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Correctional Education Association - Wisconsin

64th Annual CEA Conference Focuses on the Future

Difficult economic times can take its toll on training budgets and travel plans. Despite these hardships, dedicated correctional educators overcame financial obstacles to journey to Madison, Wisconsin on July 19-22, 2009 to make the 64th Annual Correctional Education Association Conference a resounding success.

Almost 400 participants from throughout the United States and several other countries registered for the conference. Presenters at 82 workshops shared their innovations and expertise. Thirty vendors displayed the latest in correctional education resources and technology.

At the opening session, Wisconsin DOC Secretary Rick Raemisch offered his appreciation to all jail and prison educators for their service and dedication to the field of correctional education. He thanked the educators for their daily efforts to help individuals change their lives, find employment, and re-enter society.



Wisconsin DOC Secretary Rick Raemisch keynotes opening session
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At the awards' luncheon, Wisconsin's First Lady recognized educators nationwide for their dedication to teaching in a correctional setting. From jails, to juvenile detention centers, to prisons ... First Lady Jessica Doyle says it takes a special kind of person to teach at such facilities.

First Lady Jessica Doyle has visited correctional classrooms on several occasions to observe teaching methods. "I've observed these teachers. I've observed these teachers in all kinds of facilities in Wisconsin and they find a way to connect each and every learner with learning."

One of the conference highlights was the Teacher of the Year Gala that honored CEA's nine Regional Teachers of the Year. The theme for the 2009 TOY Gala was *Dancing with the Stars of Education*. The theme's colors of red, white and black were evident throughout the room from the frames honoring each teacher; to participants' dress; to the table centerpieces created by the students in the horticulture program at Oakhill Correctional Institution.

Wisconsin's Lieutenant Governor, Barbara Lawton, honored not only the nine Regional Teachers of the Year, but all correctional educators in her speech. Immediately following dinner and the recognition ceremony, the band, *The Cutaways*, helped attendees dance the night away.

Conference Co-Chairs Peggy Meyers and David Webb would like to thank DOC Secretary Rick Raemisch, First Lady Jessica Doyle, Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton, CEA President Denise Justice, and CEA Executive Director Steve Steurer for their informative and inspiring talks. Thanks to all of the committee chairs and volunteers for their work in planning the workshops and events and making the conference run smoothly. Thanks to the workshop presenters for sharing their expertise. Thanks to the vendors for showing us the latest in correctional education materials and equipment and supporting CEA. Thanks to all those who donated items for the Silent Auction and those who bid on the items. And thanks to all of you who attended the conference and shared ideas and energy.

We would like to hear your comments on the conference. You may share them by contacting Conference Co-Chair Peggy Meyers at peggy.meyers@wtcsystem.edu.

Executive Officers		<p>The CEA-W News Review is published by the members of the Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin Chapter. The opinions herein are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the executive officers, the Department of Corrections, or the body as a whole.</p> <p>It is our hope that this newsletter will be used to communicate information concerning activities, special events, new directions and policies of CEA-W and DOC.</p> <p>Articles for publication may be submitted to the CEA-W News Review Editor Jerry Bednarowski at:</p> <p>W6443 Old Highway Road Menasha, WI 54952 920-734-5902 jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com</p>
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Pictures from 64th Annual Correctional Education Association Conference “Focusing on the Future”



Jerry Bednarowski receives CEA’s Lifetime Achievement Award from CEA Secretary Maureen Steffen and Wisconsin First Lady Jessica Doyle



Wisconsin Lt. Governor Talks with CEA Executive Director Steve Steurer at Teacher of the Year Gala



Region III Teacher of the Year DeNeal Ericksen is congratulated by CEA President Denise Justice



Margaret Done, Kay George, and DeNeal Ericksen present the “Making Prison Literacy Fun!” workshop

**Check Out the Special Interest Group
Forums at: www.ceanational.org**

CEA–Wisconsin Launches Speakers’ Bureau

What goes on in Wisconsin prisons and jails to transform the lives of those incarcerated?

