

FREE!

All Adults Welcome



2024 Fall Programs

Welcome to Mercy Connections

Who We Are:

Mercy Connections is an educational and community resource center that offers a wide variety of classes and programs for adults who are looking to advance themselves through education, mentoring, small business development and community.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated and talented professional staff who facilitate, coach, mentor and are available to help you reach your goals.

Our beautiful center is for everyone. We welcome you and ask that you participate with a kind heart and take good care of the shared space and community.

Programs & Services Offered:

- Academic Tutoring
- Community Meal Programs
- English Language Learning
- Inclusive Entrepreneurship
- Justice, Mentoring & Reentry
- Personal Growth Education
- U.S. Citizenship Preparation

Our Philosophy on Inclusion and Belonging:

Mercy Connections is made up of people from many different backgrounds and lived experiences that include various cultural, religious and language backgrounds. This may also include differing viewpoints, life circumstances and identities. We greatly value the richness that this diversity brings.

We strive to create an environment that is welcoming, safe and inclusive for each person who comes through its doors. One way that we do this is by respecting an individual's identity—whether regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, pronouns, ethnic or racial background, or any other identifying characteristics that people choose to share.

We ask that you contribute to this value of inclusion by treating all those you encounter at Mercy Connections with respect and with kindness.

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FALL PROGRAMS HELD AT MERCY CONNECTIONS: SEPT. - DEC. 2024

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Morning Classes	Introduction to Small Business 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Tutoring (ELL) 9:30 am - 11:30 am	English Language Learning Pronunciation 10:00 am - 11:00 am	Tutoring (Academic, Citizenship) 9:00 am - 11:00 am
	1:1 Small Business Coaching 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Small Business Launch Pad 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	English Conversation for Intermediate-Level 11:15 am - 12:30 pm	Mercy Makerspace 9:00 am - 11:00 am
	Navigating Life's Challenges 10:30 am - 12:00 pm		P&P Business Owner Support Group 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Circle 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
Afternoon / Evening Classes	Topics in Entrepreneurship ELL 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	1:1 Small Business Coaching 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Public Speaking Concepts & Practice 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Community Lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
	Men Moving Forward 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Mercy Marketplace 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Pens & Pages for ELL 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Personal Growth Accelerator 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
	Beginning English Level II 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Beginning English Level I (A) 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Beginning English Level II 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Beginning English Level I (A) 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm
		U.S. Citizenship Preparation 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Tutoring (All) 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Pens & Pages 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm
			Beginning English Level I (B) 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	
			VT. Women's Mentoring Training 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	

English Language Learning/US Citizenship Classes

Listed in order of date that the classes begin

Beginning English Level II

Date: Mondays and Wednesdays
September 16 - December 11

Time: 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Where: In-person at
Mercy Connections

Instructor: Maxine McGowan

Description: This group class is intended for adult beginning level ELL students who *already* have some basic English language skills, and have mastered our Beginning English Level I skills course.

Instruction in Beginning Level II will include increasingly complex reading, writing, listening and speaking skills that facilitate communication throughout the community.

For example, students will study vocabulary in thematic units to describe family relationships, search for apartments, understand utilities, describe their occupation, etc.

How to Register: Contact Veronica or Raquel

Veronica Bernicke
vbernicke@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7162

Registration Deadline: September 11

Contact Raquel to register after the deadline

U.S. Citizenship Preparation

Date: Tuesdays
September 17 - December 10

Time: 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Where: In-person at
Mercy Connections

Instructor: Melissa Lang

Description: In this class, students with their green cards who are ready to prepare for the U.S. Citizenship Test and Interview will learn the steps to become a U.S. Citizen. This class is for intermediate and advanced-level English speakers.

The curriculum covers all aspects of the U.S. Citizenship Test and Interview: 100 Civics questions, writing skills, reading skills, and listening/ speaking skills needed. Students will also receive help understanding the language of the application itself. When near to completion of the course (usually two semesters), students are referred to a pro bono lawyer for support completing and submitting their N-400 applications to USCIS.

*Note: Students who are beginning level English Language Learners will be referred to English classes or placed in one-on-one tutoring for support to improve their English skills before enrolling in the Citizenship Preparation Class.

