



CREATIVE ACTS



VIRTUAL REALITY REENTRY PROGRAM PILOT

*IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH SANKOFA.ORG*

IMPACT REPORT 2021



LANDSCAPE: THE COST OF INCARCERATION

Cost annually to house an adult in CDCR:

\$81,000/per person

\$1.6 Billion annually

Additional Costs:

KERN VALLEY STATE PRISON

Cost to process an infraction:

\$970 per person/per infraction

\$9 million annually

Psychiatric counseling cost in CDCR:

\$6,051 per year/per person

Healthcare access staff:

\$465 million/annually

California Annual Budget for Reentry services:

\$50 million per year

**Information sourced from California Legislative Analyst's Office, Jan 2019*

LANDSCAPE: RECIDIVISM & REENTRY?

- A 2017 report from the ACLU states that one in three adults in the United States has a criminal record
- There are currently more than 2 million people incarcerated in the United States; California having the largest number of people incarcerated with 549 people per 1000,000 population
- It costs taxpayers \$81,000 a year to incarcerate an adult in the California state prison system
- 95% of our incarceration population will re-enter their community, and more than 65% of them will end up returning to prison
- Lack of employment has been determined to be the greatest indicator of recidivism

● Why **Virtual Reality?**

We utilize Virtual Reality technology and the Arts to impact the capacity of returning citizens to develop critical core skills for a sustainable successful transition back to the community.

How:

1. Building long-term rehabilitation experiences for returning citizens throughout our prison systems, effectively helping to reduce recidivism and create safer communities.
2. Establish VR as a vocational learning program inside institutions.
3. Helping to strengthen skills and tools for those who are transitioning from solitary confinement to larger general population yards.



● How We Work:



We created a curriculum to address these issues which combined a strong and validated arts-based program with virtual reality, a technology that has been used already to create breakthrough treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and is showing promise in the treatment of many other mental health conditions. Our VR scenarios are designed to expose our participants to experiences which have been shown to cause anxiety in individuals reentering society after long term incarceration. This is paired with various activities, exercises, visual art projects and open space for structured sharing, as well as emotional and trust development.

Mental Health Portion

- Individuals who have experienced long-term incarceration face many barriers when re-entering society. Many of these barriers are due to changes in our society which may have appeared gradual to the general population, but are extremely stark to an individual who has had no exposure to them for decades.
- Our goal was to measure and track changes in the emotional profiles of participants over the course of their participation in our program. Our data was gathered from a combination of evidenced-based testing, observation and direct feedback from our participants.



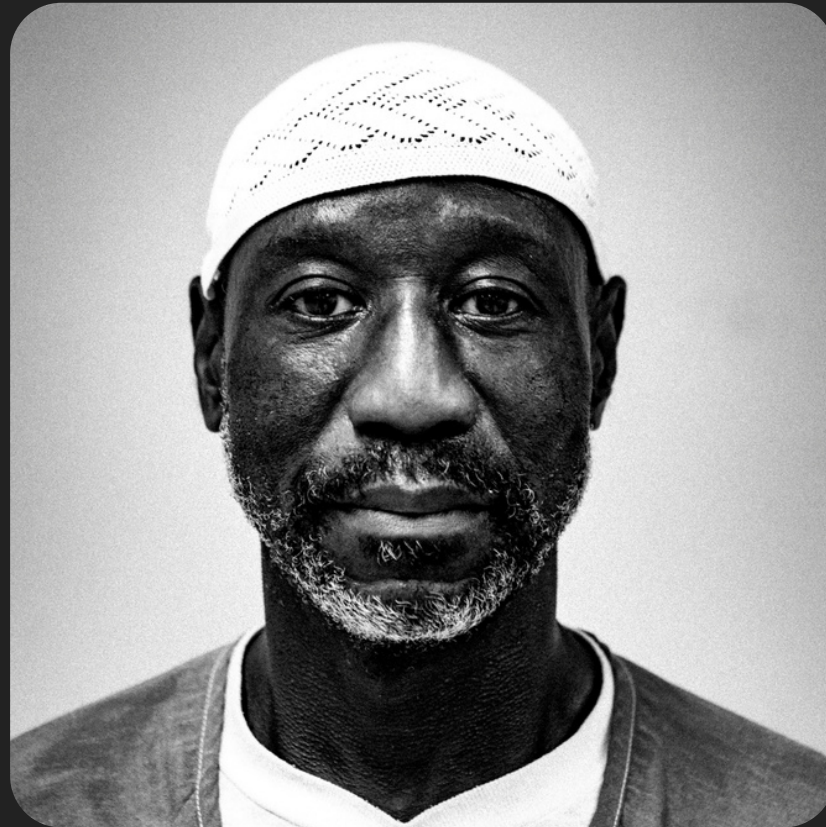
Our results indicate that VR is a powerful tool which effectively impacts the incarcerated individual's understanding and expectations of the outside world