Research has shown that providing education programs for offenders is a cost-effective way of creating safer communities. Adult and juvenile offenders who participate in literacy programs, earn high school equivalency diplomas, complete vocational training, or participate in treatment programs are far more likely to lead productive lives and stay out of trouble after release from incarceration.

Now high school, technical college, and university classes; community organizations; and religious groups can learn more about these education programs from the educators who provide them!

The Correctional Education Association–Wisconsin has established a Speakers’ Bureau comprised of experienced educators, librarians, administrators and other individuals working in correctional education environments to provide lectures, workshops, and guest presentations to schools, government agencies, and community organizations.

A list of topics and speakers is now available on the www.ceawisconsin.org website.

If you would like to schedule a speaker, contact the speaker to arrange a time and date. The presentations are provided free of a speaker’s fee. Travel, meal, and lodging expenses may be negotiated between the speaker and the agency hosting the presentation. Some presentations may require audiovisual equipment. Many of these speakers may also be available for individual consultation.

If you would like help selecting a speaker, you may contact CEA-Wisconsin President Mary Stierna at mary.stierna@wisconsin.gov or 920-426-4310 ext 4165 or CEA-Wisconsin Board Member Jerry Bednarowski at jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com or 920-734-5902.

In order to maintain the high quality of the presentations, we request that the organization receiving the presentation complete an evaluation form that appears on the website and forward it directly to the CEA-W Board.

Learn more about our efforts to transform the lives of the incarcerated. Contact our speakers and bring an excellent resource to your school, government agency, and community organization. We look forward to working with you.

If you are a CEA member and would like to share your knowledge and experience by becoming a part of the CEA-W Speakers’ Bureau, contact Mary Stierna or Jerry Bednarowski.

Creativity Contest Update

The CEA Creativity Contest group met at WRC on August 20th to rate the entries for the 2009 contest. Entries were received from 20 different institutions representing all custody levels, juvenile institutions and county jails. There were 212 total entries that included beautiful drawings, moving poetry and wonderful short stories. The entries are now at OSCI for typing and layout. Judges for the entries were Libby Kraft (WRC), Jason Brost (SOGS), Susan Casper (OSCI), Linda Lentz (BRCC), Mary Stierna (WRC), Sharon Nesemann (WRC) and Jane Schirger (RGCI).

To join CEA go to: www.ceanational.org

Beyond Bars: Rejoining Society after Prison

Stephen C. Richards, Ph.D., Professor of Criminal Justice at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, has again teamed with Jeffrey Ian Ross, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Division of Criminology, Criminal Justice and Forensic Studies, and a Fellow of the Center for International and Comparative Law, at the University of Baltimore to author another book on surviving prison and beyond.

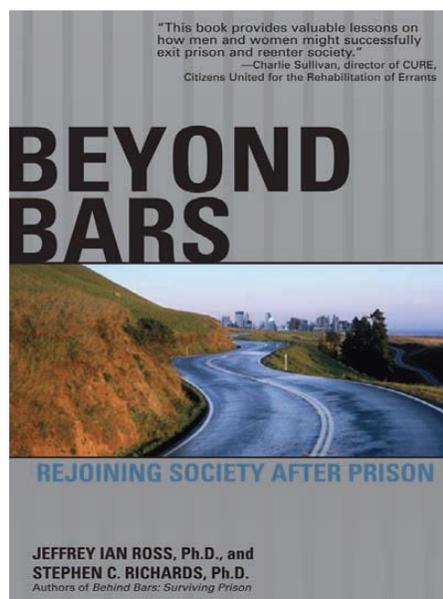
In their recently released book, *Beyond Bars: Rejoining Society after Prison*, Ross and Richards note that in the United States, more than 600,000 men and women are released from prison each year.

They need to know what comes next. The vast majority of these men and women spend enough time in prison to disrupt their connections to their families and communities. And prison authorities fail to prepare ex-convicts for the difficult and often life threatening process of "reentry." As a result, the percentage of ex-convicts who return to a life of crime and additional prison time escalates each year.

