

A P R I L 23 , 2021

RIPPLES TO WAVES

St. Tammany Parish - Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative

BILLY'S STORY

By Brittany Herron, Community Coordinator

Billy Herron was an active student, an athlete, and a well-respected community member, so when he found himself in the snares of addiction, he often wondered how it happened. "I wasn't myself," he recalls, "drugs can turn you into someone completely different, and even your friends and family won't know you anymore."

Billy was incarcerated many times over 20 years, and he swore each time was his last – a statement that wasn't true until he participated in a reentry program. "I was given an ultimatum, 25 years or this program. It was no question."

By the time Billy entered the program, he had lost contact with his oldest daughter, didn't have a stable job, and was unrecognizable to those who knew him best.

Yet, he realized that he wasn't alone in his battle as he met men like him in the program who suffered from addiction. He began to find a sense of community, a sense of support. During the program, he received training that helped him land a full-time job post-incarceration and mental health counseling to aid in his addiction recovery. Most importantly, the program reunited him with his family.

I share Billy's story with you today as both a Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative (LA-PRI) community coordinator and his daughter. My passion for this



"The reentry program saved my life, no doubt."

- Billy Herron

work is driven by a desire to give other families the gift given to me by my father's reentry program.

Like my father's program, LA-PRI provides the second chance individuals need to secure a job that pays a livable wage, stay out of prison, and live longer, healthier lives – and that translates into a safer, healthier, and more vibrant community for everyone.

My dad always says, "The reentry program saved my life, no doubt," but it also changed the trajectory of our family, who continues to work to improve the lives of others like us today. Thanks to a single second chance, a small ripple has now created a wave of change within the community.



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AREAS OF FOCUS

LA-PRI is helping individuals reintegrate into their community after being incarcerated and keeps individuals from returning to incarceration.

Housing
Employment
Mental Health
Addiction Support
Peer Support Education
Vocational Training
Family Reunification

CONTACT US

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