Location: Kern Valley State Prison
Number of Participants: 8
Areas of focus: Reentry Anxiety and Sense of Belonging

RESULTS:

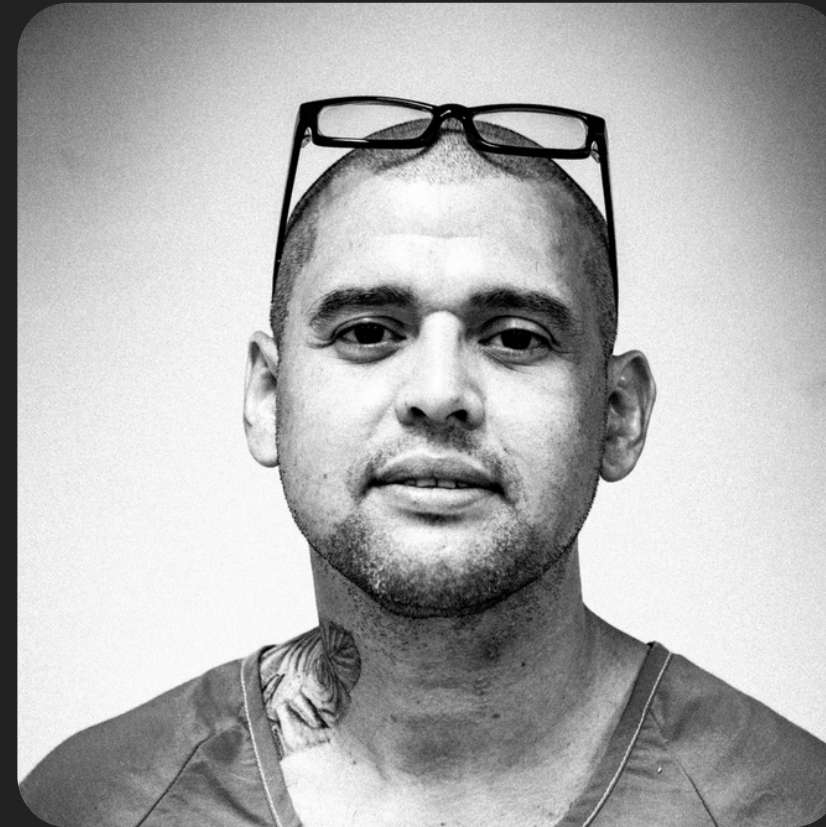
- By the end of the 7 days the clients reported feeling able to fully engage by allowing themselves to achieve a level of vulnerability necessary to create change
- They also reported that in addition to accessing greater levels of emotion and addressing re-entry anxiety, they felt "happier" and felt valued and respected by our facilitators
- Improvements in areas for which we had not measured and can only be noted anecdotally at this time including empathy, emotional intelligence, anger management and responses to trauma

● What our **Partners Inside** are Saying: ...