Beyond Bars is a current, practical, and comprehensive guide for ex-convicts and their families for managing a successful reentry into the community. Written by criminal justice experts who have 30 years of experience working with the prison system, this valuable book includes information on:

- ❖ Preparing for release while still in prison.
- ❖ Navigating and benefiting from the parole system.
- ❖ Dealing with family members, especially spouses and children.
- ❖ Finding a place to live on the "outside."
- ❖ Finding a job.
- ❖ Money issues such as budgets, bank accounts, taxes, and debt.
- ❖ Avoiding drugs and other illicit activities.
- ❖ Free resources to rely on for support.

Beyond Bars: Rejoining Society after Prison is the logical follow-up to Ross and Richards' other book, *Behind Bars: Surviving Prison*. In *Behind Bars*, Ross and Richards describe in detail what life on the inside is like for the ten thousand men and women who enter a prison each week in America.



Selection Procedures Key to Successful Vocational Program Completion

On the streets, many factors effect students' ability to successfully complete Wisconsin Technical College System certified courses. Students who are incarcerated often incur additional obstacles.

A key to improve the completion rate of WTCS courses is to implement an effective student selection process. A few months ago Chuck Brendel, Dean of Continuing Education and liaison with Moraine Park Technical College's programs in corrections asked Peter Garetson to put the student selection procedures he used into print.

Peter is the Building Maintenance & Construction instructor at the Oshkosh Correctional Institution. This is the selection procedure he developed:

Student Selection Procedures for Vocational Programs

The following outline represents the procedures I follow in determining the students who will be selected to a particular starting class.

- I. Obtain a required waiting list from the guidance counselor.
- II. Cross reference waiting list with WICS to determine mandatory release dates, upcoming program needs and whether inmate has a HSED or equivalent.
- III. Call inmates in for initial interviews who have release dates that are in an 8 to 24 month window. During this initial interview I discuss the following:
 - A. Confirm and add anything else they're aware of concerning their sentence.
 - B. Give them the hard sell on the vocational program to determine their level of commitment.
 - 1) Why are you interested in (this vocation)?
 - 2) Have them understand that apart from a family emergency, this is to become the most important thing going on in their life for the next 8 months
 - 3) Inform them of the academic challenges, commitment and high expectations associated with a post high school education; i.e. volume of assignments, math difficulty, motivation etc.
 - 4) Time commitment, 6 to 7 hours a day 5 days a week for (?) months
- IV. Determine the top 8 to 10 potential students based on objective criteria, including mandatory release dates, appropriate TABE scores, program needs and high school diploma or equivalent.
- V. Send above list to PRC for confirmation with the following request. "The following inmates are being considered for the upcoming (name your vocational program). Please check and let me know if there are future program needs or movement that would prevent any of them from completing the approximate 8 month diploma program."
- VI. After I receive the results of my inquiry from PRC, I select the 6 new students.

The time involved for the entire selection process is less than a week. Teachers are generally given 2 hours of prep time a day, 5 days a week. Referring to the above outline, steps I (obtaining a waiting list) through step V (sending my selected list of potential students to PRC) can be achieved during those few

hours a week of teacher prep time, approximately 3 to 5 hours. The turnover time with PRC is usually only 1 or 2 days. Keep in mind this selection process is only necessary 3 or 4 times a year.

There are some programs that can coexist with vocational programming, for example Sex Offender Treatment 2 and Domestic Violence. The Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) program is potentially an obstacle and requires heightened consideration when selecting students because many men have this need and AODA personnel typically wait until the last year to offer it. There are a few factors and a certain level of confusion concerning education/AODA priority and the inmate's desire. Therefore, it is handled differently from institution to institution.

Not only have these procedures resulted in a high graduation rate, but also when a student completes the vocational program, they are usually within months and sometimes weeks of being released from prison. This is due to the priority given to inmates with a reasonably close Mandatory Release date. Not only is a high graduation rate essential to a successful program, but in my opinion, it can also be counter productive to have a student complete a vocational program and then sit on the housing unit for another 3, 4, or 5 years and forget much of what they were trained for.

