immigration advice or representation
- Information about higher education
- Physical exercise and sports activities
- Information & tips on public transportation
- Opportunities to mentor youth
- Learn about history, culture and health practices of AAPI
- Connections with community-based organizations in the AAPI community



on the individual's perception of his/her own strengths, desires and perceived resources and abilities. **See Appendix Toolkit for Sample Roots2Reentry Strengths Assessment.**

Life Planning consists of helping participants to develop individual goals in five main areas: health, financial situation/employment, housing, support system, and challenges since release. Based on the individual's life goals, APSC staff will either work directly with participants on their goals or link participants with other community resources to help them move forward with their goals. The following are samples of goal support offered by APSC.

Goal Support Offered by APSC

- Support securing California identification, driver's license or social security number
- Transportation assistance
- Work permit navigation including support with permit applications and aid in securing fee waivers
- Support and/or training on technology such as setting up phones and voicemail, email, and teaching basic computer skills

"I know I can successfully examine a challenge and face it alone or with someone else's help and learn from the situation, which puts me in a situation where I can help others who are facing the same or similar problems."

- Roots2Reentry Participant

Roots2Reentry Sample of Community Resources

- Red Bay Coffee
- Inner City Advisors
- Chinses for Affirmative Action
- Cypress Mandela Training Program
- Lucky Supermarkets
- Goodwill Industries Greater East Bay
- Asian Health Services
- Highland Hospital
- Volunteers of America
- Men of Valor
- HealthRight 360
- GEO Reentry Services
- Project Rebound
- APASS-Laney College

Facilitating Linkages to Other Community Services and Resources

APSC has developed connections with other community service agencies within Alameda County including housing and employment service providers, healthcare services, immigration and legal services and educational institutions. Given that many social services systems are often complex, Roots2Reentry staff actively works with participants to make personal connections within agencies to help participants navigate these systems more easily. APSC staff gathers culturally competent referral resource information including identified personal connections at each agency. Staff input this information into an internal web-based resource guide which can be shared across the whole APSC team that is easily accessible when working with individual program participants.



Specialized Support for Immigration Related Issues and Needs

Given that a large portion of AAPI people coming out of correctional facilities have immigration and legal needs that may be complex and unique to their countries of origin, APSC has spent a great deal of time educating themselves on the different immigration and deportation rules and laws of many of Eastern and Southeast Asian countries. They have also developed essential relationships with Immigration Attorneys who provide pro-bono services for their program participants. Much of this work revolves around helping people without US citizenship understand and access the benefits that they are eligible to receive, such as under PRUCOL eligibility. *See sidebar for more information about PRUCOL.* As well, APSC actively works with “stranded deportees” or people who have technically been ordered to be deported to their home county but the home country will not accept them back. Many of these individuals need additional support securing identification and work permit documentation. APSC staff provides help in navigating these systems as well as financial support for application fees that may run as high as \$380 for a work permit.



Quick Fact: Benefits for "PRUCOL"

- "PRUCOL" or Permanent Residing in the US Under Color of Law is not an immigration status, but a benefit eligibility category. The term generally denotes that the Department of Homeland Security is aware of a person's presence but has no plans to deport him/her. A partial list of California programs available for PRUCOL include: CalWORKS, SSI, AIM, MediCal, Emergency MediCal, Healthy Kids, WIC, School Lunch Programs.

Crisis Management

APSC Roots2Reentry staff is generally on call for program participants 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Staff have been called to support clients in emergency situations such as health crises that led to facilitating ER and/or other hospitalization. Roots2Reentry staff have transported participants and provided emotional support for family members until the participants have been stabilized. Staff have also been called in during emergency housing situations when a family (including children) lost their housing and staff have helped to scramble together housing resources to rehouse the family together within a few days.

"I acquired new social skills and resources and an understanding that 'ex-felon' is not stamped on my forehead."