How to Register: Contact Melissa

Melissa Lang
mlang@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Registration Deadline: September 11

English Language Learning/US Citizenship Classes

Listed in order of date that the classes begin

Beginning English Level I

Date: Tuesdays and Thursdays
September 17 - December 12

Time: 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm
Note: There is also an evening class available on Wednesdays - See page 8

Where: In-person at
Mercy Connections

Instructor: Veronica Bernicke

Description: This group class is intended for adult beginning level ELL students for whom English is a new language.

The class will include instruction in the four main skill areas of ELL development: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Instruction will focus on survival English skills, studying the letter names and sounds in English, greetings, introducing oneself, asking/answering simple questions and basic conversation skills.

How to Register: Contact Veronica or Raquel

Veronica Bernicke
vbernicke@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7162

Registration Deadline: September 11
Contact Raquel to register after the deadline

English Language Pronunciation

Date: Wednesdays
September 18 - December 11

Time: 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Where: In-person at
Mercy Connections

Instructor: Veronica Bernicke

Description: This class aims to improve pronunciation and comprehension skills through the practice of individual sounds (phonemes) and basic phonics drills.

Students will use tongue twisters, call and response, and articulation exercises to target vowel sounds and common pronunciation challenges. Students are encouraged to share obstacles to production and comprehension to work on in class.

This class is appropriate for all levels of student and can help beginning students build a strong foundation for further learning.

How to Register: Contact Veronica or Raquel

Veronica Bernicke
vbernicke@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7162

Registration Deadline: September 11

English Language Learning/US Citizenship Classes

English Conversation Group for Intermediate-Level Speakers

Date: Wednesdays
September 18 - December 11

Time: 11:15 am - 12:30 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Veronica Bernicke

Description: Intermediate-level English speakers may join this group for a fun and engaging class. Activities will focus on oral communication, learning about the U.S. and cross-cultural exploration.

How to Register: Contact Veronica or Raquel

Veronica Bernicke
vbernicke@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7162

Registration Deadline: September 11

Pens & Pages for English Language Learners

Date: Wednesdays
September 18 - December 11

Time: 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructors: Melissa Lang & Peter Burns

Description: This class is intended for intermediate to advanced level English Language Learners. Students will read "The Eyes and the Impossible," by renowned author, Dave Eggers.

In this award-winning fictional novel, a free dog named Johannes whose job is to report the daily activities of a park to a "Council of Bison." Described as "a timeless story for all ages," this is a tale filled with humor and unforgettable personalities.

In class, students will discuss the book's themes which include friendship, survival, teamwork, freedom, the power of art, and the importance of one's chosen family. Students will also practice skills to increase their abilities as readers and writers. Everyone will be expected to read 20-25 pages for homework each week. A brief reading and writing assessment is required for enrollment. Books are generously provided free of charge, thanks to Vermont Humanities.

How to Register: Contact Melissa

Melissa Lang
mlang@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Registration Deadline: September 11

English Language Learning/US Citizenship Classes

Beginning English Level I

Date: Wednesdays
September 18 - December 11
Note: There is also an afternoon class available on Wednesdays - See page 6

Time: 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Maxine McGowan

Description: This group class is intended for adult beginning level English language learning students for whom English is a new language.

The class will include instruction in the four main skill areas of ELL development: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Instruction will also focus on survival English skills, studying the letter names and sounds in English, greetings and asking/answering simple questions and basic conversation skills.

How to Register: Contact Veronica or Raquel

Veronica Bernicke
vbernicke@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7162

Registration Deadline: September 11

Topics in Entrepreneurship for English Language Learners

Date: Mondays
October 21 - December 09

Time: 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructors: Maxine McGowan & Jacob Cribbs

Description: This is a student-centered class that introduces topics related to starting a business in Vermont. It is designed for intermediate-to-advanced level English Language Learners.

Each class will include vocabulary instruction and examples of cultural practices essential for exploring entrepreneurship. Students will have opportunities to practice open conversations and learn directly from business owners.

How to Register: Contact Raquel. All students will need to be assessed for level of English prior to enrolling.

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7162

Registration Deadline: October 14

Tutoring Programs

Note: This is not a drop-in program. Each student is paired with their own tutor and commits to a 90-minute time slot each week at the same time and on the same day at Mercy Connections.

US Citizenship Preparation

Date: September 18 - December 12

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Time: Select one weekly 90-minute appointment:
Wednesdays 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Thursdays 9:00 am - 10:30 am

Coordinator: Melissa Lang

How to Register: Contact Melissa

Melissa Lang
mlang@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Registration Deadline: We maintain an active waiting list. New students can be accommodated as spots open up.

