

Hello NIBIC folks,

Happy Labor Day week. To continue the theme of good work for workers, the national Interfaith Worker Justice website, www.iwj.org, has a broad range of resources and worship materials for you to use in your workplace and congregational ministries this season. We make the resources available here at Worklife Institute.

This week we participated in a major hiring fair at the baseball stadium in Houston. 1,000 transitioning veterans and their family members mobbed our information table looking for new opportunities. The Oil & Gas industry has plummeted in this region, and over 70,000 jobs have been lost in the greater Houston area. Many of those we assisted through their job search over the past seven years are having to hit the pavement again. Employment cycles are a major challenge, and I hope that more of us industrial and business chaplains will buff up our skills in career transition counseling and use that to reach out to the working people in your region. If anyone in NIBIC would like some coaching in developing or updating these skills, you may call us at Worklife Institute. Likewise, any other NIBIC members who have this knowledge, please copy the email list above and offer your assistance.

Another application of workplace ministry I recommend getting refresher training for is in providing critical incident response. We at Worklife Institute head up or are part of a number of Employee Assistance Program – based critical incident response teams. This summer, we have been called on to handle a variety of incidents, including corporate layoff days, retail and bank armed robberies, the murder of a company area manager by a just-fired employee, and a manager suicide. Each situation is unique, and we go on-site with prayerful openness to discern what is going on under the surface, to pick up on each employee's personal response with respect and compassion, to provide support to management and help restore a sense of safety and hope.

The current issue of *The Journal of Employee Assistance* (3rd Quarter 2015, VOL. 45 No.3) is a good place to start. The cover article is entitled, "Broadening the Value of Critical Incident Response" (pp. 10-13). It recounts a 5-year study which found that the most common requests for CIR services have been employee death (45%), robbery and armed robbery (31%), and layoff, downsizing, termination (8%). This is what we are experiencing for the Houston area. You can request a copy of the Final Report Executive Summary at jfrey@ssw.umaryland.edu.

Some *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling* news: Alan Harris has taken over from Dave Plummer as NIBIC's representative on the Board of Managers. Sage Publications is now the producer of the Journal, which is on-line. We have access to the Journal through logging on to the www.nibic.com website and clicking on the Journal link. Greg Edwards, our Treasurer and web keeper, is troubleshooting the link as I write this, because there have been some bumps in making the publisher transition to member pastoral care organizations. By the time you read this, we should be up and running. Remember that you need to create your log on before you can access this member benefit. The summer issue is now online.

And, NIBIC Board notes: Several of us, including myself, Alan Harris, Juliette Jones, and Lowell Graves, are going to be getting our heads together in a brainstorming session to see how NIBIC members can link closer together to provide for collaboration and energizing in our association. All your ideas are welcome. Also, for anyone who is in arrears with your 2015 dues, please send them in ASAP, so that we can pay our website and JCPC assessments.

Wishing you the best and blessings for a good start to the Fall back to work and school season. Diana

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