- Roots2Reentry Participant



Support Groups and Community Immersion Activities

Intending to provide a “support group” for Roots2Reentry participants, APSC decided to infuse a more culturally enriched support program that includes a mixture of traditional support groups with community immersion activities, leadership development opportunities and physical exercise components. This diverse and interactive support program model, allows APSC to keep the program fun, fresh and attractive to people coming home after incarceration. This model also provides opportunities to promote self-confidence, develop skills to overcome reentry challenges, and give back to the community.

Community immersion, or service learning, is an innovative reentry strategy to enhance participants’ opportunities for community development, expand their social support network, introduce them to a range of community organizations, and practice cultural humility. This unique strategy allows participants to develop and contribute as members of the community independently within the fabric of a supportive and learning environment. Community immersion activities are usually held every Saturday and provide an opening for formerly incarcerated people and the broader AAPI community to engage in community building activities together. Additionally, the events offer an opportunity for the broader AAPI community to learn of the unique needs and challenges of formerly incarcerated people and helps to break down AAPI community stereotypes and biases against people returning home after incarceration.

See Appendix Toolkit for Full Community Immersion Calendar.

SAMPLE CALENDAR COMMUNITY IMMERSION EVENTS

March 1, 2014: Tour of Asian Health Services

April 19, 2014: BBQ at Alameda Crab Cove

May 5, 2014: Volunteer at Bataeay Srei Fundraiser

June 21, 2014: Presentation at UC Berkeley Southeast Asian Student Coalition

July 16, 2014: Restorative Justice Workshop at DeAnza Community College

October 11, 2014: Life Planning Support Session

November 8, 2014: Bay Bridge Trail Bike Ride

December 28, 2014: Ai Wei Wei Exhibit at Alcatraz

January 17, 2015: BART Public Transit Training

February 2, 2015: Community Lunar New Year Mural Painting with Eastside Arts Alliance

April 11, 2015: Nhuanh's Vietnamese Coffee Pop-up and Car Show



Physical & Health Activities

Organized physical and health activities include walks at Lake Merritt, jogs, hikes, mediation and yoga and even circuit workouts specially designed by a Roots2Reentry program participant. Many times, participants eat lunch together after a physical activity providing additional time for community and social network building. These activities help to encourage and engage participants in healthy activities and habits while building community and support.



Community and Cultural Events

These events represent a broad and diverse range of activities from volunteering to support partner organizations such as the Malcom X Jazz Festival or other Cultural Festivals, participating in Chinatown neighborhood clean-up teams, or attending cultural activities together such as a Luna New Year's event. As well, people have participated in the development of culturally enriching



public murals. There have also been opportunities to participate in healing circles that include potlucks with AAPI community elders who speak of the struggles of the people in the community who “came before us” and inspire thoughts and actions within the participants of what they can do to heal their own wounds and that of their families and communities.



Community Education and Political Advocacy

Roots2Reentry participants have participated in many community and political rallies such as events that raise awareness and action around environmental justice or LGBTQ rights. People have also participated in voter registration drives and at events hosted by AYPAL, a coalition building organization that seeks to create healthy, safe and thriving communities by empowering Oakland's low-income Asian and Pacific Islander immigrant and refugee families to be leaders for school reform and neighborhood change.

Roots2Reentry participants also worked on a resolution passed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to fully implement AB1726 at the county level; this law requires any state agency, board or commission that collects demographic data on ethnic origin to use separate collection categories for specified Asian and Pacific Islander groups. Finally, participants worked with Alameda County Supervisor Carson's Asian Community Collaborative on a broad range of issues facing AAPI people in the county including organizing a



Town Hall Meeting that focused on the discussion of AAPI Boys and Men's issues (including formerly incarcerated people.) This event provided an important and high profile opportunity to highlight AAPI community issues with stakeholders in the county and an opening for Roots2Reentry participants to speak publicly about their life experiences.

ROOTS2REENTRY CLIENT STORY HIGHLIGHTS

APSC helped client HA to secure his birth certificate and social security card, which enabled him to access social security benefits. He also completed several vocational trainings at the College of Alameda. HA also participated regularly in the Roots2Reentry support group and community immersion activities every Saturday. Without any communication or support from his family, HA often refers to the reentry group as his family.