In Memoriam – Mike Merkes

On May 6, 2009 long time DOC and WCI teacher Mike Merkes, age 55, unexpectedly passed away. Mike started his teaching career in Oshkosh as an elementary school teacher. In 1989 he began his DOC career at WCI. His DOC career had a number of stops, therefore he was well known to many throughout the DOC system. Over the years Mike's career included stops at KMCI, OSCI, RGCI, TCI and two tours of duty at WCI. A member of CEA-W, Mike was looking forward to this year's national conference in Madison. Mike's absence has truly created a gap in the staff at Waupun and he is greatly missed by his former colleagues, former students and of course his family and friends.

Mike Breszee
WCI Teacher and Friend

Save the Date!



April 8th and 9th, 2010
CEA Region III & IV Conference
Bloomington, Minnesota

Getting an Education Behind Bars

Oakhill program gives inmates skills they need to succeed

A 13.5-foot-high electrical fence keeps prisoners in the Oakhill Correctional Institution in Fitchburg. Something electrifying is also happening inside.

Men who flunked out or zoned out are now learning from dedicated teachers, obtaining a vital key to their future lives. The prison teaches basic reading and math skills, as well as vocations including horticulture, building services and computer skills.

"Education is absolutely a top priority, next to security," says Deirdre Morgan, the warden at Oakhill since 2004. "It's the only way to give people choices and a way to get out of poverty. It opens doors and gives opportunities not there otherwise."

A 2001 study of more than 1,000 Minnesota inmates found significantly lower recidivism rates among those who participated in education programs — 14% compared to 21%. And those who attended classes in prison also earned higher wages upon release.

"The drop in recidivism is large and has important fiscal and policy implications," the study found. "Education provides a real payoff to the public in terms of crime reduction and improved employment of ex-offenders."

Of 22,444 prison inmates in Wisconsin in 2008, just 42% had a high school diploma or an equivalency diploma. Moreover, more than half read below a ninth-grade level and 70% performed math below that level.

Oakhill's Ray Schlesinger, an instructor in the state prison system for 15 years, says the problem is not just the lack of high school diplomas, but the level of learning. He's taught men who went through 10th grade but can only read at a third-grade level.

In class, Schlesinger uses real-life examples whenever possible. For example, he uses parole dates to calculate fractions of prison time remaining.

He talks easily with the men, occasionally joking. But he keeps them on task. When one inmate asks about the U.S. economic crisis, Schlesinger says, "Let's see if we can do the GED stuff first before we get into Wall Street finance."

Like most of the 12 men at desks in the classroom, Arty Hamlin is working on his high school equivalency diploma (HSED). He already has a certificate of general educational development (GED) but wants the higher standard, which includes health, civics and employability tests in addition to the GED basics of math, reading, writing, science and social studies.

"I think this is great," says Hamlin, 39, who was extradited to Wisconsin from Illinois for possession of drugs with intent to deliver. "I have the social studies test coming up. I have a good teacher. I wish I had him 20 or 30 years ago. I would have had my regular high school diploma."

Originally convicted of burglary, David Smith, 40, earned his own HSED at Oakhill in February. Afterward he went through training to become an inmate tutor. He's since been released.

"There is a good program here, with some good teachers," says Smith. "It's awesome what can be done for somebody like me. My limitations are less than they were."

Twenty-seven Wisconsin correctional institutions have high school equivalency diploma programs, and most also offer vocational and basic educational assistance.

Oakhill, formerly a reform school for girls, houses about 700 inmates. The education program, Oakhill School, is run out of a 63,000-square-foot stone building that has recreational and craft facilities on the ground floor and a computer room, library and classrooms on the second floor. The computers link up to others in the prison system, so inmates who transfer here can continue education programs they started at other institutions.

On average, 80 students attend basic literacy and HSED classes each month. In 2008, 64 earned their high school credentials, and inmate tutors assisted 225 learners during that year. Overall in the state prison system, 1,096 inmates completed their HSED or GED work in 2008, and about 11,000 have done so since 1998.

