

# CPO Ministries

## CHICAGOLAND PRISON OUTREACH

Chicagoland Prison Outreach P.O. Box 63 South Holland IL 60473 708 331-3301  
www.epoministries.org

December 19, 2005. I was 23 years old when the cast iron door shut behind me. I'd been locked up before, but this was different. This time I knew I was done with the streets.

Months earlier I had shot and killed a man who came into my house unannounced. It was at that point, while I was sitting in jail, that I remember the Lord began to deal with me. If you are not affiliated with a gang you are considered nothing.

When I went in for the last time I decided the only thing I was getting into was the Bible. Through this, and Chaplain Corey, God changed everything. **..God changed everything.** God allowed me to go to Boot Camp.

When I was released on June 8, 2006, with the Word of God on my mind and no money, with the only way I knew being the wrong way, God continued to be faithful. God enabled me to keep my faith and to pray. **God continued to be faithful.**

My good friend from CPO, Rich Van Til, got me a job with M&M Roofing. I started on August 11, 2006. It had to be the hottest day of the whole summer. I wanted to quit everyday but God enabled me to stick with it and now, 2 years later, I own my own roofing company, Moore & Moore Roofs. I'm married to a beautiful woman. We have a newborn child, a wonderful house in County Club Hills and we attend a great church.

I know I owe every one of my blessings to God. Faith without works is dead so we need to believe in God, believe in who

**I owe every one of my blessings to God.** God made us to be, and always...always...give 100% in everything we do.

### My Name Is Robert Moore



In this issue are testimonies from a few of those who participated in various CPO programs, and who are currently gainfully employed. They are employed thanks to the faithful support CPO receives from people like you, despite these tough economic times.

At this writing, I am working on preparing a proposed budget for 2009. Unfortunately, because of the above mentioned economic situation and its impact on donations, it is a struggle to determine whether to consider cutting any programs. But which program that had such an impact on these lives do we cut? Please pray for CPO, and perhaps consider what you might do to help avoid leaving any one of these people behind.

Thank you!

## My name is De'Andreas McCanton.



I'm 22 years old and I was born and raised in Evanston.

As a young child, I had both parents, but they were working parents so I was always with my sister. As a child I got everything I wanted and I was good at every sport I played. I don't know what happened but around seventh grade I was infatuated with things. My parents couldn't buy me a lot so that's when the streets got hold of me. I started doing all types of things for money including selling drugs, robberies, and stealing. By always staying in the streets my grades started falling and I couldn't play sports any longer. I never knew how I really started gangbanging but I remember the older G's (*gangster disciples*) letting me kick it with them. Just like that I ***.. I was plugged and started making money on the block.***

I was getting a whipping every day for something, either for weed, guns, money, or school. My mother found one of my guns and took it away from me. My father gave it back to me & that same day I got arrested. I was fifteen years old, on my way to juvie (*juvenile detention center*). I spent two weeks in the Audi home because there was no probable cause. After this my parents got a divorce and it was down hill from there. When I was seventeen I caught an armed robbery case. In a four-year span, while out on bond, I had nine different cases pending against me. By a blessing they gave me Boot Camp.



I spent three months in county jail wiling (acting crazy to the 3<sup>rd</sup> power) with the GD's. They shipped me to boot camp and that was the hardest thing in my life. Before I was calling the shots and now I have people yelling and spitting in my face, telling me what to do. If you fail in boot camp you're sent to the joint for your whole bit (sentence) plus a couple. I almost did not make it. I was on the verge of being kicked out when I met Chaplain Corey. I thank God for meeting Corey because I had just called my mother and told her I wasn't about to make it. My best friend had died and I was ready to start wiling again. Corey helped me make it through. By the end of my four months they gave me the most outstanding change award. Thank you Corey.

***...the verge of being kicked out  
...I met Chaplain Cory***



After boot camp Corey got me in the carpentry school. It began with three of us from the boot camp. I was the only one who made it all the way. Now it's been three years since I gave my life to God and I love every bit of it. I now own my first two flat, I'm a union carpenter, a janitor at my church and I'm also a youth leader. I still can't believe what God has done for me. I've been robbing, shooting, and stealing just for money and I always landed in the same place, but now in just three years God has given me way more than I could desire. For me, it's G.O.N. (God or nothing).