EVALUATION AND LESSONS LEARNED

Program Evaluation

During the implementation of the Roots2Reentry program under the Innovations in Reentry grant, 21 individuals initially engaged in the program and completed an intake form. Of these 21 people, 16 individuals fully participated in the program and received comprehensive services. Evaluation data was collected and reported on these 16 participants.

“Roots2Reentry helped me develop a bigger tool box. Before when there were problems, I would just fight or lash out. Now I have more tools other than violence”

- Roots2Reentry Participant

Client Demographics

15 of the participants were men and 1 participant was a woman. Because this program is designed specifically to meet the unique and often unmet cultural and ethnic needs of formerly incarcerated Asian and Pacific Islander people, most participants in the program identified as AAPI. Languages spoken by the participants represented these ethnic identities as well. The following table provides highlights of client demographic data.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Gender (N=16)	#	%
Male	15	94%
Female	1	6%
Transgender	0	0%
Ethnicity (N=15)	#	%
African American	0	0%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	7%
Asian	9	60%
Caucasian	0	0%
Latino	1	7%
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	3	20%
More than one ethnic identity	1	7%
Languages Spoken (N=16)	%	
English	60%+	
Spanish	0%	
Mandarin/Cantonese	10-40%	
Vietnamese	<10%	
Hmong	<10%	
Punjabi	<10%	
Samoan	<10%	



Recidivism Data

Staff also kept track of recidivism data for all participants who fully engaged in the program. Of the 16 participants in the program, only 1 (or 6%) of the participants was reincarcerated. This reincarceration was the result of a violation of his terms of release and not the result of a new conviction. In addition, four participants were on probation supervision during their tenure in the Roots2Reentry Program. None of the four participants on probation were reincarcerated at any point during their involvement in the program.

Only 1 participant was reincarcerated (and this was due to a technical violation, not a new offense.)

Table 2: Recidivism Data (N=16)	#	%
Number of participants reincarcerated because of <i>violation of terms of release</i>	1	6%
Number of participants reincarcerated for a <i>new conviction</i>	0	0%
Number of participants on probation during program period	4	25%
Number of participants on probation who were reincarcerated	0	0%

94% of participants accessed or engaged with at least one additional community resource

Linkage to Community Services, Health Insurance and Benefits

In addition to recidivism rates, APSC staff tracked client referrals to community services and if participants accessed or engaged in services. This information was gathered on a client by client basis and input into an internal case management database. All 16 participants were provided with at least one referral to an additional community service resource. Of these 16 participants, 15 (or 94%) participants accessed and/or engaged in

referred services. In addition, 6 of 7 (or 88%) participants who were under or uninsured prior to participating in Roots2Reentry, were enrolled in health insurance. And 3 of 3 (or 100%) CalFresh/SNAP (or food stamps) eligible participants who were not previously enrolled, were enrolled for these benefits.

Table 3: Linkage to Community Services, Health Insurance and Benefits	#	%
Number of participants referred to at least 1 community resource or service	16	100%
Number of participants referred to service who accessed or engaged with that service	15	94%
Number of participants under or uninsured	7	--
Number of participants under or uninsured who were enrolled in health insurance	6	88%
Number of participants eligible for CalFresh/SNAP but not enrolled	3	--
Number of eligible participants enrolled in CalFresh/SNAP	3	100%



Self-Image, Social Support and Positive Problem Solving

Given the often-reported sense of isolation and community stigma voiced by AAPI people returning to the community after incarceration, the Roots2Reentry program integrated many efforts to increase community and social support among its participants and took measures to document the effects of these programs on increasing the participants sense of self image, social support, and problem solving. This information was collected through written surveys completed by 13 of the program participants. **See Appendix Toolkit for Sample Pre-program Survey.** The following table highlights the significant impact the program had on increasing participants sense of social support.

