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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cumberland County Seeks Volunteers for Ex-offenders Mentoring Program

Cumberland County, PA – Positive peer relationships can make the difference for ex-offenders trying to reenter society. The Cumberland County Adult Probation Office is seeking volunteers willing to give their time, talents and support to inmates and ex-offenders who are transitioning from incarceration back into the community.

Partnering with Christian Recovery Aftercare Ministry, Inc. (CRAM), program MENTOR (**Mentoring Exoffenders' Needs To Overcome Reoffending**) aims to successfully return these individuals to the community, in an effort to reduce recidivism rates and promote safer communities. **A training session for the MENTOR program will be Monday, June 5 from 6 – 8 p.m. in the Jury Assembly Room, 3rd Floor of the Cumberland County Courthouse.** Anyone interested in becoming a mentor is invited to attend.

Nearly two-thirds of released prisoners will recidivate within five years of their release, according to the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics. Many offenders entering the community struggle with substance abuse, lack of adequate education and job skills, limited housing options, as well as mental health issues. The MENTOR program works to reduce the recidivism statistic by empowering ex-offenders to be self-sufficient, lessening the burden on local communities.

"Mentors serve as positive role models who can, and do, positively affect social, behavioral and academic outcomes for offenders," said Ashley Rohm, the Cumberland County Adult Re-entry Program (CCARP) Coordinator and the Cumberland County Representative of the Leader Project. "Anyone living in Cumberland County, who has a genuine desire to encourage, inspire and support a fellow human being by offering hope and caring guidance, is capable of enhancing personal development and betterment, both for the ex-offender and our community. It's a win-win for everyone involved."

MENTOR program services encompass several areas within an offender's life, in order to help him/her become a law-abiding citizen. Securing housing and employment, obtaining official identification, drug and alcohol counseling, and reconnecting with family are all important parts of reentry.

Community volunteers are needed to provide positive, constructive peer relationships for offenders, to help them succeed in all aspects of life. To learn more about Program MENTOR or how to become a volunteer, visit www.ccpa.net/adultprobation. To learn more about the Cumberland County Adult Re-entry Program, contact Ashley Rohm at (717) 601-0543 or CCARProgram@gmail.com. To learn more about the Leader Project visit www.craminc.org

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