

United Way of Central Iowa leads the fight for the health, education, and financial stability of all central Iowans.



CAREER OPPORTUNITY:

## Peer Support Specialist

Central Iowa Retuning Citizens Achieve Program (CIRCA)

Position Posted: February 14, 2020	Application Deadline: February 24, 2020
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- To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to [careers@unitedwaydm.org](mailto:careers@unitedwaydm.org)
- For more organizational information, please visit [www.unitedwaydm.org](http://www.unitedwaydm.org)

### Program Summary

United Way of Central Iowa (UWCI) believes one of the clearest paths to economic self-sufficiency is education and training. Job training and readiness programs remain critical to advancing low-wage, low-skilled workers into self-sustaining jobs. To help fulfill our mission to improve lives by uniting the care power of our community, UWCI and its' Central Iowa Works initiative has developed a program that ensures individuals leaving incarceration have the skills necessary to secure long-term employment. The **Central Iowa Returning Citizens Achieve (CIRCA) Program** goal is that 75% of the individuals served will secure employment and less than 20% will return to prison. UWCI is seeking a Peer Support Specialist to join the CIRCA team to reach this goal.

### Position Summary

The Peer Support Specialist (PSS) assists and guides clients toward the identification and achievement of specific goals defined by the client. The work performed by this position will promote community socialization, successful reentry, self-advocacy, self-help, and development of natural supports. The candidate selected for this role will need to have personal experience in successfully reentering the community from incarceration and the ability to successfully complete peer support training as provided by the organization. The Peer Support Specialist works closely with the CIRCA case managers to identify clients who would benefit from peer support and mentoring. There will be some travel to correctional facilities in Newton and Mitchellville, The CIRCA program and this position is funded by a federal grant and is time limited and based on continued grant funding. This fulltime position is eligible for our benefits package and works Monday-Friday with mostly daytime hours and early evenings on occasion.

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## Why choose United Way of Central Iowa?

United Way of Central Iowa is an established and highly respected nonprofit in the Central Iowa area and the United Way Worldwide network. Employees at UWCI have a passion for the organization's mission and community impact work and strive to create a positive, inclusive, and welcoming work environment. Our Core Values of **Compassion, Integrity, Community Engagement, Responsiveness and Striving for Excellence** is the foundation for how we do our work and to reach our aspiration to "Engage Community to Empower All." In addition to a competitive salary and robust benefits package including health insurance, a dental plan, 401(k) with match and paid life insurance, we offer the following:

- Generous paid vacation plan, holidays, a personal holiday and sick time
- Paid volunteer time off
- Convenient central Des Moines location with free parking
- Free, newly remodeled on-site fitness center
- Tuition Assistance
- Commitment to employee professional development
- Fostering diversity and inclusion initiatives
- Fun monthly opportunities for employees to build camaraderie
- Wellness initiatives

## Essential Accountabilities Include (but not limited to):

- Assist CIRCA clients in articulating personal goals for reentry through the use of one-to-one and group sessions.
- Using training knowledge and tools, helps identify and develop reentry plans with the skills, strengths, supports and resources that will aid in achieving personal goals.
- Works with both the CIRCA participants and their case manager in determining the steps he/she needs to take in order to achieve these goals.
- Utilize tools such as the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) to assist participants in creating their own individual wellness and recovery plans.
- Independently or with periodic assistance of others utilizes and teaches daily living problem solving techniques and methods in an individual setting or by facilitating group discussions that share how others have overcome problems or certain situations.
- As a Peer Support Specialist, empathize and motivate clients by sharing personal experiences and what skills, strengths, supports and resources they used and will demonstrate how they have that directed their own successful return to the community.

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- Maintain a working knowledge of current trends and developments in the reentry field by reading books, journals, and other relevant materials .and attend continuing education seminars and other in-service training when offered.

## Competencies:

- Client Oriented: Demonstrates a level of desire to serve clients by focusing effort on meeting their needs, understanding their concerns, and seeking to build trust.
- Communication, Oral: Demonstrates an ability to send clear verbal messages and listen to others' responses in order to gain understanding.
- Empathetic: Demonstrates a level of ability to identify with or be sensitive to the feelings and experiences of others.
- Empathetic: Demonstrates a level of ability to identify with or be sensitive to the feelings and experiences of others without judgement.
- Tactful Demeanor: Demonstrates a high level of ability to show consideration and avoid giving offence in dealing with others. Relationship Building: Ability to establish and maintain a good rapport and relationships with customers and coworkers.
- Organized: Ability to be structured and methodical in working skills.
- Time management: Ability to effectively use available time for the completion of necessary job tasks
- Relationship Building: Ability to establish and maintain good rapport and cooperative relationships with customers and coworkers.
- Problem Solving: Ability to recognize courses of actions that can be taken to handle to handle problems or potential problems and apply contingency plans to solve those problems.

## Experience:

- Lived experience and knowledge of the reentry process.
- Proven experience in functioning successfully in the community.
- Ability to create and help with basic problem-solving strategies to support individual clients in reentry.
- Knowledge and skill to use community resources necessary for successful reentry
- Knowledge of how to establish and sustain self-help by soliciting input from participants on their strengths and interests.
- Ability to facilitate group discussions.
- A valid driver's license and good driving record is required

United Way is an equal opportunity employer and employment practices are implemented without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, military status or any other basis protected by federal, state or local fair employment practices.