100% of participants reported an increased sense of life purpose

Table 4: Social Support Networks (N=13)	#	%
Number of participants who reported increased comfort in engaging and participating in community activities	13	100%
Number of participants who reported an improvement in positive self-image	13	100%
Number of participants who indicated having damaged relationships <i>prior</i> to participating in the program	13	100%
Number of participants with damaged relationships that demonstrated efforts to repair relationships with family, community, or peers <i>after</i> participating in the program	13	100%
Number of participants who reported higher comfort in overcoming difficult situations (resiliency)	13	100%
Number of participants who reported an improved ability to solve problems as they arise	13	100%
Number of participants who reported a greater positive life outlook or increased sense of life purpose	13	100%

"I have been confident enough to build my own fitness camps as well as participate in public speaking events"

- Roots2Reentry Participant

Leadership

Another important cornerstone of the Roots2Reentry program is the peer based model that encourages growth and leadership among the participants. To this end, the program encourages and tracks participants' efforts to take leadership roles within the program. **75% of participants within the program took on a leadership role** from co-facilitating support groups to planning and leading community immersion activities.



Lessons Learned

AAPI People Face Real Obstacles to Reentry

Housing

Not surprising, housing was one of the largest obstacles for people as they returned home from prison. What was surprising were the complexities and restrictions within the existing housing resources. Housing programs are not willing to provide commitments to housing resources while someone is still incarcerated, yet some individuals, especially people serving long sentences and/or people with parole board hearings, need documentation of housing to help improve their chances for release. APSC approached this challenge by building strong relationships with six housing providers within Alameda County and by writing letters of support themselves to gather housing commitments for currently incarcerated people.

Jobs

Again, not surprising, but critical, program participants faced challenges in gaining employment upon release. In response, APSC built strong relationships with both employment programs and employers who are willing to work with and hire formerly incarcerated people. APSC also supported one program participant to develop her personal training business by providing her clients and organizing physical fitness events for her to promote her work. APSC also secured paid speaking opportunities at colleges and community events for participants. These opportunities not only provided wages for participants, but gave them platforms to share their personal experiences and own perspectives on issues of mass incarceration, reentry and the AAPI community.

Health Issues

One surprising challenge for Roots2Reentry participants were the number of participants who faced very real health issues upon release. Two participants needed emergency medication refills. Two additional participants faced major health illness that required hospitalization. In addition, many of the participants experienced anxiety and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder after leaving prison. APSC approached these challenges by providing hands on crisis management that included trips to the hospital for emergency

ROOTS2REENTRY CLIENT STORY

"I thought that my transition would be rough. Even though I was happy to be paroled, I was really stressed out about getting out of prison and how I was going to fend for myself and survive on the outside."

After getting out of prison, PT received case management from R2T including ID assistance, support with enrollment in social services and job search support. Within 4 months of release, PT had secured 3 jobs:

"When I was able to get a job, that really boosted my confidence. It felt like going over the hump. I feel that I can get any job now."

R2R also engaged PT in many community immersion and support activities:

"I thought that I would be shunned and isolated when I got out, but that hasn't been the case. Being active and being part of the community makes me feel welcomed and helps build my self-esteem. I'm doing the opposite of what I did before...I want to show young people and my peers that there is another way, and show that by my example."



care and medication refills. APSC also developed a strong relationship with Asian Health Services to help enroll participants into the community health clinic for medical and behavioral health care.

Peer-Based Grassroots Reentry Program Models Work

Reentry programs that incorporate true community driven peer-based models of service are successful alternatives to more traditional top-down criminal justice system models of reentry. These grassroots models are especially important for communities such as the AAPI community who are not always served by or the focus of more traditional reentry programs. Programs like Roots2Reentry provide culturally enriching programs that bring isolated individuals back into the heart of the AAPI community and engage them in giving back to the community while developing leadership and resiliency skills that further support their successful reentry into the community. As more reentry resources become available at the local level, Alameda County should hold up programs like Roots2Reentry as an alternative successful reentry program model and investment more directly in community-driven peer based programs that have been developed by and for formerly incarcerated people themselves.