Description: Adult learners are matched with skilled tutors one-on-one to prepare for the U.S. Citizenship test and interview. Students will study United States history, government and geography.

Each session includes practice questions and answers from the U.S. Citizenship test and time to practice English language skills.

It is recommended to register for tutoring prior to submitting the N-400 application to USCIS. Students learn about the N-400 application process and receive support to understand the language of the application.

Academic Support

Date: September 18 - December 12

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Time: Select one weekly 90-minute appointment:
Wednesdays 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Thursdays 9:00 am - 10:30 am

Coordinator: Melissa Lang

How to Register: Contact Melissa

Melissa Lang
mlang@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Registration Deadline: We maintain an active waiting list. New students can be accommodated as spots open up.

Description: Adult learners are matched with skilled, trained tutors, one-on-one, to improve academic skills.

Each student is provided with an individualized educational support plan. Students meet with their tutor in the center, and the program is facilitated by the Tutoring Program Coordinators.

Tutoring Programs

Note: This is not a drop-in program. Each student is paired with their own tutor and commits to a 90-minute time slot each week at the same time and on the same day at Mercy Connections.

English Language Learning (ELL)

Date: September 17 - December 11

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Time: Select one weekly 90-minute appointment:
Tuesdays 9:30 am - 11:30 am
Wednesdays 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Coordinator: Veronica Bernicke

How to Register: Contact Veronica

Veronica Bernicke
802-846-7086
vbernicke@mercyconnections.org

Registration Deadline: We maintain an active waiting list. New students can be accommodated as spots open up.

Description: Adult learners are matched with skilled, trained tutors, one-on-one, to improve English language learning skills.

Each student is provided with an individualized educational support plan. Students meet in our center and the program is staffed and facilitated by the ELL/Tutoring Program Coordinators.



Personal Growth Programs

Navigating Life's Challenges: Inspiration from the Book 'Two Old Women'

Date: Mondays
September 16 - November 18

Time: 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Heather Gilbert

Description: Participants will read an inspiring short novel about resilience, working together and survival to prompt reflection about these themes in their own lives.

"Two Old Women," by Velma Wallis is based on Athabaskan legend and tells the story of two Indigenous women who are left in the wilderness to survive.

Class participants will identify parallels and strengths in their own lives to find tools for living, problem solving and building community.

How to Register: Sign up online or contact Heather directly
Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: Ongoing

Men Moving Forward

Date: Mondays
September 16 - December 09

Time: 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Michael Hechmer

Description: An engaging support group for men and male-identifying persons. Participants will learn from one another as they explore circumstances, experiences and goals over the course of the session.

This program is intended for participants to grow skills in building supportive relationships with other men to challenge and sustain one another, work through personal goals and life transitions, and learn how to show up consistently for themselves and others.

How to Register: Sign up online or contact Raquel

Raquel Aronhime
raronhime@mercyconnections.org
802-846-162

Registration Deadline: September 16

Personal Growth Programs

Public Speaking Concepts & Practice

Date: Wednesdays
September 18 - November 20

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Heather Gilbert

Description: In this class, participants will practice public speaking skills in a safe and supportive setting among peers.

Participants will learn about basic concepts and tools to help address nerves, organize a talk and more. Participants will also be expected to prepare brief presentations and apply what has been learned.

How to Register: Sign up online or contact Heather

Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: Ongoing

Personal Growth Accelerator

Date: Thursdays, by appointment
September 19 - December 12

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Heather Gilbert

Description: Participants may sign up for three to six one-on-one sessions with Personal Growth Coordinator, Heather Gilbert, to prepare for or build upon the concepts taught within personal growth programming.

Participants will create specific goals and set up a plan for self-assessment with their instructor.

How to Register: Contact Heather

Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: Ongoing

Limited spots available - a waitlist will be maintained if needed

Personal Growth Programs

Pens & Pages

Date: Thursdays
September 19 - December 12

Time: 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructors: Melissa Lang & Peter Burns

Description: This class is designed for native English readers, writers and speakers, as well as advanced-level ELL students.

Participants will read and discuss “Gather,” a novel written by Vermont educator and author, Kenneth M. Cadow. It is the story of Ian, a teenage boy struggling to help his mother who is trying to overcome her addiction to opioids.

Students will read 30 pages per week for homework, and in-class discussions will center around themes of rural life, resilience, class differences, addiction and recovery, and the power of community.

