



OG MAC Academy Re-Entry Program PROPOSAL

About Open Gate, Inc.

Open Gate, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in Oakland, California focusing on college education for students exiting incarceration.

In 2014, Open Gate established the 'Open Gate' program at the College of Alameda. Shortly afterwards, Open Gate established College Readiness Workshops in the Transition Center at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin, CA. This step established what is believed to be the first Jail to College pathway in California.

In 2016, Open Gate partnered with Chabot College in Hayward, CA to establish and develop the successful RISE Program for formerly incarcerated students. In 2020, Open Gate expanded to Laney College to enhance the ROC Program.

We have achieved high retention and graduation rates, high employment outcomes, and an extremely low recidivism rate of 3%, compared to a California State average of 68%.

Our Scholars

Since 2014, over 200 former Santa Rita inmates have enrolled in college with Open Gate and more than 120 have earned a GED/High School Diploma, college credits and/or AA/bachelor's degrees. 90% plus of Open Gate participants have secured living wage employment.

Fourteen (14) students have transferred to UC Berkeley, CSUEB (Hayward), Cal Poly, San Jose State University, and San Francisco State University. Ten (10) students have graduated with an associate degree (AA), with the other four on their way. Two (2) students are now studying for a Masters' Degrees.

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OG MAC Academy

The Open Gate Re-entry Program (OG MAC ACADEMY) formalizes and expands our existing outreach to community members being released from the CDCR system. Our goal is to continue to empower our clients to successful re-entry, focusing on personal development, college education, and employment readiness. Our facilitators have successfully navigated their own re-entry and are known for their leadership and mentorship to others on that path.

OG MAC Academy Coordinators/Mentors

Rodney Scott (Mujahid Asad), born in Valdosta Georgia in 1960 and moved to Los Angeles in 1963. He later moved to the Bay Area where he attended and graduated from Tennyson High, Hayward in 1978 before he joined Marine Corp Reserve that same year. Between 1980 and 2015 he served an extensive prison term of 27 years. During his incarceration he attended and graduated from the Patten University Prison Project 2012 with an AA degree in Liberal Arts.

Upon his release in 2015, Rodney joined the Open Gate Program at College of Alameda where he was quickly chosen by his instructor as her Teacher Assistant for night classes. From 2016 – 2019 he served on the Alameda County Probation - Community Advisory Board, he was a Substance Abuse Counselor at Chabot College for the RISE Program – developed by Open Gate, and he was the Study Group Monitor in the Athletic Student Center at U. C. Berkeley.

In 2019 Rodney received his bachelor's degree in Sociology from Cal State University East Bay, Hayward and that same year he was hired at San Quentin Prison as a Substance Abuse Counselor. The following year Rodney became a Licensed Behavioral Health Technician in the state of Arizona with a Level 1 Fingerprint Card.

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From 2021 to 2022, Rodney was a Chess Instructor for preschool to 5th grade students, teenagers, and adults of all ages.

Lee Bonner (Taqwaa), a proud husband and family man, joined All Of Us Or None as a Housing Advocate in August, 2018. On September 10, 2018, Taqwaa officially started an All of Us Or None, East Oakland Youth Chapter in a quest to help rebuild the community which he damaged 32 years ago.

During his 30 years of incarceration, Taqwaa achieved a G.E.D. and an Associate In Arts Degree in Social Science. He also became certified in three Electrical trades, completed a 5-year Electrical Apprenticeship training program, and two certifications in the painting programs. Other achievements include becoming a certified Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselor.

Curriculum

OG MAC Academy will comprise of four (4) separate certification components:

1. SUCCESSFUL RE-ENTRY
2. EMPLOYMENT READINESS
3. COLLEGE READINESS
4. OG MAC FACILITATOR CERTIFICATION (*Open Gate Mentors Advisory Council*)

1. SUCCESSFUL RE-ENTRY

- How to Adjust After a Long Incarceration: Re-shaping to a post-incarceration world.

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- Effective and Positive Communication: Verbal and body language.
- Personal Accountability
- Time Management: How to prioritize and plan your day/week/month.
- Understanding and Developing Emotional Intelligence
- Self-advocacy and the power of positivity
- Title IX: The new standards of sexual harassment and gender awareness.
- Code-Switching: Adjusting to life on the college campus.
- Mental Health Awareness: Understanding and managing your mental health is core to success at college and beyond.
- Creating healthy boundaries
- Student Accessibility Services: Accommodating and clearing blocks to learning. How to recognize your needs and secure accommodation such as extra time for exams.
- Using Technology: Computer literacy and effective use of texting, creating professional emails, and social media.
- Understanding & Managing Finances: Debt management, credit building and management, and budgeting (among other topics).
- Writing Workshop: Becoming a confident writer.
- How to complete your GED

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2. EMPLOYMENT READINESS

- *Myers-Briggs Personality Testing:* Know yourself and use your natural skills to target employment that is a good fit for you as you use your transferable skill sets to build a positive and sustainable life.
- Building your resume- again focusing on your transferable skills
- Reasons previous employment did not work out.
- Planning an effective job search that fits with your personality.
- How to use technology (i.e., Craigslist, LinkedIn, Indeed, Jobs.com)
- How to apply for jobs
- Networking
- How to secure living wage employment with felony charges
- Mock interviews with professionals to prepare for real interviews (2 minimum).
- Get the job and keep the job with excellent work habits and professional conduct.