Graduation ceremonies for graduates of educational and vocational programs are conducted three times a year, with families and friends attending. Oakhill graduates wear caps and gowns, and commencement speakers in recent years have included former Superintendent of Public Instruction Elizabeth Burmaster, State Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson and Madison Police Chief Noble Wray.

Inmates take a basic education test when they enter the prison system, followed by a more comprehensive test when they get to their institution, explains Jack Rice, Education Director at Oakhill.

"The test shows what they are weak in," says Rice. If they read at less than a sixth-grade level, they would take basic education classes. If they score at sixth grade or above and don't have a high school diploma, they would take the equivalency diploma class."

The institution has six instructors — three academic and three vocational; one of the vocational spots is now vacant due to a state hiring freeze. Though the Department of Corrections educational program was not targeted for cuts in the new state budget, vacancies are receiving additional review before they are filled.

Classes are in three-hour sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, Monday through Friday, year-round except when teachers are on vacation. Each class has about 15 students.

"My teachers are like classroom managers," Rice says. "One student may be reading at a seventh-grade level and another reading at a fifth-grade level, and others would be working on math. It's according to individual needs."

Schlesinger is in charge of training inmate tutors at Oakhill, a program of the Wisconsin Institutions Literacy Council. Successful trainers receive a certificate that can be used upon release to continue tutoring in the outside world.

Almost 2,000 inmate tutors have been trained since 1998 in Wisconsin prisons.

"The tutors are invaluable," Schlesinger says. "A lot of the learners thrive on individual attention, and this gives the tutors something productive and socially beneficial to do. It is a shame not to use their talent."

by: Anita Weier, The Isthmus
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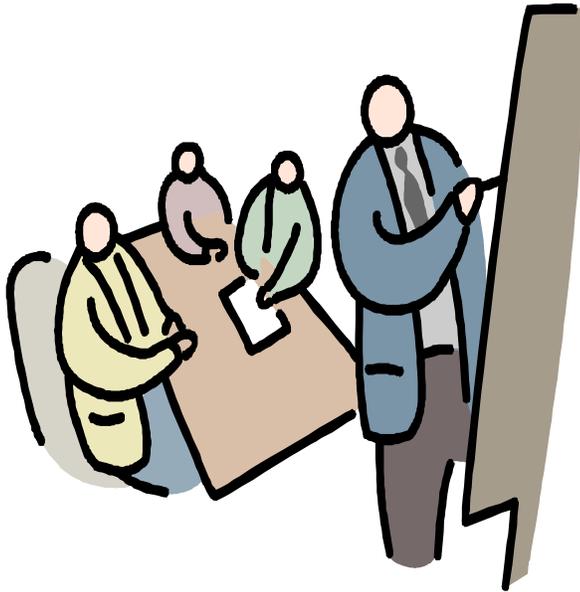
Learn All About CEA-Wisconsin at:
www.ceawisconsin.org

2009 GED/HSED & Adult Literacy Conferences

“Achieving Credentials for Success”

November 10-12, 2009

Radisson Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton, WI



The Wisconsin GED/HSED and Adult Literacy Conferences continue to expand, adding new professional development opportunities for its participants.

Again this year, the Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin has joined the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Technical College System to plan the conference agenda.

Over 50 different workshop sessions are scheduled for those who teach or volunteer in family literacy, ESL, ABE instruction, inmate education, or community-based organizations or literacy programs or are GED examiners or administrators. CEA-W Board members Jerry Bednarowski and Mary Stierna have worked with the Planning Committee to include the following six sessions specifically highlighting concerns and programs of interest to educators working in correctional settings:

Fathers Sharing

Diane Birch, Stanley Correctional Institution

Fathers Sharing Books is offered at Stanley Correctional Institution. Fathers initially attend a class to learn how to select age appropriate books, where to find reading material, and how to make reading an enjoyable experience for their child/children. After completing the initial class, fathers have the opportunity to record a DVD each time the program is offered at SCI. This program allows fathers an additional opportunity to remain in touch with their children during their period of incarceration.

