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Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program

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Restorative Justice brings victims, offenders and the community together to search for solutions and reconciliation. SLV- VORP offers the opportunity for young offenders and their victims to meet with trained, volunteer mediators from the community to discuss the offense and "make things right." VORP also assists schools in developing conflict resolution and peer mediation programs, and other restorative alternatives to suspension.

FALL

NEWSLETTER

2002

Insight from our Intern

by Frank Martinez

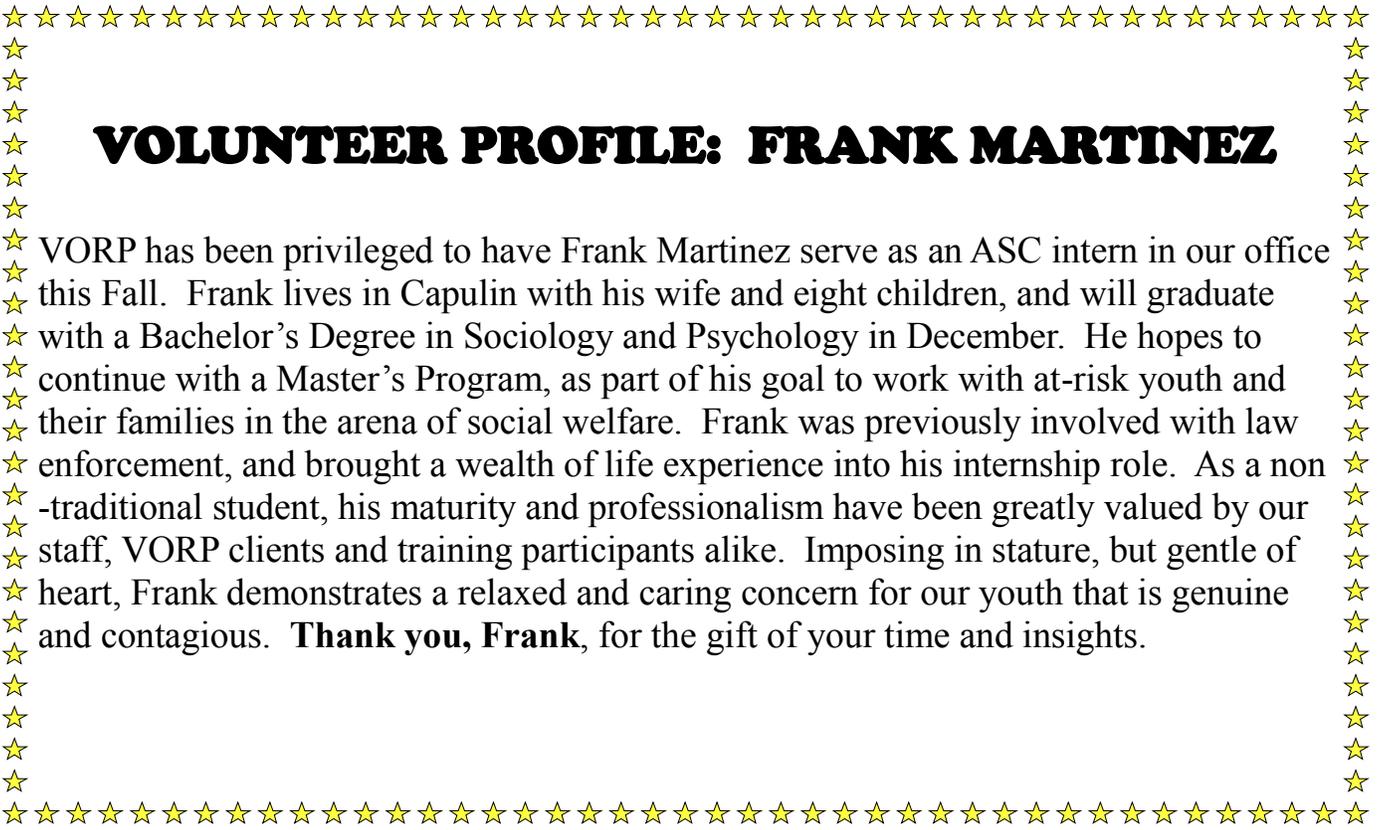
This article usually focuses on individual case scenarios, but this time it's going to be a little different. I am doing an internship at SLV-VORP this semester through Adams State College. The reason I am at the SLV Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program is that I wanted to help our youth in any capacity possible. All the criminology classes and even the law enforcement experience that I have had did not prepare me for sitting in the juvenile court in Alamosa County. The caseload was phenomenal for a rural area with the size of population that we have. As I sat and tried to rationalize the reasons for this, I went through some of the more traditional reasons such as; single parent households, drugs and alcohol, or crime is on the rise. But none of these seemed to be the one answer to all. Maybe it is that times really are changing and we stand at the dawn of a new era. If so we as parents and as members of society need to think about our youth and how they are being affected by our current judicial system.