“I thought that people would judge me as a felon, but people treated me like a regular person. I am grateful to have a program to where I can ask questions and receive support... Before I was a gang banger, drug addict, but now I am back on the right track”

- Roots2Reentry Participant



APPENDIX TOOLKIT

Appendix A: Roots2Reentry Recruitment Flyer

Appendix B: Roots2Reentry Introduction Letter

Appendix C: Roots2Reentry Intake Form

Appendix D: Roots2Reentry Locator Form

Appendix E: Roots2Reentry Pre-Release Assessment

Appendix F: Roots2Reentry Post-Release Assessment

Appendix G: Roots2Reentry Strengths Assessment

Appendix H: Roots2Reentry Community Immersion Calendar of Events

Appendix I: Roots2Reentry Pre-Program Participant Survey



Asian Prisoner Support Committee



- **Do you need support after coming out of prison or jail?**
- **Do you want to reconnect with the East Bay Asian and Pacific Islander communities?**

The Asian Prisoner Support Committee is starting a Reentry Support Group in Oakland, with the first session planned for Saturday, February 22nd, 2014. Please join us for the first-ever reentry support group targeting the Asian and Pacific Islander communities—your participation is crucial in helping us design a program that is effective and culturally competent.

Topics will include:

- ✓ How to access health care and other social services
- ✓ Explore educational and employment opportunities
- ✓ Address issues of cultural stigma and silence
- ✓ Opportunities to give back to the API community
- ✓ Transportation guides and tips

Date: Saturdays (Starting 2/22/14)

Time: 10am-12pm

Location: The Spot (299 13th Street, Oakland, CA)

Formerly incarcerated men, women, and family members are welcome.

Please sign up by:

Phone: (510) 292-0852

Email: apscinfo@gmail.com

Mail: P.O. Box 1031, Oakland, CA 94604



Appendix B: Sample Roots2Reentry Introduction Letter

Greetings,

Roots2Reentry is a culturally competent peer oriented support group that focuses on community immersion and community activism as a strategy towards hands-on reentry solutions. We hold weekly support groups with the goal of participating and volunteering in community events and/or for community organizations as a means of expanding formerly incarcerated participants' support base by contributing to their communities in a healthy way.

This fosters the healthy relationships necessary for a strong foundation to sustain healthy individuals and their communities. For men and women returning to their communities, nurturing this symbiotic relationship of mutual sustainability is important to sustaining healthy communities and returning individuals, by fostering a solution based relationship in a healthy environment, for a successful and sustainable transition.

We also offer case management, culturally competent services and referrals, individualized needs assessment and support, employment related assistance, technology assistance and guidance, transportation assistance, housing and/or program referrals, assist in fulfilling any medical or mental health needs and provide referrals to language based services if needed, attend culturally focused lectures and events, and attend community educational events to educate the community about the impact and consequences of the Prison Industrial Complex.

We currently provide services in Oakland, Alameda County, CA. Please let us know if you would like to be part our support group prior to your release by contacting us at the P.O. Box address below.

Sincerely,
Asian Prisoner Support Committee (APSC)



Asian Prisoner Support Committee
P.O. Box 1031
Oakland, CA 94604



Appendix C: Sample Roots2Reentry Intake Form



ROOTS 2 REENTRY
Intake Form

Name:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Date of Birth:
Gender:	Years in prison or jail:
Date of release from prison or jail:	Ethnicity (e.g. Vietnamese, Samoan, Chinese, Cambodian). If applicable, list multiple:
Currently on probation? (Y/N)	Currently on parole? (Y/N)
Are you a U.S. citizen? (Y/N)	Do you have an Immigration hold or deportation order? (Y/N)
Address, City, and Zip Code:	



Please check the box if you need assistance:

