

Why Higher Education Matters in Today's World of Technology

For Incarcerated People

Providing access to Higher Education has a ripple effect that extends far beyond the rehabilitation of incarcerated people. Higher Education has a positive impact on society by reducing recidivism, increasing public safety and strengthening communities.

Incarceration without Education Is a Bad Investment

Nationally, correctional costs consume over 75 billion dollars each year while nearly 2/3rd of all inmates are re-arrested for new crimes within three years of release. This clearly shows that current correctional policies are failing and much needs to be done.

Increasing Incarceration Costs Don't Pay Off

Despite the rise in Correctional populations over the past 25 years, rising rates of imprisonment have not shown to reduce crime or increase public safety. Many people leave prison unskilled and undereducated, both factors that leave them unprepared for life on the outside.

Increasing Access to Higher Education Does Pay Off

The value of Higher Education is clear. **Higher Education:**

- Decreases reliance on public assistance
- Elevates quality of life for children
- Increases the employment rate
- Improves physical and mental health
- Strengthens our local communities

As an inmate in the Department of Correction, I am among many who know that Higher Education is very important to a successful transition during and after prison. It has been proven throughout this country, to reduce crime and the recidivism rate. Not only that but, Higher Education for inmates is the most successful and cost-effective method to prevent crime and increase public safety. For every dollar spent on Education for inmates, two dollars are saved.

Statistics also show that 43% of incarcerated individuals are likely to return in three years. The likelihood drops to 5.6% for those earning a Bachelor's degree, and less than 1% for a Master's degree, clearly showing the benefits.

With today's need for affordable Higher Education and the high costs of College, there are solutions to the many problems we all face in society in regard to these important financial and political issues for inmates.

Today some people are reaching out to the on-line communities for public support for the Department of Corrections approval in our state for Higher Education in our prison system. Back in 2012, Harvard University and MIT launched the **free** on-line College Certificate program called (**edX**) for everyone world-wide ^{some} ~~except~~ inmates. This is one *web-site* with many other Colleges and Universities participating with their own curriculum.

At this time we are looking for our state government's approval to allow inmates throughout our state to participate in this much needed Educational Program. To be allowed to have lap top computers and tablets ~~with~~ limited internet access to learn software and other Educational programs could be another option for computer skills and future job opportunities. This can also help to motivate some inmates to seek Higher Education when released.

It's our hope that you too, will support this growing need for inmates being allowed lap tops and tablets in our prison system. With today's *affordable* technology there is no logical reason why the DOC could not provide a program suitable for the many men and women in our prison system, at our own expense.

— With the student debt in this country being over a trillion dollars now, we must consider the facts and details we all may not be aware of. **Free** on-line Education is here to stay and growing throughout the world for everyone---^{some} ~~except~~ inmates, at this time.