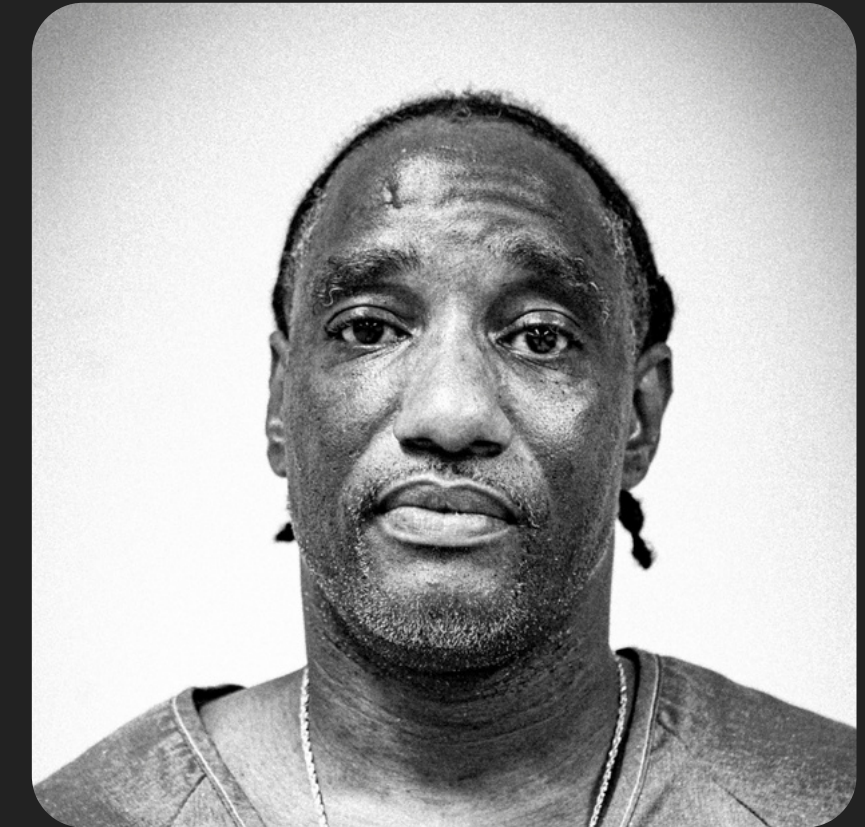
Roderick

"This helped me look deep within myself, by challenging me to push past the issues that were holding me back from reaching and achieving my full potential in life."



Hector

"Seeing the earth move and revolve, I had no idea how fast...shows me there is a lot out there and somehow I fit in with the world spinning so fast."



Daryl

"Seeing the outside world...that was big for me. I sometimes am in the tunnel, I can't see around me, it's dark and there is a light to focus on. I forget the outside world sometimes, and how bad I want that."



Reflections from Pilot at KVSP July 2021

“For So long I felt a lack of being,
but only a few moments in
headsets felt so freeing.”
- David



“Sailing, by myself out on the water,
made me appreciate life, I used to say I’d
rather be dead than living in jail, and this
made me feel connected to being alive.”

- Michael

“I felt free, just walking
through the world.”

- Hector

NEXT STEPS?

Expand the VR Pilot to a full program:

How:

- Continue to Increase our access to improved technology in order to provide a greater interactive experience in the VR environment, including the ability of participants to choose from a variety of scenarios in general population yards and especially for those in solitary confinement.
- Create specific content for job skills and trainings, as well as social interaction and conflict resolution revolving around returning to home and community.
- This report is the result of data analysis from part 1 of our 3 part pilot. A second analysis and eventual complete analysis will be provided
- In addition to programs at various institutions, this information will support building a full program and VR lab that Valley State Prison has invited us to build.



● THANK YOU!



to those who make this work possible:



QUANTUM XPR



StoryTech[®]
IMMERSIVE



CLEANBOX



VIVE



CALIFORNIA
ARTS COUNCIL



Thanks to **Ethan Moeller**
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The
Durfee Foundation



collective
BLACK EQUITY



*Thank You
to our
Partners Inside*