- Employment preparation
- Introduction and referrals to job opportunities
- Health care
- Enrollment in health insurance programs
- Housing
- Food assistance
- Immigration advice or representation
- Information about higher education (community colleges and universities)
- Physical exercise and sports activities
- Information and tips on public transportation
- Need a bicycle for transportation
- Opportunities to mentor or share advice with youth
- Learning about history, culture, and healing practices of Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and “Other” communities
Specify which cultures: _____
- Connecting with community-based organizations in the Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and “Other” communities (specify)
Specify which communities: _____



Appendix D: Sample Roots2Reentry Locator Form



ROOTS2REENTRY
LOCATOR FORM

We need to contact you for the three months after you are released. The information on this form will help us. Please provide as much information that you will permit us to use to contact you. Do not provide any information for anyone you do not want us to contact.

Is there anything that would interfere with us contacting you, such as plans to enter a substance use treatment program, pending charges or warrants in other jurisdictions, ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) issues? (If YES, explain below.)

Name: _____ **Nicknames or another name(s):** _____

Mother's maiden name: _____

Home address: (Can we contact you here? Yes No)

Street/Apartment: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone number(s): Cell: _____ Home: _____

E-mail: _____

Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat): _____

Places you hang out: _____

Where do you have your mail sent? (List if different from home address noted above)

(1) Name: _____ **Relationship to you:** _____

Street/Apartment: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone number(s): Cell: _____ Home: _____

E-mail: _____



Can we contact you here? Yes No

Are they aware of your incarceration history? Yes No Don't know

Are they aware of your HIV status? Yes No Don't know

(2) Name: _____ **Relationship to you:** _____

Street/Apartment: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Can we contact you here? Yes No

Are they aware of your incarceration history? Yes No Don't Know

Are they aware of your HIV status? Yes No Don't Know

Can we contact you at work or school? Yes No

(If YES, get information below; if NO, skip to next section.)

Name of School or Workplace Contact: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone number: _____

If we cannot find you in any other way, may we contact your Probation/Parole Officer to get your current address and telephone number? Yes No

(If YES, fill out Release of Information; if NO, skip to signature section.)

How often are you scheduled to meet with your Probation/Parole officer? _____

Contact information for Probation/Parole Officer:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Are they aware of your HIV status? Yes No Don't know

Client's signature

Date

Case Manager/Interviewer's signature

Date



Appendix E: Sample Roots2Reentry Pre-Release Assessment Form



ROOTS2REENTRY Pre-Release Assessment Form

Client's Name: _____ CDCR#: _____ Date: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____ Race/Ethnicity: _____

Primary Language: _____ Committed Offense: _____

Release Date: _____ County of Parole/Probation: _____

Country of Birth: _____

Do you have an ICE (Immigration, Custody, and Enforcement) hold? Yes No

SUPPORT

1. What type of support do you need?

Board Letter (please include
chronos, certificates, support
letters, etc.)

Employment Letter

Character Letter

Reference Letter

Research

Other: _____

HOUSING

1. Where are you going to live? Transitional Housing Residential

2. With whom? _____ (Relation): _____

Note:



MEDICAL

1. Do you have any medical concerns? Yes No
2. What are they?

3. Do you have enough medications to last you one month? Yes No

Note:

IDENTIFICATIONS

1. Do you have your birth certificate? Yes No
2. What type of ID do you have?

Note:

CLOTHING

1. Do you have dress outs? Yes No
2. If not, what size are you? Pants _____ Shirts _____ Shoes _____

Note:



TRANSPORTATION

1. Who will pick you up?

- a. _____ (Relation): _____
- b. _____ (Relation): _____
- c. _____ (Relation): _____

Note:

2. How will you get to your residence or transitional housing?

_____ (if no personal transportation is available)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Note:



Appendix F: Sample Roots2Reentry Post-Release Assessment



ROOTS2REENTRY
Post-Release Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Primary Language: _____

Current Address: _____

Date of Commitment: _____ County of Commitment: _____

Release Date: _____ County of residence: _____

Post Release Needs:

Once you are released, will you or do you need assistance with any of the following:

- 1) Getting your birth certificate Yes No
- 2) Getting your Social Security Card Yes No
- 3) Acquiring your California ID &/or Driver's license Yes No
- 4) Support with employment Yes No
- 5) Transportation support Yes No
- 6) Getting health care and health insurance Yes No
- 7) Please write any request not listed here: _____





Roots2Reentry (R2R) Strengths Assessment

1. Name: _____
2. Nationality: _____
3. How would you describe your health? _____
4. Do you have a doctor? Yes _____ No _____
When was the last time you saw a doctor and where? _____

5. Do you have a family history of chronic illness? (circle all that apply)
heart disease cancer stroke high blood pressure diabetes liver disease
addiction emphysema psychiatric disorders mental illness
*If not on this list write in _____

6. What is something that you are currently doing to stay healthy?

7. Are you taking any medications Yes _____ No _____
 - a. Name of meds and why

8. If you needed a ride to a doctor's appointment or help while you were sick, who would you call/ask for help?

9. What is something you would like to do in the future to support your health?

10. How would you describe your financial situation?



11. Do you have a resume? Yes _____ No _____

12. Are you currently employed? Yes _____ No _____

13. Describe your employment history. _____

14. Do you have a bank account? Yes _____ No _____

15. If you needed money, who would you call/ask?

16. What are some goals that you have in regards to employment? _____

17. Describe your current housing situation. _____

18. How long will you be at your current place of residence? _____

19. Do you pay rent? Yes _____ No _____

20. What would be your ideal housing/living situation in the future? _____

21. If you had to move out of your home today, where would you go? _____

22. What has been the biggest challenge for you since you got out? _____



23. What has helped you the most since you got out? _____

24. Do you have health insurance? Yes _____ No _____

25. Are you on any public assistance? Yes _____ No _____
(Circle: CalFresh, CalWORKs, GA, SSI, SSDI?)

26. What have been some of the biggest surprises for you since you got out? _____

27. Do you have a California ID? Yes _____ No _____

28. Do you have a Social Security Card? Yes _____ No _____

29. Will you need a work permit? Yes _____ No _____

30. Do you know how to access public transportation? (Example: bus, BART, taxi's)
Yes _____ No _____

31. Would you need assistance or information? Yes _____ No _____

32. Please fill in any requests, assistance or any concerns that we may have missed.

Participant signature

Date

Case Manager/Interviewer

Date



Appendix H: Community Immersion Calendar of Events

Date	Event
2/22/14	Orientation
3/1/14	Tour of Asian Health Services with Dr. Sue Chan and Jen Lee
3/8/14	Workshop Presentation at Asian Pacific Islander Issues Conference at UC Berkeley
3/15/14	Group physical exercise walk/run around Lake Merritt
3/23/14	Participation in Oakland Running Festival
3/29/14	Presentation/sharing circle about cultural healing practices and addressing trauma with Cyndi Choi and Jun Hamamoto, followed by a community-building potluck
4/5/14	Hike in Joaquin Miller Park with holistic herbalist Elokin Orton who shared about natural healing remedies and its role in various cultures
4/12/14	Computer training on topics including scanning, the “cloud” services, sharing files, and phone apps
4/19/14	Community-building BBQ at Alameda Crab Cove beach
4/26/14	Employment opportunity training by Jenny Lam and Mike Cheng covering union jobs opportunities, rights of applicants, and resume and interview tips
5/3/14	Volunteering at Banteay Srei fundraiser
5/17/14	Training on resumes and skill building
5/24/14	Community exercise and basketball at Lincoln Square with community members
5/31/14	Presentation at API college student conference at Deanza College
6/7/14	Community gathering and discussion on culture and healing
6/17/14	Presentation at A Gathering of Leaders Conference on boys and men of color issues
6/21/14	Presentation at UC Berkeley Southeast Asian Student Coalition
7/12/14	Training on sharing your story with others
7/16/14	Restorative justice workshop at DeAnza Community College
7/19/14	Training on public speaking and working with youth
7/26/14	Technology training
7/29/14	Asian Pacific Islander Legal Organization youth workshop
7/29/14	Chinese Progressive Association youth workshop
8/2/14	UC Berkeley Native American Studies and Ethnic Studies professor Patricia Hilden led group discussion about mass incarceration, activism, and community support
8/9/14	Case management / Life planning support session
8/16/14	Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies instructor Kei Fischer led group discussion about gender, stereotypes, and the media.
8/23/14	Volunteering at Oakland Chinatown Streetfest. Roots 2 Reentry participants volunteered to conduct voter registration efforts with Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) and Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA).
8/31/14	Volunteering at Oakland Pride. Roots 2 Reentry participants volunteered to conduct voter registration efforts with Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) and Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA).
9/6/14	South Asian Berkeley Walking Tour. Participated in South Asian walking tour in Berkeley to learn about South Asian discrimination, history, and resistance.
9/13/14	Volunteering at King Pan Festival, Lu Mien Cultural Center. Participated in Lu Mien cultural event, conducted voter registration efforts with Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) and Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA).
9/27/14	Case management / Life planning support session
10/4/14	Case management / Life planning support session
10/11/14	Case management / Life planning support session