Each week, students will be expected to produce one piece of writing chosen from the list of prompts. In class, they will share their writings and provide feedback to peers with the goal of helping one another become stronger writers.

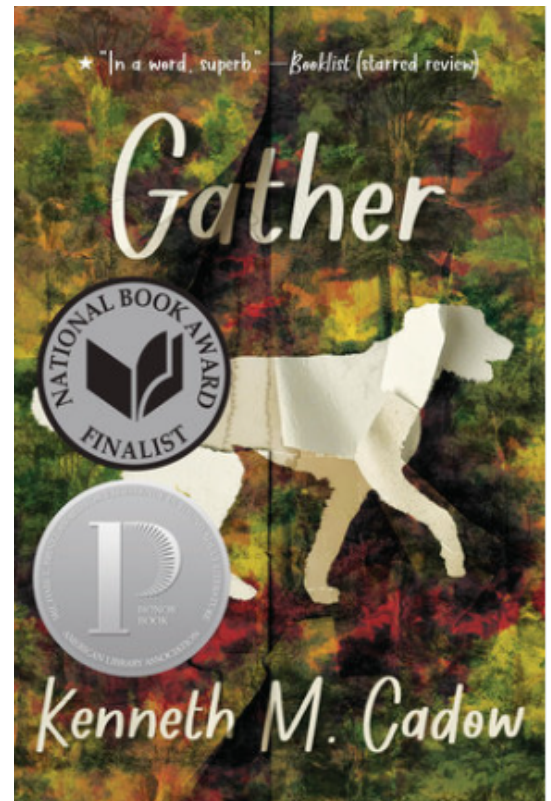
“Gather” was chosen as the Vermont Reads 2024 Book of the Year by Vermont Humanities.

Books are provided free of charge, thanks to the generosity of Vermont Humanities.

How to Register: Contact Melissa

Melissa Lang
mlang@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7084

Registration Deadline: September 11



Limited spots available - a waitlist will be maintained if needed

Personal Growth Programs

Circle

Date: Thursdays
September 19 - December 12

Time: 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Facilitator: Sr. Ann Duhaime, RSM

Description: Circle is a supportive experience where people can take time to reflect on peace, hope and healing. Participants may find renewal and gain strength as they listen to and talk about experiences. This is a special time to feel part of a nurturing community and imagine new possibilities.

This program does require registration, but participants are not required to attend every session.

How to Register: Sign up online or contact Heather

Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: None



Personal Growth Workshops

Setting Course for 2025

Date: Wednesdays
December 4 and 11

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Heather Gilbert

Description: In this six-hour workshop over that lasts three weeks, participants will learn how to welcome new possibilities by setting their mind toward growth and change.

Additionally, participants will be tasked with developing meaningful goals and strategizing how to navigate obstacles toward them.

Through group discussions and creative activities, participants will ultimately develop a vision and plan for making progress in 2025.

How to Register: Sign up online or contact Heather

Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: Ongoing

Need Assistance Registering?

Learn More Online:
www.mercyconnections.org

With Registration:
Call the instructor listed for the program

All Other Questions:
802-846-7063

Inclusive Entrepreneurship Programs

Small Business Launch Pad

Date: Tuesdays
September 17 - December 10

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Claire Wheeler

Description: This class is for participants who are looking for community and support as they start their new business. Launch Pad is a supported, drop in, co-working space for folks actively working to start a new business. Participants work alongside other entrepreneurs to take action and get support on tasks to get their business up and running.

The Inclusive Entrepreneurship program staff will offer help on everything from registering a business or setting up bookkeeping software, to building a marketing strategy.

Registration: Interested students must schedule a chat with Claire Wheeler before enrollment in order to survey each person's needs and ensure fit.

Claire Wheeler
cwheeler@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7081

Registration Deadline: September 18

Mercy Marketplace

Date: Tuesdays
September 17 - December 10

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructors: Heather Gilbert & Jacob Cribbs

Description: This course is for artists and and crafters who have dreamed of selling their work. In this 13-week vendor training program, participants will apply project management skills to explore how to sell products to the public.

Students will learn how to assess the market for products and discover what makes their work unique. They will also learn how to create a budget, price products, how to work with customers and handle money.

The class includes a field trip to the Old Mill Craft shop at the Snowflake Bentley Museum on October 29th, and culminates in a marketplace experience held at Mercy Connections on November 23rd.

