

Troy House provides opportunity Inmates receive help

By JUDITH TILLMAN
Staff Writer

Dick Jones (the name is fictitious) was convicted of selling cocaine in 1973. He spent more than a year in prison. Denied parole, he obtained an early release from prison through Troy House in Durham, a rehabilitation center for prison inmates. With the assistance of the Troy staff, he found a job and decided to return to college. He received his bachelor's degree from a local university in May and will enter law school this fall.

Troy House is a center for state and federal prison inmates. It began under the name of Maynard House in 1970, and was a rehabilitation house for mentally retarded delinquent youth. In 1971 the house became Transition of Youth, Inc. (TROY) and emphasized vocational rehabilitation for delinquents 16 and older. During the last three years Troy has evolved into a rehabilitation center for prison inmates and recipients of aid from the N.C. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Inmates who come to Troy are usually men in their early 20s who have six months or less of their sentence to serve. Most residents live in the house approximately three months.

A resident's first two weeks at Troy serve as an adjustment period. A newcomer has time to get acquainted with the staff and other residents. He is required to begin to look for a job.

"My philosophy is to place the responsibility for finding a job on the resident," Hadrick said. But he and his staff quickly provide encouragement and assistance when it is needed.

"Many employers are very interested in hiring someone until they notice that he has spent time with the department of correction," he said. "Then they back off."

The counselors work individually with the residents to help them find jobs and to help them learn of opportunities for further education.

Curfew for Troy residents is 11 p.m. on weekdays and 1 a.m. on weekends. Residents may stay away

overnight or for a weekend, but they must notify Hadrick of their plans.

A recent study showed that only 13 per cent of former Troy residents who had been in prison returned to prison within a year after leaving Troy. "Unfortunately, two former residents have gone back to jail since the study," said Hadrick. "Some of the men who have lived at Troy seem like part of my family," he said. "I hate to see them get into trouble again." He plans to initiate more in-depth follow-up studies soon.

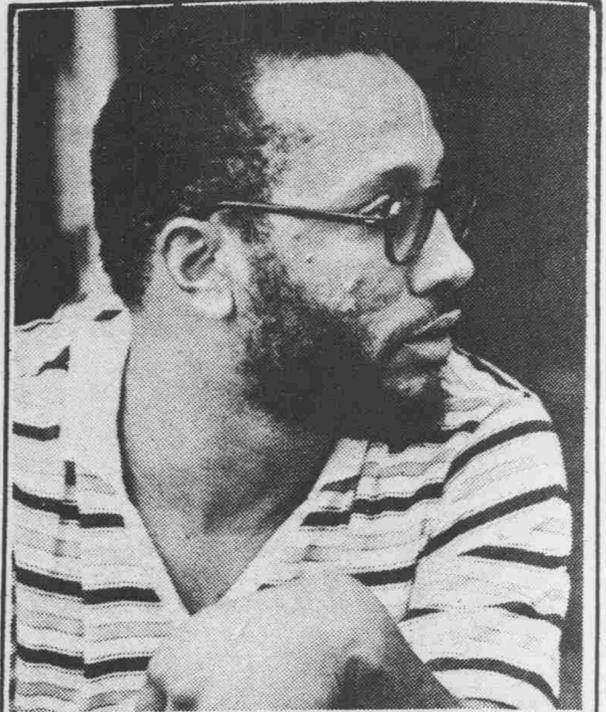
Funding for residents is the center's most serious problem. Under contract with Troy, the Federal Bureau of Prisons provides \$20 a day for each resident who has not found a job. It pays \$18 a day for each employed resident. Each resident pays \$20 a week for rent. There are many inmates in prisons now who are eligible to come to Troy, but there is not enough money to fund them.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons began to refer increased numbers of men to Troy House during the summer of 1976. The house was full (nine residents) during most of this past winter. Now there are six residents.

"We have painted and made repairs and tried to make the house look more like home," Hadrick said. "We have a good staff and I think we're ready to roll, but the whole thing will fall through if we don't have enough money to bring men here from the prisons."

He hopes to gain support for the house from Triangle communities. He is concentrating on a summer publicity campaign and will begin fund-raising projects in the fall. He wants to create greater community awareness of Troy House's purposes and goals.

Hadrick has plans for increasing Troy House activities. He hopes to complete a basketball court which was started in the spring. Construction on the court stopped several weeks ago because money for the project ran out. He would also like to hire a psychologist to lead regular group discussions among the residents.



Troy House board member David Eckerman indicates that the most important thing is to keep communication open and stay in tune with the community. Staff photo by L. C. Barbour

Hadrick periodically meets with the Troy board of directors to discuss publicity and fund raising. Board members include John Lennon, North Carolina Central University dean of men, board president; Adrienne Fox, Durham Legal Aid Society, and David Eckerman, associate professor of psychology, UNC.

Hadrick and Eckerman emphasized Troy efforts to maintain a good rapport with the local community. "The most important thing is to keep communications open, to stay in tune with the community," Eckerman said. Hadrick stressed that the local neighborhood is very receptive of Troy house residents. "We have some very good neighbors," he said.

Hadrick is encouraged by Troy's success in helping its residents become re-established in jobs and community activities. "We need to raise money and bring more men to Troy. We have room for three more men right now. I hope we can afford to fill those places soon."



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