

# HIGHLIGHTS of AL-ANON

## in

# INSTITUTIONS

## 30 years of history

- 1956 Lois W. asked Irma F., Al-Anon's third volunteer to check the feasibility of contacting the secretaries of AA groups in prisons. Irma felt a lot of good could come from this and drafted a letter for Lois to approve. In October of 1956, AA's Grapevine had an article about Al-Anon members doing prison work.
- 1957 Irma F., contacted AA GSO for a list of AA groups in institutions. A letter was sent to each AA group secretary explaining our fellowship, aims and purpose. Requests for information were received from residents in 26 state prisons; 10 from Canada, 1 from England and 1 from New Zealand. (Prison authorities found the percentage of continued sobriety was greater when families attended Al-Anon.) In 1959 AA groups in prisons and 150 additional hospitals were contacted.
- 1961 Anne B., co-founder of Al-Anon services, assumed responsibility for WSO Institutions work. Volunteers spoke to families during visiting hours at prisons and distributed literature.
- 1965 Al-Anon served an increasing number of families of AA members belonging to groups in institutions. Alateen was instituted in a maximum security boys' school in Texas and in an institution for girls in Canada. At the end of 10 years, 45 Institutions groups were registered.
- 1968 First draft of Guidelines for Institutions Work was distributed at the 1968 Conference. Letters were mailed to 1400 AA Institutions groups.
- 1969 Al-Anon groups in Institutions had tripled since 1966. A pilot project was started which suggested to Delegates that an Al-Anon group be started in any institution that had been ordering an abundance of literature.
- 1970 WSO Institutions Committee received approval to start an Institutions newsletter. The first issue of INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS was to be mailed in January 1971. Through the efforts of the Delegates, local Institutions Committees and the cooperation of sponsors of AA Institutions groups, Al-Anon Institutions groups increased.
- 1972 Mail to WSO indicated that we were reaching judges, wardens and hospital directors through Al-Anon and Alateen members' involvement. More professionals were requesting that an Institutions group be started at their facility.

- 1975 Guidelines for "A Meeting On Wheels" were developed. This brief on-site meeting, proved to be a successful method of presenting Al-Anon to professionals. Institutions articles became a monthly feature in The FORUM, under the title of "Come Alive in '75."
- 1976 FORUM articles continued under the title of "Spirit of '76." A direct result of FORUM articles was that more members volunteered for service.
- 1977 A cover letter, INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS and a "Meeting on Wheels" format was mailed to English speaking groups and translated for the Spanish-speaking groups.
- 1978 A leaflet, YOU CAN Render A Great Service To Families of PROBLEM DRINKERS, was developed by committee members for distribution in emergency rooms, courts, etc.
- 1979 The Institutions newsletter, INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS, was renamed AL-ANON IN INSTITUTIONS to indicate what it is; Al-Anon activities in institutions.
- 1980 New Orleans International Convention, Institutions Session, "A Step Beyond," brought six members together from different parts of the world to serve on a panel. They shared how each carried the Al-Anon message, "A Step Beyond," their home group meetings.
- 1981 Newsletter, AL-ANON IN INSTITUTIONS, came of age and went to press. With an attractive new face and format, the first issue was sent groupwide. The Spanish translation created interest and activity among Spanish speaking members who are bringing the Al-Anon program to the Spanish population in institutions.
- 1983 Guidelines for Al-Anon Service in Correctional Facilities were developed and distributed at the World Service Conference in April.
- 1984 A year-long study on a suggested "name change" indicated the word "Institutions" appearing before "committee," "group" or "service" wasn't objectionable. Rather, the need for the membership's awareness of what Al-Anon in Institutions represents is what really counts. The study revealed that no other name could appropriately replace the word "Institutions" and still cover all the aspects of its meaning. When these facts were tabulated, it was agreed, the name "Institutions" would remain the same.
- 1985 The leaflet, "Planting A Seed" was developed for members interested in bringing the Al-Anon program to hospitals, treatment centers, correctional and other residential facilities. Thus making the Al-Anon presence visible.
- 1986 A Worldwide Institutions Month campaign was instituted. Members made an effort to reach as many institutions as possible during a specific month.

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