3. COLLEGE READINESS

- Why college?
- What your local community college offers: Career and Technical Pathways (i.e., Welding, Culinary, Construction Management and Auto-Tech)
- How to get your fees paid and receive financial aid.
- Accommodate and clear blocks to learning, particularly ADHD and PTSD through DSPS, tutoring and various programs.
- Use established programs and services to facilitate your college success.
- Title IX on campus
- How to make college work for you

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- Connecting with established universities and community college programs for formerly incarcerated students. (i.e., RISE/Chabot College, ROC/Laney, Street Scholars/Merritt College, Project Rebound/CSUEB, Hayward, and Underground Scholars/UC Berkeley)

College Pathways

On release from Santa Rita Jail, students contact us to schedule a meeting at the preferred college campus to begin matriculation before a warm handoff to the special enrollment/support program for formerly incarcerated students. Open Gate supports enrollment into the following California colleges:

- Chabot College, Hayward - *RISE Program*
- Laney College, Oakland - *ROC Program*
- Merritt College, Oakland - *Street Scholars*
- College of Alameda, Alameda - *New Dream*
- California State University East Bay (CSUEB), Hayward - *Project Rebound*
- University of California Berkeley - *Underground Scholars*
- San Francisco State University (SFSU) – *Project Rebound*
- Cal Poly, Humboldt – *Project Rebound*

We also provide a GED pathway with services provided by Oakland Adult & Career Education (OACE) . Students do not need a GED to enroll in college, but attaining a GED provides Financial Aid.

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4. OG MAC FACILITATOR CERTIFICATION

Students must complete 1 through 3 to qualify for the OG MAC Facilitator Certification Workshop.

- Preparing your classroom materials and resources
- Setting your expectations of the workshop environment and sharing with students what the goals of the workshop are.
- Using the OGMAC Academy lesson plans to effectively facilitate your workshops.
- Students own 40% of the conversation during the workshop.
- Effective Classroom Management: Keeping on track during the workshop and keeping students on track.
- Seeing and unlocking the potential in each student
- Managing one on one time with each student
- Keeping accurate records: attendance, student contribution, retention, completion

In our experience, 75%+ of our community members returning home from prison are Alpha Males and Alpha Females, most of whom have used their innate leadership skills to create a positive impact while incarcerated, leading groups within the prisons, such as:

- Violence Prevention (Anger Management)
- Restorative Justice
- Healing Circles
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (Impulse Control)
- Development of Self-Awareness
- Personal Accountability (Recognizing Triggers)
- Education / Skilled Certification
- Recognizing & Understanding Community Responsibilities
- Transferrable Skills

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A huge part of the Open Gate success rate is due to our harnessing this powerful group as they continue their positive impact following their release. We have witnessed that returning community members can be coached as OG MAC Academy Facilitators to utilize and maximize their skills to lead others to a positive and successful re-entry.

Student Expectations

We ask that all inmates comply with the following:

1. Enroll in OG MAC classes in Santa Rita and attend every class.
2. Enroll in college (on release) and attend all classes.
3. Complete one semester with a minimum of 3 college credits.
4. Commit to completing their GED/High School Diploma (if required).

We believe that the college campus is a good and positive place to land for newly released individuals. The positive, learning-focused environment of a college campus provides stability, a sense of community, and support while our students navigate their re-entry as law abiding citizens.

Program Facilitators

Denise Richardson Open Gate Inc., President. *36 years of teaching experience, 10 years of college enrollment for formerly incarcerated students*

Mildred McKinney Open Gate Inc., Executive Director *30 years in Corporate America, 10 years of college enrollment for formerly incarcerated students*

Dr. Talia Moore *Professor of Criminology at Holy Names University, Professor of Forensic Psychology, 10 years as Deputy Probation Officer*

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Debbie Green *Licensed Family and Marriage Counselor, Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Counselor @ College of Alameda (Retired), and Academic Counselor at, Merritt College (Retired)*

Stephanie Zappa *Professor of English (Retired), Chabot College*

Raquel Nadal *Spanish Facilitator, AA Degree Language Arts, Laney College*

Also included will be our OG MAC Academy Coordinators/Mentors, **Rodney Scott (Mujahid Asad)** and **Lee Bonner (Taqwaa)**, two of our OG MAC (*Open Gate Mentors Advisory Council*) members. These are individuals who completed long incarcerations and have successfully reentered into senior positions in their communities and workplace.

We offer our workshops and services in Spanish.

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