



## 2021 Spring Fundraiser

**GOAL WAS  
\$5,000**

*raised \$8,775*

**Thank You!**

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## 11 Trained/Retrained on May 1



This hybrid online course involved people and ministries from several parts of Florida. This included Impact Church ministries of Jacksonville, Jericho Road of Brooksville, Inside-Out Jail Ministries, Orlando, Harvest House, Sarasota, and personal ministry in Bradenton.

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### Jericho Road, Brooksville

6 Shared the Computer at JR  
(Jericho Road has been part of FIT since 2008!)

from Cheryl Hart, VP Programs -

We had a great time on Saturday. The training was really good. Thank you. As promised, I have attached a photo of the attendees.

From the right: Melanie Blankenship, Pamela Travis, Carol Robin Watler, L. James Van Wagoner, Cheryl Hart and Mark Kaly in the forefront.

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### FIT Program Approvals

The Fit office is often asked about who recognizes our program and who does not. The short answer is "it depends". Here is a summary of some of them:

#### FL Department of Corrections

From 2008-2017 our entire program was approved state-wide as meeting the 100-hour transition requirement. In 2017, our program was broken up into eight separate programs with six approved as electives and two classified as "Bible study" and not approved. In 2019, our entire program was reclassified as a Bible Study but approval for use in a particular prison is at the discretion of the local prison officials. That is how it stands today.

(over)

## Program Approvals Continued

Our work through all of these years has been coordinated mostly through the chaplaincy offices and none of these changes has had a material effect on our getting into the prisons and conducting our classes.

### Florida Jails

Program approvals in Florida Jails are determined by each of the 67 separate county sheriff offices. Some have approved all of our courses. Some have approved some of them. And some of them have not approved any of them. Approvals change over time with changes of administration, sometimes going from total approval to no approval and back again. Jails are increasingly looking for evidence based programs.

### Florida Department of Children and Families

Case management for programs related to custody of children has been largely privatized to outside contract agencies in each of the 20 Florida Judicial districts. Some districts approve all our courses, some approve some of them, and some do not approve any of them. The most commonly approved FIT courses are *Anger Dynamics* and *Practical Parenting*. In the home district of FIT, our Anger Dynamics course is approved both for sentencing in general by the courts as well as for child custody cases. Our parenting course is approved for "non judicial" clients who are following a case plan before their case goes to court but not for "judicial" clients who have already had a judicial decision.

## FIT Teams up with FSU and UCF in Research Project

It started with our YouTube "Evidence Based" video produced by Drs. John Woods, Gary Ensign, and Don Pratt. Dr. Ensign followed up with a call to Dr. Julie Brancale of Florida State University asking if they had any research on the success of faith prisons in Florida. This led to Professor Brancale inviting Dr. Ensign to teach a lesson to her class on the topic. Professor Brancale is a part of the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice at their Tallahassee campus.

This further led to discussions about the possibility conducting an effectiveness study of linking the FIT database to that of the Florida Department of Corrections. The preliminary work has started with Dr. Pratt of the FIT office, Dr. Brancale, and Dr. Karol Lucken of the Department of Criminal Justice of the University of Central Florida.

### *from the desk of Office Manager Betty Drawdy*



FIT provides a very valuable service to its facilitators by supplying the colorful, data-rich, certificates to their clients. This is a very tedious and labor-intensive challenge for us but is well worth the effort. Problems often arise due to the spellings of names. Sometimes it is just because of a typo and sometimes because of something else like a nickname. When in doubt, we use the official Florida Department of Corrections information if that is available.