



Empowered for Growth and Hope
Rev. Dean Bucalos, Coordinator
Mission Behind Bars and Beyond
August 2016



She gave me a very funny look when I said, “I love her and I hate her.” I said this in response to a question posed by one of our board members who wanted to know how the work with our new development coach was working out. Our development coach seemed a bit taken aback by my comment. I needed to elaborate to try to get her raised eyebrow back in place.

We have been blessed to have received a grant from the NBA Incubate Initiative to work with a development coach. Kirsten Bullock of Bullock Consulting, Inc., has been working with me and our board since January 2016. My remark was the result of all the work that Kirsten piled on in order to begin the process to move our program from one of maintenance to one of sustainability. My work as program coordinator seemed to double as we began to reconstruct my job duties and develop a fundraising plan. The doubling of work triggered my “hate” comment. But it was vastly minimized by my “love” comment because we are growing and moving in the right direction.

Kirsten has met several times with our board and more times with me and our board chair. I have moved from the “do-it-all” program coordinator to a place where we have volunteers assuming many of the things I was doing, which has freed me up to concentrate more of fundraising and long-range development.



Frankly, we had plateaued, and a year ago, we weren’t sure if we would be able to continue as an organization. Now, we have greater hope and are turning the corner. Our fundraising strategy has involved two “house parties” so far, with more on the horizon, and the receipt of several small grants, which I have had more time to pursue and write. Our board is still in the nascent stages of all this fundraising talk, but Kirsten has tried to make

that not only easier but also more closely tailored to who we are and who our constituency donors may be. We are making lists, creating timelines, learning fundraising methods, examining logos, discussing strategies, and designing campaigns.

Okay. That all sounds good. But honesty is the best policy. The money isn’t rolling in. Yet. However, we are in a better financial situation than we have ever been. Our board members have stepped up in their own giving and understand that there is more to this than just coming to a board meeting and hearing me ramble about all the things I have been doing.

Kirsten has empowered us. We all now have a better sense of direction. We are better equipped to move our program to the next level. And, perhaps most importantly, we all have restored hope.

Frankly, we could not have afforded the services of a development coach. The NBA Incubate Initiative made that possible for us at just the right time. There's still a whole lot of work ahead. And when I see Kirsten coming, I still have these mixed feelings because I know she is going to put me to work! But seeing the fruits of that as Mission Behind Bars and Beyond grows and expands makes all that hard work worth the effort. We are grateful to the NBA Incubate Initiative, and to our development coach, Kirsten Bullock.

Kirsten Bullock, MBA, CFRE

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502-509-5004

kirsten@bullockconsulting.net

<http://bullockconsulting.net>

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