

# RENÉ F. RODRÍGUEZ

Restorative Justice Facilitator | Higher Education Ambassador

website: [viewsonlife.org](http://viewsonlife.org) • email: [rene.f.rodriguez.21@gmail.com](mailto:rene.f.rodriguez.21@gmail.com) • location: Lenox, Michigan

## SUMMARY

Restorative Justice Facilitator seeking opportunities to leverage my knowledge and experience in designing, developing, and implementing restorative justice programs.

Expertise in organizing and teaching restorative justice classes following its methodologies, philosophies, and principles that focus on the importance of accountability, reconciliation, and relationship building.

Experience engaging with high-level donors and state legislators promoting higher education as an effective tool in rehabilitation and crime prevention.

## EDUCATION

**Calvin University, Grand Rapids, MI** 2016-2021

*Bachelor of Arts in Faith and Community Leadership (Minor in Social Work)*

**Dean's List: spring 2020, fall 2020**

## WORK HISTORY / VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

*Wayne State Prison Education Program (Hope College Education Ambassador)* 2025 – Present

- Senior traveling education ambassador with experience helping higher education institutions establish, strengthen, and develop prison college education programs. Engage in think tank sessions and round table discussions geared toward students' academic success.
- Teaching assistant and tutor helping students formulate and develop strong thesis statements. Provide assistance with creating effective outlines, editing, and developing academic papers. Counsel students on overcoming academic or personal barriers that may hinder their progress. Provide guidance on searching for and correctly utilizing sources to support academic papers and work.

*Views on LIFE (Founder and Editor-in-Chief)* 2022-Present

- Educational publication dedicated to sharing the unique experiences of those serving life without parole: Download a free copy of our newsletter at [www.viewsonlife.org](http://www.viewsonlife.org)

*Restorative Justice Alliance Organization (Founder)* 2023-2025

- Launched and established the Restorative Justice Program at Muskegon Correctional Facility. Successfully initiated ~2-year process to obtain approval and authorization from MDOC. Identified and recruited leadership team. Procured resources for restorative justice classes including training and educational materials. Worked collaboratively to draft and create program's mission statement, constitution, and bylaws.
- Educating program participants on concepts of restorative justice practices and procedures such as analyzing the effects of crime as it relates to victims, offenders, and communities. Educating participants on the importance of accountability and ownership for offense, analyzing the impacts of crime on society.

*Inside Out Substance Abuse (Program Collaborator)* 2023-2025

- Assisted in building 13-week peer-to-peer course designed to assist incarcerated individuals struggling with substance abuse. Educating participants on identifying and combating potential sources for relapse. Developed selective program recruitment process.
- Provided program participants with safe space to learn about the connections between addiction and trauma. Analyzing the relationship between addiction and self-image, society, and social expectations. Helping participants develop healthier more effective strategies and coping mechanisms to avoid relapsing.

*Hope-Western Prison Education Program (Calvin Education Ambassador) Muskegon, MI* 2022-2025

- Work closely with program directors, teachers, and faculty members to help establish a strong foundational education program that models Calvin University's Prison Initiative.
- Provided assistance to teachers and ad hoc tutoring services to current students.

# RENÉ F. RODRÍGUEZ

Restorative Justice Facilitator | Higher Education Ambassador

website: [viewsonlife.org](http://viewsonlife.org) • email: [rene.f.rodriguez.21@gmail.com](mailto:rene.f.rodriguez.21@gmail.com) • location: Lenox, Michigan

---

- Calvin University (Teacher's Assistant) Ionia, MI* 2019–2022
- Assisted with administrative tasks, e.g., handing out and collecting completed exams, returning graded papers and assignments, and other academic duties as assigned.
  - Offered guidance to students on obtaining required texts books for relevant coursework. Assisted students with instruction on proper academic research techniques and provided thorough explanation and breakdown of syllabus. Assisted with how-to questions on accessing information and resources for related courses.
- Leader Dogs for the Blind (Dog Trainer) Rochester, MI* 2017-2021
- Raised pure-bred, 7-week-old Labrador puppies and followed through with 1-year obedience and guidance training. Trained puppies on recognizing and responding to basic commands, e.g., sit, stay, come, laydown. Effectively trained dogs on how to avoid distractions, i.e., people, objects, food on the ground. Maintained basic hygiene routine, e.g., daily coat brushing, monthly nail trimming, daily eye and ear care, and adhered to proper waste management disposal guidelines.
  - Remained attentive to dog's physical and emotional well-being. Alerted appropriate staff/personnel of any unusual behavior or circumstances that required evaluation by veterinarian. Maintained thorough quarterly records on dog's training and progress.
- Calvin University / Vocational Village (Co-Facilitator) Ionia, MI* 2017-2018
- Provided guidance on creating effective resumes and assisted with mock interviews using "real-life" scenarios. Provided assistance on accessing reentry resources for those scheduled to return to society.
  - Lead mock interviews promoting awareness on displaying positive body language. Provided feedback and evaluated overall performance.
- Refurbished Pets of Southern Michigan (Rehabilitation Coach) Coldwater, MI* 2014-2016
- Trained a variety of mix-breed dogs. Identified, recorded, and corrected social behavioral issues. Socialized dogs and focused on activities that reinforce positive human interactions.
  - Provided extensive training on recognizing and responding to basic commands and tricks, e.g., rollover, pray, kisses, stay, sit, come, etc. Adhered to strict canine hygiene guidelines. Administered flea & tick, and heartworm medications and tended to dog's minor medical needs.
- Michigan Department of Corrections (Law Library Clerk) Oaks, MI* 2002-2004
- Provided instruction and guidance in navigating law library and assisted patrons with accessing legal resources for researching cases. Maintained inventory records of administrative policies, Michigan compliance laws, state statutes, law journals, and department office memorandums. Organized and managed legal research materials.

## LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Calvin University Restorative Justice Club (Co-Lead Facilitator / Member) Ionia, MI* 2017-2022
- Assisted in coordinating restorative justice annual conferences; worked for and in conjunction with Calvin University, Grand Rapids Diocese, and Hope College. Organized bi-monthly restorative justice meetings. Led, encouraged, and participated in open dialogue/discussions on restorative justice. Adhered to the practices and principles outlined in *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*. Assisted and participated in mock victim and offender dialog circle. Reviewed and discussed information on restorative justice literature, books, and videos.

## CERTIFICATIONS / LANGUAGES

- Ministry Leadership, Calvin University, Ionia, MI 2018
- House of Healing, Coldwater, MI 2015
- Chance for Life Organization, Southfield, MI 2014
- Paralegal Studies, Blackstone School of Law, Allentown, PA 2002
- English and Spanish, native fluency.