Registration: Register online or contact Heather

Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: September 18

Inclusive Entrepreneurship Programs

Pride & Prosperity: Business Owner Support Group

Date: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays
September 18 - December 11

Time: 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Jacob Cribbs

Description: Join a facilitated peer-to-peer support circle to discuss important issues and challenges unique to LGBTQIA2S+ business owners in the state of Vermont.

Topics may include resource navigation, marketing, visibility, aspects of business ownership and management, finances, skill shares, and explorations of personal and interpersonal strategies for successful business endeavors.

Registration: Register online or contact Jacob

Jacob Cribbs
jcribbs@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7390

Registration Deadline: September 18

Mercy Makerspace

Date: Thursdays
September 19 - December 12

Time: 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructors: Heather Gilbert & Vicky Tamas

Description: Crafters and makers are supported in a co-working environment to develop and create products to sell at craft and art fairs, including Mercy Connections' "Mercy Marketplace" fair that takes place in November, 2024.

Participants work one-on-one with instructors to design and create products, hone time and project management skills, and set sales goals for vending opportunities that they wish to pursue.

Registration: Register online or contact Heather

Heather Gilbert
hgilbert@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7294

Registration Deadline: September 18

Limited spots available - a waitlist will be maintained if needed

Inclusive Entrepreneurship Programs

Introduction to Small Business

Date: Mondays
October 07 - December 09

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: In-Person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Claire Wheeler

Description: In this introductory series, participants can learn about a variety of topics to support them in starting and operating a small business in Vermont.

Register once and attend all, or just drop in for the sessions that are of interest to you.

Session topics:

1. Design Your Business Model Using the Business Model Canvas - Oct. 07
2. How to Register Your Business - Oct. 21
3. Intro to Marketing and Branding - Oct. 28
4. How to Create Your Own Website - Nov. 04
5. Intro to Business Finance & Bookkeeping - Nov. 11
6. Paying Yourself and Your Taxes as a Small Business Owner - Nov. 18
7. Managing Risk for Your Business - Dec. 02
8. Time Management for Business Owners - Dec. 09

Registration: Register online or contact Jacob

Jacob Cribbs
jcribbs@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7390

Registration Deadline: One week before each session begins.

One-on-One Small Business Coaching

Coaching with Jacob Cribbs

Date: Mondays
October 07 - December 09

Time: 1-hour sessions by appointment
between 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections,
online or by phone

Coaching with Claire Wheeler

Date: Tuesdays
September 17 - December 10

Time: 1-hour sessions by appointment
between 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections,
online or by phone

Description: Individualized business coaching is offered for all aspiring, new and established business owners who need specialized support and technical assistance moving forward with their business.

Each participant may access up to three 1-hour coaching sessions.

Registration: Contact Jacob or Claire

Jacob Cribbs
jcribbs@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7390

Claire Wheeler
cwheeler@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7081

Registration Deadline: September 18

Inclusive Entrepreneurship Workshops

Small Business Workshop: Idea to Action

Date: Mondays
September 16, 23 and 30

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Instructor: Jacob Cribbs

Description: This is a six-hour workshop that spans over the course of three sessions. Each session is two hours long.

The workshop is designed to introduce aspiring adult entrepreneurs to self-employment and to assist with creating a vision and a plan for a path forward that includes business ownership.

Space is prioritized for new participants.

Registration: Register online or contact Jacob

Jacob Cribbs
jcribbs@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7390

Registration Deadline: September 11

Pride & Prosperity: Business Owner Workshop Series (Online)

Date: Wednesdays
September 25 - October 30

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: Via Zoom

Instructor: Claire Wheeler

Description: LGBTQIA2S+ business owners are invited to gather in community to brush up on essential tools, tricks and skills required to run a business.

Register once and attend all, or just drop in for the sessions that are of interest to you.

Session topics:

1. Time Management - Sept. 25
2. Money Management - Oct. 09
3. Navigating Risk and Legal Compliance - Oct. 23
4. Revisiting Your Marketing Strategy - Oct. 30

Registration: Register online or contact Jacob

Jacob Cribbs
jcribbs@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7390

Registration Deadline: September 11

Inclusive Entrepreneurship Workshops

Pride & Prosperity: Idea to Action Workshop (Online)

Date: Tuesdays
October 15, 22 and 29

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: Via Zoom

Instructor: Jacob Cribbs

Description: This is a six-hour workshop that spans over the course of three sessions. Each session is two hours long.

The workshop is designed to introduce aspiring adult entrepreneurs to self-employment and to assist with creating a vision and a plan for a path forward that includes business ownership.