This is where the concept of community involvement plays such a major role. Programs like VORP allow for another approach to the traditional punitive model. We need to, in a sense, regress to a time when disputes were settled with the help of the community. Communication is that threshold that we need to reopen. These traditional channels have been cut off in recent times and this is why our society is so punitive in nature. I don't believe that there is not a need for our judicial system, only that there is a need for more restorative justice along with our current model. In just the few months that I have been involved with the program I have personally seen its effects on our youth. Sometimes having to face up to our wrongs is harder than not having to at all. The personal connection of putting a face to a name, or a person to property damage is profound. Mediation is not for all cases or all offenders but the youth that are able to learn from it makes it so worthwhile.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 31, 2002—Volunteer Mediator Get-Together
- Nov.—Dec., 2002—Alamosa District Expelled students' training series
- December 10, 2002—Holiday Open House (see announcement)
- December 30, 2002—Alamosa Sheriff's Dept. Patrol and Victim's Advocate In-Service
- January, 2002—Annual Meeting (date TBA)
- 4th Annual Teen Mediator Summit—TBA—(Feb.-March Timeframe)



VOLUNTEER PROFILE: FRANK MARTINEZ

VORP has been privileged to have Frank Martinez serve as an ASC intern in our office this Fall. Frank lives in Capulin with his wife and eight children, and will graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Psychology in December. He hopes to continue with a Master's Program, as part of his goal to work with at-risk youth and their families in the arena of social welfare. Frank was previously involved with law enforcement, and brought a wealth of life experience into his internship role. As a non-traditional student, his maturity and professionalism have been greatly valued by our staff, VORP clients and training participants alike. Imposing in stature, but gentle of heart, Frank demonstrates a relaxed and caring concern for our youth that is genuine and contagious. **Thank you, Frank,** for the gift of your time and insights.

SLV VORP SUPPORTERS

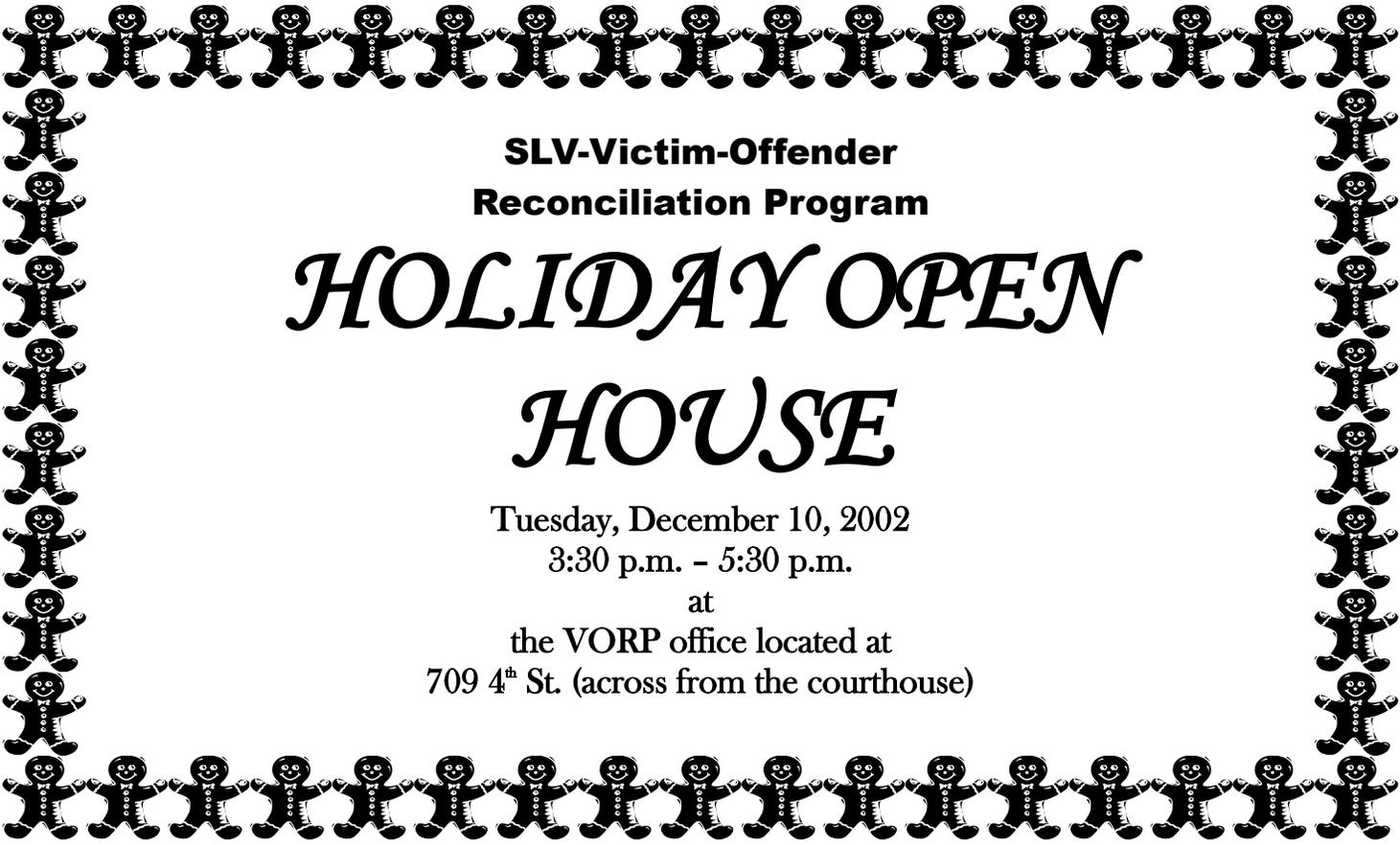
Please add me to the mailing list for the next mediator training

I am enclosing a tax deductible contribution for \$_____

I am enclosing the name & phone # of a church or civic organization that may be interested in a presentation about VORP

DONATION OPPORTUNITY

If you have an account at SLV Federal, stop by in December and select SLV-VORP as a “customer’s choice” charity. This allows us to receive a portion of the \$10,000 the bank has set aside for charitable giving in 2002.



**SLV-Victim-Offender
Reconciliation Program**

***HOLIDAY OPEN
HOUSE***

Tuesday, December 10, 2002

3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

at

the VORP office located at
709 4th St. (across from the courthouse)

SLV-VORP is a member of Valley Community Fund

San Luis Valley



Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program

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