

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



PRESS RELEASE

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D.C. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS CONTINUES TO PROVIDE INNOVATIVE REENTRY PROGRAMMING FOR THE INMATE POPULATION

(Washington D.C.) Today D.C. Department of Corrections (DCDOC) Director Tom Faust announced an innovative reentry initiative being offered in partnership with Howard University's College of Arts and Sciences/Department of Sociology and Anthropology. This collaborative project evolved from a shared commitment to using educational and other learning resources to proactively address the multitude of issues facing the incarcerated.

Following a regular semester cycle, the Howard University course titled "Crime and Justice Behind the Wall" is being taught with a vision for change through education and engagement. "We are especially proud that DCDOC was chosen by the university as this is the first course of its kind in the District of Columbia, said Director Faust." The DCDOC team is excited about the impact this will have on our population preparing for community reintegration. To achieve stability and long term self-sufficiency, it's important that we expose them to opportunities that change thinking, stimulate personal growth, and encourage the development of skills that are relevant in the community."

The "Inside Out" model being used by Howard University is very similar to the program established by Temple University in 1997 that focuses on the social and criminal justice consequences associated with incarceration. Dr. Bahiyyah Muhammad, Assistant Professor of Criminology and the course instructor says "we are very excited---this partnership is so important because it allows students to recognize the power of education as a vehicle for transformation and a force for social change. Through course readings, students critically discuss hope, compassion, integrity, respect, truth, service and leadership. It is truly changing lives on both sides of the wall."

Ms. Jacqueline Williams, Women’s Program Coordinator for DCDOC has seen firsthand the enthusiasm and pride felt by participants. “This is as a unique opportunity for them to participate in college level training and gain an appreciation for the benefits of lifelong learning. At the end of the course, students will receive certificates of completion from one of the most prestigious universities in the country—a real sense of accomplishment for all those involved.”

Effective reentry programming is a critical component of the DCDOC mission and a factor in the reduction of recidivism. DCDOC staff, working in collaboration with a dedicated corps of volunteers and community-based advocates, facilitates access to reentry programs and services focused on educational enhancement, gender-informed instruction, work readiness, life skills, residential drug treatment, occupational skills training, and post release wraparound services.

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