



Study on the “Inside” to make it
on the “Outside”

New Directions Education Project

P. O. Box 393, Pendleton, OR 97801

Our mission is to provide college transfer classes for inmates at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution

End of Year Report – 2007-2008

Letter from a Former NDEP Student, Michael Thad Busselle

Just a short note to say that Busselle is doing great! I am enrolled in my fifth term at Chemeketa Community College working toward my AAOT in General Studies. In the fall of 2008 I will be enrolling in the MSW program at PSU. I already have a treatment provider that has agreed to allow me to volunteer; and after I get my LCSW status, he will hire me on.

I just wanted the BMCC staff and the New Directions Program volunteers to know that their support in the program gave me the confidence to make it all happen. Without the opportunity to take the college courses while I was incarcerated, I may not have had the faith in my ability to succeed. That also goes for the teachers that I tutored for in the academic department there. They allowed me to use my abilities to assist others which is exactly what I plan to do after I graduate.

I know that sometimes it feels like your work is in vain when you see inmates returning after they are released. I am here to tell you that some of us succeed and that should make you proud of the excellent job that you do for the men who attend your classes and work for you in the academic department. Please let the other instructors there know that I appreciate their confidence in me as well as their support and trust in an otherwise dismal environment. You cannot imagine how you all touch the lives of those you teach.

Again thank you very much for the opportunity to be a part of your program. It literally changed my life.”

Selected Excerpts from Current Students

Thank you for the opportunity to better myself. It is appreciated by both my family and me.

I just want to thank the New Directions program for the wonderful opportunity to learn, grow, and feel like we are doing something with our lives. Thank you!

I have gotten a lot from this writing course specifically and also from the whole program. Thank you for going out of your way to help.

I really enjoy the opportunity this program offers, and I plan to continue to show this in my work.

I would like to thank all the donors to the program and the program facilitators for setting up everything.

Thanks again for this opportunity. We all appreciate the work and effort that goes into offering us a chance to better ourselves.

BMCC Instructor Stan Prowant's Remarks

This past spring quarter I had the opportunity to teach an introductory geology course through New Directions to inmates at EOIC. I have to admit that at first I was a little apprehensive about teaching in a prison and was not sure what I was getting myself into. But after meeting my class the first evening, I had no reservations about agreeing to teach here. I loved the class.

The students had excellent attendance, were polite, asked good questions and in general were interested in the material, more so than the majority of on-campus students. Several students were so excited that they could relate geology to situations in their lives. As a teacher, it's very rewarding to see students get "turned on" by the subject.

Geology is a lab science and students always came prepared for the lab exercise. I found they took longer to complete some labs than students in the on campus classes and, as I observed them, I realized why. These students wanted to understand what they were doing and not just "get it done". This dedication and conscientiousness shown by the students was reflected in their grades. For most students the sciences are not the easiest of courses, yet the mean grade for this class was nearly 85%. Very rarely on campus do I have a class with this high of mean.

I also want to say that the New Directions personnel were a pleasure to work with. I feel that I was well prepared before beginning the class. My questions were answered promptly; and if I needed supplies, they were always available. Teaching at EOIC was a rewarding experience. I thoroughly enjoyed my students and plan to offer another geology course next winter quarter."

There is a New Spirit in the Land!

It is so exciting to see the new interest in providing college classes for inmates across our state. In Salem, an anonymous donor has given money so that a program similar to ours could be established. It is managed by Nancy Green of Chemeketa Community College, the educational manager at the Oregon State Penitentiary and Oregon State Correctional Institution. Two college classes were offered at both institutions each of the four terms of

the year. It was so successful the donor financed it for a second year. We were contacted lately by a volunteer in Salem who wanted to know how we operate so that a group there might raise money to expand the program.

At the Oregon Department of Corrections, there is much conversation about helping inmates return to their communities with skills to help them succeed. According to Nichole Brown, Administrator of Workforce Development at ODOC, there is a growing awareness that higher education is an important piece in this process. What we are doing is greatly valued and correctional institutions are encouraged to accept programs of this kind.

When New Directions Education Project was formed in the fall of 1999, it seemed like a daunting task; but it was hoped that some day we would not be needed as the state would provide college classes. At that time there was a fear by many in ODOC that people in the community would think that they would be “coddling” inmates by giving them the opportunity for higher education. Thankfully, there is a growing awareness that higher education can help inmates leave the prisons without returning. They can continue their education on the outside and get living-wage jobs.

We still need to get the message out to our communities and to keep NDEP going strong until the day that the state provides for higher education or federal Pell Grants again become available for inmates.

Chance Meeting with Former EOCI Inmate

One of our board members met former inmate Brian Brinson outside the Portland main post office this spring as he was preparing to send off announcements of his graduation from Portland State the next day. He was so excited to have finished and praised the BMCC instructors at EOCI for providing so many courses which started him on the road to a BS Degree. He was in the program when Pell grants were available. (Before the end of the grants, twenty four inmates received AA Degrees from BMCC.) It was refreshing to see the enthusiasm which he expressed and to know that the Education Department at EOCI continues to give hope to present inmates through our program.

Two Special Highlights of the 2007-2008 NDEP Year

The number of individual donors increased. Donors are people with many different reasons for interest in college education at EOCI. Some are family and friends of student inmates while others are current and former citizens of the Pendleton area that like what NDEP is doing. Part of this group of donors is made up of BMCC staff who contribute monthly by way of payroll deductions. Some have taught at EOCI and others have not. These are all people who see the value to individuals and society that comes from the education provided through NDEP and received by inmates at EOCI. This past year individual donors contributed approximately 33% of the NDEP income. That is an increase over last year. Thank you so very much.

The NDEP-BMCC-EOCI relationship was strengthened. This relationship has been, over the years, an ongoing, positive, working-together relationship. It has had to adapt to the constant changing of political, legal, and fiscal realities. After some ongoing dialogue, representatives of the BMCC Administration and the EOCI Education Department were invited and encouraged to attend NDEP Board meetings several times a year. The first of such meets was held this past spring to great satisfaction by all. We look forward, in this coming school year, to the continuation of this improved working relationship.

**NEW DIRECTIONS EDUCATION PROJECT
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
JULY 1, 2007-JUNE 30, 2008**

BALANCE AS OF JULY 1, 2007		\$13,984.81
INCOME		
Individuals	\$ 7,165.00	
BMCC Faculty	1,301.00	
Inmate Registration Fees	2,488.00	
Civic group, Altrusa Club	463.00	
Interest	380.97	
Foundations		
Wal-Mart	500.00	
The Red & Gena Leonard Foundation	1,000.00	
Wildhorse Foundation	3,000.00	
Larson Legacy Foundation	9,000.00	
Book Returns	<u>640.00</u>	
TOTAL INCOME	\$25,937.97	
EXPENSES		
BMCC Tuition		\$ 20,943.00
Fall '07	7,047.00	
Winter '08	6,345.00	
Spring '08	7,551.00	
Office Supplies		326.40
School Supplies		38.90
Department of Justice		60.00
Textbooks		4,954.30
Postage & PO Box		201.00
Other		<u>156.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 26,679.60
BALANCE AS OF JUNE 30, 2008		\$13,243.18