10/18/14	Case management / Life planning support session
10/25/14	Case management / Life planning support session
11/1/14	Physical fitness workout with participant, Jess, who is a personal trainer
11/8/14	Workout and Bay Bridge trail bike ride
11/15/14	Case Management sessions and lunch. Guest: Bonnie Kwong, artist
11/22/14	Men's Healing Clinic
12/6/14	Technology training session
12/13/14	Attended book event at Eastwind Books of Berkeley about Chinese immigration detention at Angel Island
12/20/14	Holiday potluck with community members and card-signing event
12/28/14	Alcatraz visit to Ai Wei Wei exhibit with community members
1/3/15	Physical fitness workout at Lake Merritt and Welcome Home lunch with Pete
1/10/15	Physical fitness workout at Lake Merritt and attended Jack of All Trades market
1/17/15	BART public transportation training and attended Ashby swap meet
1/24/15	Physical fitness workout at Lake Merritt
1/31/15	Community lunar new year mural painting with Eastside Arts Alliance
2/1/15	Community lunar new year mural painting with Eastside Arts Alliance
2/7/15	Pacific Islander, and Native American Environmental Leadership event at Lake Merritt
2/12/15	Community event invited by Nhuanh, addressing Mass incarceration for Oakland congregation.
2/14/15	Community support for Polynesian business grand opening in Newark.
2/21/15	Men of Color Hiking trip at Point Reyes.
2/22/15	Henry's Art Exhibit at the "Art of Americas" in Marin & supporting activities.
2/24/15	Speaking at "Sayama Documentary" at the New Parkway Theatre.
2/26/15	EastSide Arts Alliance Lunar New Year Mural potluck.
2/28/15	Redwood City's Lunar New Year Festival in support of OH-IN Taiko group.
3/7/15	Men of Color Hiking Trip on Mt. Tamalpais
3/21/15	Case management / Life planning support session
3/28/15	Health and Fitness workout w/Jess
4/3/15	Art exhibit opening featuring prisoners' artwork
4/4/15	Case management / Life planning support session
4/11/15	Nhuanh's Vietnamese coffee pop-up and car show at Eastside Arts Alliance
4/18/15	Men of Color hiking trip
4/25/15	Exercise at Lake Merritt, w/Jess



Appendix I: Roots2Reentry Pre-Program Participant Survey



ASIAN PRISONER SUPPORT COMMITTEE
ROOTS2REENTRY – PRE-PROGRAM SURVEY

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree/Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am comfortable with participating in community activities such as cultural events, community service, educational programs, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have many good qualities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel afraid or negative when I am faced with difficulties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can handle difficult situations with comfort and ease	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will keep trying even when others have given up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel positive and motivated about life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have relationships with family members, friends, or peer that have been or are currently damaged? Y/N	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>			

