The Plight Of The Mentally Ill Who End Up In Jails and Prisons - Correctional Mental Health Is The Focus of Virginia Frusteri Sollars' 'And Some Will Triumph'

'And Some Will Triumph' is a riveting look into correctional mental health and is ultimately a story of regret, hope, tragedy and redemption

WILMINGTON, NC, February 24, 2017 /24-7PressRelease/ -- The mentally ill do not belong in jails. That is simple common sense. Nevertheless, many do end up there. That is a problem. It is a problem with very few solutions. This problem is not a new problem - it has instead become a national crisis. News stories - from all over the country and beyond - hit the media outlets every day.

A story by Michael Martz in the Richmond Times-Dispatch described how Virginia legislators are struggling with finding a solution. Another on the KEPR-TV website (Washington) by Elise Haas stated that the Benton County Jail has "over 500 inmates and it is estimated that 55% of them suffer from mental illness . . ." These are not isolated stories or events. The stories are found everywhere. The Ottawa Citizen. Rapid City Journal. The Bellingham Herald. Cal Coast News. There are hundreds more.

Virginia Frusteri Sollars, author of 'And Some Will Triumph' spent decades working in correctional mental health. She offers an enlightening perspective on the subject coupled with some common-sense recommendations.

"You were scared, when the police arrived, the voices were telling you that they were going to kill you. You thought you had to run or die. So, you ran and they came after you, the men with the uniforms. When they tried to handcuff you, you did the only thing you could, you tried to prevent it. You didn't mean to hurt the officer, you were only trying to protect yourself.

"For the mentally ill, this is a common occurrence and they end up in jail alone and afraid, not understanding what they've done wrong. And for them, the jail is a nightmare. There are so many rules they can't follow and they get in trouble with deputies, guards and other cellmates. Some refuse medication, due to being paranoid or because of the side effects, and mental health staff is overwhelmed by the many in the system. As there are few cells for the mentally ill, they find themselves housed with criminals who take advantage of them, stealing their food and whatever belongings they might have. If they are suicidal, homicidal, or gravely disabled they may be separated, however, many end up sitting in cells that are filthy, smeared with their own feces."

"The guards and deputies do not have the proper training to deal with them, as most police departments only get a three to six-hour course during their basic training and in most of the institutions, more is not required. Funds should be appropriated so that all members of law enforcement get (CIT) Crises Intervention Training, which is a forty-hour course. Even this is not enough, but at least it is a start. And though many states have adopted Laura's Law, due to the restrictions, many of the mentally ill will fall through the cracks."

"We do not have the facilities to house or heal mentally ill people. We need to educate the people who have the means to make changes. As I have mentioned before in the many presentations and interviews I have done, we need long term institutions for the mentally ill, many who are homeless. Per the National Alliance of Mental Illness, two million jail bookings per year can be attributed to the mentally ill, though from my personal experience, I believe the stats to be much higher and one out of every four people killed in either shootings, or beatings involve the mentally ill."

"It is sad that with all the funds being appropriated by the government, the mentally ill always seem to come last."

Sollars uses her captivating and sometimes shocking stories of fact-based fiction to reveal the stark truths that lie behind the curtain of today's current issues- the fundamental facts often obscured by our headline culture. Her gift for raw storytelling takes readers backstage, where they will experience, in vivid 3-D the challenges her semi-fictional characters must face. She brings the truth into the light, and lays bare the stunning reality behind these stories in ways that mere headlines could never achieve.

As a psychiatric nurse, Virginia journeyed inside the minds of the mentally ill. She not only allows her readers to participate in the day to day struggles that ensue behind the heavy steel doors of the correctional facility, but takes her readers into the thoughts, fears and secrets of the psychiatric inmates. Virginia explains the reasons why the criminal justice system has become the dumping ground for the mentally ill and why there are so few beds available to them on the outside, a matter of
great concern in the United States.

Sollars' book has received rave reviews from readers. Kirkus Reviews said the book is ...."a remarkable timeline of the treatment of mental illness in the past 40 years, and it's a triumphant account of her boldness as a mother, nurse, and woman. At a time when mental health is in the forefront of conversations about our health care system, her story is one of hope."

One reader stated, "Absolutely the best book I've read in years, uncensored look into correctional mental health, patients, inmates and the professionals who deal with some of society's most troubled criminals, their day to day struggles all interwoven within a gripping story of murder and suspense. A must read!" Another said, "Awesome story! While the story keeps you turning the pages to see what happens next, the real plight of the mental health patients in a correctional setting is heartbreaking.

Virginia Sollars is available for media interviews and can be reached using the information below or by email at virginiasollars@yahoo.com. ‘And Some Will Triumph’ is available at online retailers. More information is available at her website at http://www.virginiasollars.net.

Virginia Frusteri Sollars was raised in Brooklyn, New York, and became a registered nurse in 1980, working as a psychiatric nurse for most of her career. She worked in the jail system for twenty-six years, caring for and treating the mentally ill. She continues to advocate for the mentally ill though her presentations and radio shows advising people of the plight of the mentally ill.

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