Fighting Hate with Literacy: Let's Call It What It Is

Sharon Abel, Lakeshore Technical College– Sheboygan County

Lakeshore Technical College Instructor Sharon Abel with support and encouragement from a partnering agency, Eastern Shores Library System, offered a series of book discussion groups for inmates in Sheboygan County. Hoping to encourage her peers to facilitate similar learning opportunities, Sharon tells her story of climbing the learning curve with her students.

Making Literacy Fun!

Margaret Done, Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center

Kay George, Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility

These correctional educators will describe book sharing programs that they have implemented for both juveniles and adults including MotheRead, Book Club, and author visits. These programs can be successful in all types of settings. Come join the discussion and see how you can make these programs work for you.

A Model of Success for Blended Jail Instruction from a Basic Education Skills Classroom – A Manual of Basic Survival Techniques Regarding What to Do or Not to Do.

Roxanne Bowdin, Northeast Wisconsin Tech. College/ Marinette Campus

Gary Johnson, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College/ Marinette Campus

Video-conferencing for GED prep with inmates at the Marinette County Jail began in January of '06 with on-site instruction added in September of '07. This workshop will discuss the challenges of video-conferencing from our Basic Ed skills lab, associated costs, coordination with jail staff, and results of the endeavors. Since blending video-conferencing with on-site instruction, results have dramatically increased. Reasons for the increase in success will be shared in order that other technical colleges can use this as a cost effective model for jail instruction.

Multimedia Instruction Paves the Road to Math Remediation with Reluctant Math Learners (aka, I said I couldn't, but now I can do Algebra!)

Deb Anderson, Madison Metropolitan School District

Annette Czarnecki, Wisconsin Technical College System Foundation

The Madison Metropolitan School District uses ModuMath courseware in its Metro High in the Dane County Jail. Teacher Deb Anderson describes how the visual presentation, audio narration, and an application-based tutorial provide a powerful alternative to the traditional lecture-&-textbook approach. She explains how an individualized, self-paced, confidential instructional design reduces math anxiety, promotes a better understanding of math concepts, and fosters success in those students who may not have experienced success in math in the past (the reluctant learner!). This session will demonstrate the tutorial and testing features of ModuMath, discuss its implementation in the jail setting, and allow time for questions.

Using Manipulatives to Teach GED Writing Skills

Scott R. Carey, Jackson Correctional Institution

This is a presentation on the results of my graduate research and classroom experience over the past three years of inventing, developing, and implementing manipulatives to teach GED Writing Skills

The GED/HSED portion of the conference is scheduled for November 10-11. The Adult Literacy part is on November 11-12.

As always, our exhibit hall vendors will have the best and most current goods and services that meet professional educators' needs.

Building on the success of previous years, CEA-W will again conduct a Silent Auction. The Silent Auction will include inmate-made items donated by Wisconsin correctional institutions, items contributed by Wisconsin Technical College System schools, and items donated by Appleton area businesses. Stop in and make a bid.

The Wisconsin Association for Career and Technical Education is serving as managing partner for the conference. You will find more information, an online registration form, and an online housing form at their website: www.wacteonline.org

We hope to see you in November !

President's Message

I truly enjoyed the 64th Annual Correctional Education Association Conference. It was a great pleasure to meet and spend time with the Regional Teachers of the Year. Taking time to collaborate with other correctional educators is so important. I would like to once again thank everyone who worked so hard on the conference. So many people put in countless hours before, during, and after the conference to help make it such a success.

I would also like to thank the presenters who took the time to share their ideas and talents with us. We had many Wisconsin members present workshops, and the feedback was very positive! Some of our members are also presenting at the GED/HSED Literacy Conference in Appleton in November.

We are very fortunate to have dedicated and creative members who are willing to share their knowledge with us. If you cannot present at a conference, write an article for the newsletter. We would love to hear about classroom ideas and techniques that have been successful for you!

Mary Stierna

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