



MEDIA RELEASE

August 12, 2009

Inmate High School Education Graduation Ceremony

The St. Mary's County Detention Center in collaboration with the St. Mary's Public Schools Adult Education Program offers a high school education program at the St. Mary's County Detention Center for inmates who wish to complete their high school education while incarcerated. Classes are held five hours a week for ten months. The course of study includes instruction in math, social studies, science, literature and writing. Inmates are required to pass five major exams and write an essay prior to graduating. Inmates who successfully complete the program receive a Maryland State High School Diploma. The program is funded through the Inmate Welfare Fund and grant funding. The St. Mary's Public Schools Adult Education Program provides volunteer staff instructors.

The high school education program is a part of the St. Mary's County Detention Center's Offender Re-entry Program. The Offender Re-entry Program is a group of programs targeted at promoting the effective reintegration of offenders back to communities upon release from jail. As a concept, reentry involves any program, initiative, or partnerships, which address issues necessary to ensure offenders successfully transition and maintain a crime-free existence post-release. Issues commonly addressed in a re-entry program include lack of education, job training or vocational experience, housing, and/or substance abuse and mental health treatment.

The Commander of the St. Mary's County Detention Center, Captain Michael Mercian and Sheriff Timothy Cameron's goal is to help inmates acquire the life skills needed to succeed in the community and become law-abiding citizens. The Offender Re-entry Program provides tangible benefits and is a model for enhancing public safety, combating recidivism and joblessness among the formerly incarcerated persons and reducing crime.

The high school education program at the detention center began in September of 2008. Inmates June Marie Buckler, 39 of Clinton, Maryland and Matthew Scott Hurry, 23 of Clements, Maryland graduated and received their diplomas on July 20, 2009. Both inmates expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the program and earn their diplomas. "It is the highlight of my life", expressed Matthew Hurry. "A true turning point for me", stated June Buckler.



June Buckler, Captain Denise Hintze, and Matthew Hurry