Space is prioritized for LGBTQIA2S+ identified persons and/or business ideas that directly support the LGBTQIA2S+ community.

Registration: Register online or contact Jacob

Jacob Cribbs
jcribbs@mercyconnections.org
802-846-7390

Registration Deadline: September 11



Justice & Mentoring Programs

Programs held at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF)

Introduction to Mercy Connections Night

Date: Tuesday
September 10

Time: Held in two separate sessions
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
6:15 pm - 7:15 pm

Facilitators: Heather Gilbert, Kelly Moran

Description: An introduction to Mercy Connections and the various Personal Growth programs that are held at CRCF. Participants may learn more about the programs offered, ask questions and determine which program they would like to enroll in.

Registration: Open to CRCF participants only

Navigating Life's Challenges: Inspiration from the Book 'Two Old Women'

Date: Tuesdays
September 17 - November 12

Time: Held in two separate sessions
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
6:15 pm - 7:15 pm

Instructor: Heather Gilbert

Description: Participants will read an inspiring short novel about resilience, working together and survival to prompt reflection about these themes in their own lives.

"Two Old Women," by Velma Wallis is based on Athabascan legend and tells the story of two Indigenous women who are left in the wilderness to survive.

Class participants will identify parallels and strengths in their own lives to find tools for living, problem solving and building community.

Registration: Open to CRCF participants only

Justice & Mentoring Programs

Programs held at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF)

Circle

- Date:** Tuesdays
December 03 and 10
- Time:** Held in two separate sessions
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
6:15 pm - 7:15 pm
- Where:** Chittenden Regional
Correctional Facility (CRCF)
- Facilitator:** Heather Gilbert, Kelly Moran
- Description:** Circle is a supportive experience where people can take time to reflect on peace, hope and healing. Participants may find renewal and gain strength as they listen to and talk about experiences.
- This is a special time to feel part of a nurturing community and imagine new possibilities.
- Registration:** Open to CRCF participants only



Justice & Mentoring Programs

Programs held at Mercy Connections

Vermont Women's Mentor Training

Date: Wednesdays
September 11 - October 09

Time: 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections*

Instructors: Joanne Nelson & Kelly Moran

Description: This program pairs volunteer mentors with justice-involved women (mentees) in order to successfully reestablish their lives post-incarceration.

Volunteer mentors support, coach, and function as new, healthy companions to trauma-affected women facing many challenges.

Pairs are carefully matched, and training will provide everyone with the tools they need to be a successful mentor. Mentoring is a year-long commitment. We welcome all people who identify as women regardless of assignment at birth, transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming and gender-expansive folks who are comfortable in a woman-centered space to join the training.

* The last session will be held at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF) from 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Registration: Sign up online, or contact Joanne

Joanne Nelson
802-846-7164
jnelson@mercyconnections.org

Registration Deadline: September 10

Mentor Support Group

Date/Where: Wednesdays
September 30, in-person at Mercy Connections
October 23, in-person at Mercy Connections
November 13, via Zoom
December 16, via Zoom

Time: 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Facilitators: Joanne Nelson & Kelly Moran

Description: Staffed by the Justice and Mentoring team, this monthly support group is for mentors who are already paired with a justice-involved woman to ask questions and share experiences in a supportive and confidential environment.

Volunteer mentors support, coach, and function as new, healthy companions to trauma-affected women facing many challenges.



Community Meal Programs

The below programs are open to current Mercy Connections participants. Community meal programs are intended to promote connection and provide resources to support successful learning.

Community Lunch

Date: Wednesdays
September 19 - December 12

Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Where: In-person at Mercy Connections

Description: One of the oldest traditions of Mercy Connections! Every Thursday, Participants may stop by and join Mercy Connections' staff and community partners for a delicious lunch in the spirit of collaboration.

Everyone will stand in a circle and listen to a reading of a reflection, followed by announcements, and a meal together. Come by to practice your English, make new friends, learn more about community initiatives and feel a part of the incredible magic that happens at Mercy Connections. All participants welcome.

Registration: Not required

Did You Know?

Food insecurity affects concentration, memory, mood and motor skills - all of which are required for adults to be successful in a learning environment.

Where Learning & Living Come Together

At Mercy Connections, every person - regardless of life circumstances - experiences dignity, compassion and the opportunity to pursue personal aspirations within a supportive community. Our programs change lives.



QUESTIONS?

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