

# Project RETURN

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Helping men and women leaving prison make a positive and permanent return to our community.

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In my natural habitat: eating an ice cream bar

## Meet Ally--Project RETURN's Newest Intern!

Hello, my name is Ally Halonen, and I am this year's intern from Notre Dame! I am a Business Analytics and Applied Math & Stats major from New Richmond, WI (which is basically the opposite side

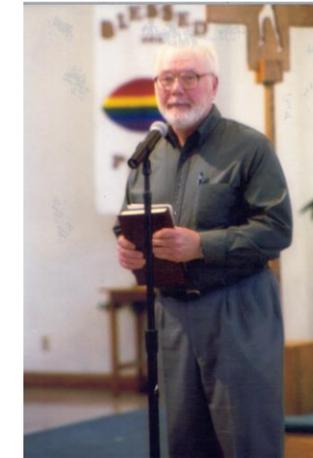
of the state from Milwaukee).

Some fun facts about me are that I am in an all-girls a cappella group (kind of like "Pitch Perfect") and that I once saw Bon Jovi at a Notre Dame football game. Last summer I lived and worked at a homeless shelter in Aurora, IL, so this summer I wanted to change things up a little by working at Project RETURN.

My goal is to learn as much as I can about the prison system as well as the reform that Project RETURN aims to create. I've been going to conferences and working in the office so I've already learned a lot! Once I start to go into the prisons, I will be able to gain some firsthand experience, and I am excited to meet some of the people who are currently incarcerated and to hopefully hear some of their stories.

# NEWSLETTER

Summer, 2017



## In Memoriam

October 12th, 1939—May 9th, 2017

Project RETURN mourns the loss of Fred Moss, a former board member, volunteer, and advocate. He was known for his analytical mind, and even more so for his huge heart for all those he served. After becoming a member of Cross Lutheran Church, Fred wanted to get more involved in the mission and ministry and became part of Project RETURN in 1995. Fred took part in the weekly library program picking up incarcerated individuals from the correctional center and bringing them to the library and back. He always encouraged people to try new strategies in the pursuit of bettering conditions for formerly incarcerated people. Fred never shied away from a client and engaged all with a smile, putting every client at immediate ease. Bringing his philosophy and bigger vision to Project RETURN, he was part of transforming Project RETURN from a tiny organization with a desire to help to a stand-alone non-profit helping to change lives every day.

**"Being an individual from northeast Iowa, they made me feel at home and opened their doors to me when they definitely didn't have to. They made me feel like I wasn't crazy for doing what I was doing when everyone else did."**—Wendel, Executive Director of Project RETURN

He left the board only when he and his partner set off to travel the world. Fred returned for the annual Celebrate the Return and the Christmas celebrations in pre-release centers, and continued to donate clothing and furniture. The mission always remained close to his heart.



Andre Brown, Project RETURN Case Manager, after expert shot

## 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing Held June 13<sup>th</sup>

Raining through the prior night and early morning of June 13<sup>th</sup>, participants lined up at Western Lakes Golf Club in Pewaukee to sign in, to receive their Project RETURN t-shirt, and to register to win one of the many donated raffle prizes. Miraculously, the clouds parted and the sun emerged just in time for the first tee-off. Groups of Project RETURN supporters ranging from amateur to seasoned golfers selected their golf cart and set off on the trail for the morning. Throughout the event, interns Ally Halonen and Eliana Winterbauer-Light drove around with a camera to capture the shared smiles, laughter, and all-around healthy competition. Then as noon approached, golfers returned cart by cart to the club to eat a delicious BBQ lunch catered by Saz's and to hear the announcements of the winners for the golf outing and coveted raffle prizes. For the second year in a row the winning foursome was from Unity in Motion. Such raffle prizes included a SHARP HD LED television, a wine basket, Summerfest tickets, a \$25 gift certificate to the Original Pancake House, gift certificates to the Prairieville Park, gift certificates to the Bunzel's Old-Fashioned Meat Market, a framed picture of Lambeau Stadium, and premium Special Wisconsin Golf Balls.

Through this event we were able to raise over \$10,000! The members of Project RETURN thank all who contributed to making another annual Project RETURN golf outing a reality and for coming out to spend the day to support Project RETURN's mission to strengthen the Milwaukee community.

This event would not be possible without our sponsors.: Bunzel's Meat Market, Wisconsin Community Services, Lutter's Elmbrook Automotive, Table of the Saints, Project RETURN Board and Staff, Augustine Financial, R&R Insurance, Foti Chiropractic, St. Vincent de Paul of Waukesha County, Beyer Construction, Park Bank, Rodrian Insurance, Unity in Motion, Ford Construction, All Peoples Gathering, Bread of Healing, Voice of the Fatherless Child, BASICS of Milwaukee, Hephatha Lutheran Church, Marathon Construction, Schlossmann's Subaru City, Dominican Center for Women, Golf Galaxy, ExPO, Atonement Lutheran Church, College Possible, Summerfest, Hruska's Canoe Livery, Western Lakes Golf Club, Office Copying Equipment, Sprecher Brewery, Fran Odden, The Original Pancake House, Cedar Creek Winery, Prairieville Park, Rob Schreiber, and Mullet Ice Center.

Please mark your calendars for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing to be held on **June 12, 2018** at **Western Lakes Golf Club**.

## Healthy Mind and Soul Day, May 6<sup>th</sup> 2017

It was a day to bring awareness of mental health to the African American community. We called it Healthy Mind and Soul Day. Through spreading awareness of mental health and ways to care for one's mind and soul, we sought to water down the stigma currently surrounding mental health in the African American community. Though every ethnic group encounters their own hardships involving mental health, Caucasians have already seen significant growth in conversations, resources, and connections surrounding mental health. We sought to initiate these three components in the Milwaukee African American community-- conversations, resources, and connections--by hosting experts, collaborating with other organizations, and sharing a meal together.

Attendees could come to hear experienced psychologists and mental health professionals discussing a variety of topics such as impulse control, spirituality, and family within the African-American community. The presentations began with Dr. Alfonzo Watkins, director of the Wakeup Program, a mentor and tutoring program for first time juvenile offenders, presented on mental health issues from an Afrological history and psychology perspective and their role in the African American experience. Then Clem Richardson, CEO of Manna Behavior Services and provider of community workshops and psychoeducation, discussed the connection between Afrocentric mental health issues with both media-perpetuated generational trauma as well as the modern baby mama/baby daddy family structure. Ahmand Muhammad, Chief Educator Consultant at the Inception Consulting Group, emphasized the connection between having a strong spirit and mental health. The presentations concluded with Hasaan Nuruddin, workshop facilitator at Shecar, a substance abuse and mental health center, who discussed impulse control and its place in everyday interactions. Following the presentations, attendees could browse the resource table and connect with organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the Black Health Coalition, and Aurora Health Care.

When the day concluded, we at Project RETURN knew this couldn't be a one day event, but this would be the first of a series of days to come together to build community and attenuate the stigma of mental health.

**!!!!!!Save the Date!!!!!!**

**37<sup>th</sup> Annual CELEBRATE THE RETURN**

**Banquet**

*October 7, 2017*

**Held at the Tripoli Shrine Center**

**Located on 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208**

**There will be a wonderful meal with **Amazingly Talented Entertainment!****

**Silent Auction will feature a host of great items including: hand-made items from incarcerated individuals, sports memorabilia, gift cards to various places around Milwaukee, and outdoor activities.**

**You will not want to miss out on this **FANTASTIC NIGHT!****