***I was the only one who made it all the way.***

***De Andreas & Corey continue to meet every Monday evening for Bible Study.***

My genesis began in 1997 when life as I knew it was changed forever. I was arrested and charged with murder.

## My Name Is Mike Hill

While confined behind the walls of Cook County Jail I began to call **..I began to call on the Lord.** My soul was in constant turmoil. I believe God was looking at the content of my heart and blessed me by sending a comforter. He didn't send me freedom but God provided CPO and Chaplain Dan Swets. Dan took the time to express spiritual truths to me along with countless others.



There, in a seemingly helpless situation, I began to see the hand of God cleaning me up from the inside out. I also kept hearing God telling me that whatever you are going through, my grace is sufficient and my power is made perfect through your weakness. **..my grace is sufficient..**



I was convicted of murder and sentenced to 20 years. Regardless of this I took Jesus with me into the penitentiary, trusting Him to preserve me and to continue cleansing me and growing me. **..the Lord brought me out.**

After serving 10 years, the Lord brought me out. I did not have a clue as to what I was going to do but God opened doors. With the help of CPO and Rich Van Til, I was able to find gainful employment at Billboards Inc.

Praise the lord, Praise the Lord! I'm finally on the right kind of path that God would have me on. I have a good job, I'm blessed with a wonderful church I can call home, and I'm taking college classes.

I am a thirty year old graduate from the CPO/Outreach Career Center. During the Christmas season of 2007 I made some bad choices that lead me to be incarcerated for three months. While there, I saw a flyer about the CPO/Outreach vocational program. The flyer explained that this program was for ex-offenders.

When I got the call to interview for the program I wasn't sure what would happen, or if they would be able to help me, but I decided that I needed a change for the better and that I should give this a try.

## R.W. Peterson

I was given an appointment right away. I felt very welcomed and comfortable. They explained what the programs were about and what would be expected of me. Also, they explained, everyday of class would include an hour of Bible Study. I enrolled into the welding program at that time feeling overwhelmed not having been in school for years.



Roger, our instructor, taught me in the classroom as well as with the hands on training. Following the classes Laura, through CPO, helped me to make a resume and with job placement. I began my new job as a welder in May, 2008.

**From myself, my wife, & our 3 daughters, thank you CPO. What would I have done without this 2<sup>nd</sup> chance?**

*We couldn't tell you how many times we've heard from our students how they have been involved with programs, receiving government money, that lead to absolutely nowhere. You've seen the horror stories of organizations virtually stealing government money and we've seen it first hand. Our Christian testimony is measured not only while our students attend our program but long after as well. Our commitment to God, to our students, and to you is to provide the very best program we can with the resources we have.*

*These testimonies are simply a reflection of many more success stories. Several of our former students have returned to help us when we need help. Who better to ask to help us install a dropped ceiling than Delanious, a former student who installs dropped ceilings professionally? His article is meant to reflect the practical aspect of what our vocational program is about.*

## Former Students Contribute Skills At CPO/Outreach Career Center

Sitting at a desk everyday may not be the ideal job for everyone, and college isn't for everyone either. If you are one of these people then picking up a trade may be the best thing for you. The pay is great and so are the benefits.

Attending the Carpenters Program was very beneficial to me. I learned the basics of carpentry while also preparing for the Carpenter's Union exam. This class prepares you for every aspect of the exam; the math, reading comprehension, paper folding, and so on. This class was also beneficial because through the relationship CPO has with the Carpenters Union, after passing the exam, you have the opportunity of getting called back faster for the 9 week union class. When I got in to the 9 week class after only 4 to 5 weeks, there were people there who had been waiting for up to 2 years.

After passing the class and being accepted into the union, I found a job within a month. I have been employed since August, 2006, starting out at \$14.60/hour as a first year apprentice. Now as a second year apprentice I make \$18.89/hour. When I reach my third year apprentice I will be at \$24.70/hour.

Being in this program was a very smart move for me. I learned a lot and as I move further into my career I continue learning. I recommend this program to anyone who wants a good high paying career.

Delanious R.



Delanious, former CPO student & dropped ceiling installer, returns to help out CPO.



Delanious' friend helps out.



**Chicagoland  
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[www.cpoministries.org](http://www.cpoministries.org)

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*If you would like more information on CPO or would like to be a CPO volunteer, please call, write or e-mail us at:*

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