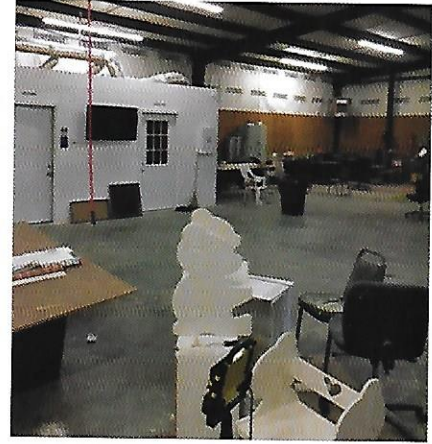




SCAC Honorable Mention Award



Classroom (behind window), auto repair in foreground



Renovations taking shape



Program participant using his skills



Certificate of Occupancy



Unused warehouse, soon to transform into new training facility

**faith & family**

By Joyce Cady, Palm Bay

# WHAT'S NEW in This Amazing Journey

Since my last article (PCL Mag, Jan. 2018), the inmates in the RES (Georgetown County Re-entry Program) completed renovating an existing warehouse which has become the new home for their training facility. Under supervision, the inmates completed all the work themselves, which gave them an additional opportunity to apply their newly acquired skills. The new facility allows these inmates ample room to learn and work in a safe environment.

Georgetown County Detention Center is the home of a highly successful re-entry services (RES) program. This program provides an opportunity for selected inmates nearing the end of their sentence to obtain journeyman certificates in 12 different trades. Qualifying inmates receive on-the-job training through the Public Services Department working alongside county employees, a "win-win" situation as the inmate obtains hands-on experience and the county saves hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in labor costs. One hundred percent of the inmates completing this program are hired in jobs in their communities upon release from prison with some being hired by the county.

The RES program ensures the inmates have the necessary skills and tools to keep them out of "the system," skills to ensure they can earn a good living keeping them from the pitfalls that plague

many inmates. The program is a "win-win" for our communities by providing well-trained tradesmen in skilled areas that are in demand in our communities, especially HVAC systems, electrical work, and plumbing. RES provides a self-sustainable trade for the inmate. Many graduates of the RES program interview and are hired for high-paying jobs *before* they are released from prison.

In May 2018, Georgetown County received "honorable mention" from South Carolina Associations of Counties (SCAC) for its approach to reducing recidivism rates among incarcerated men. Data released from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, states that recidivism is about 43% within the first year of release from prison. Three of four prisoners are arrested within five years of release. The Georgetown County RES program continues to boast 0% recidivism in the 12 years of its operation with over 300 inmates going through the program. This program works because it provides the inmates with a full complement of support to help them succeed once they are released from prison. Director Barr anticipates the needs of the inmates and strives to ensure they are provided the necessary tools to succeed.

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