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**PATHWAYS FOR CHANGE
CELEBRATES GRADUATES
JULY 16, 2016**

Participants in Pensacola's Prisoner Re-entry program will graduate this month

PENSACOLA, Fla. (July, 2016) – Thirty clients in the Pathways for Change program will participate in a Phase Up and Graduation Ceremony at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 16, 2016 at Olive Baptist Church in the Passmore Hall (1836 East Olive Road, 32514).

Pathways for Change – a collaboration of Escambia County Board of County Commission and over twenty-five partners– is a court ordered addiction treatment program designed to reduce the recidivism rate in Pensacola. Substance-dependent men from Escambia County volunteer to “successfully complete” four phases and abide by a strict curriculum to learn interpersonal communication, job and life skills and undergo individual, family and group therapy.

Potential participants must undergo a rigorous court-monitored screening process to be considered for the program.

Phases one and two provide participants with an intensive personal growth and development curriculum, a six month timeframe that allows them to confront their chemical dependency and mental health issues.

In Phase three, PFC clients “give back” to the community by cleaning blighted areas in Escambia County. After these nine months of treatment, participants must prepare for re-entry into the community by attending work or school. Clients are provided job training and are encouraged to complete high school equivalency degrees while in the program and as Alumni.

Quarterly reports reflect an inmate's progress. Before "phasing up," participants are evaluated by clinical professionals. They do not advance to the next level if their attitudes and behavior do not show improvement.

Currently, two-thirds of released offenders not undergoing treatment are rearrested within three years of release. Pathways for Change has a 67% success rate, vs. 33% for the regular "lock 'em up" criminal justice sentence. PFC costs \$10,000 per inmate, per year, vs. \$20,000 per inmate per year for a jail sentence. PFC is saving our county over 1.5 million dollars every year.

For more information about Pathways for Change or this public ceremony, call executive director Connie Bookman at or visit www.pathwaysforchange.org.

Pathways for Change, located at 1211 W. Fairfield Drive, gives inmates a Christian foundation, a level of accountability for actions, therapy and life skills they need to successfully reenter the Pensacola community.