



Nevada Department of Corrections

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Incarcerated Veteran's Fund Raiser Enables 15 Inmates to Attend College

The Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) announces that through an inmate fundraiser, incarcerated veterans at the Warm Springs Correctional Center (WSSC) made it possible for 15 inmates to attend college classes. The fundraiser was a barbeque hosted by the Veteran's Integration Program participants and staff from the Western Nevada College, and was held on Memorial Day in May.

Incarcerated veterans and staff organized the barbeque, cooked steaks and offered the specially priced lunches to the inmates ultimately raising over \$4,000. All the proceeds will be used to offer inmates, some of which are veterans themselves, the opportunity to take college classes through Western Nevada College (WNC). August 31, 2016, the ceremonial check was handed from WSSC Warden Harold Wickham to Kevin Burns, Director of Veteran's Resource Center at the Western Nevada College. (Photo attached)

"I'm really proud of the efforts of my staff and the inmates," stated Warden Wickham.

"Inmates taking responsibility and working to fund their own education in custody is pretty groundbreaking. We hope to set the example for other facilities to follow."

This is just one of the innovative programs coming to the Nevada Department of Corrections. The department has been undergoing a change in philosophy since James Dzurenda took over as Director and made it their mission to "incorporate proven rehabilitation initiatives that prepare individuals for successful reintegration into our communities."

"Our mission is about inmates changing their behavior, and we've seen some proof that it works in the inmates who participate in these programs," explained the Warden. "Since we've started the Veterans program, for example, there have been less incidents, less fights... inmates are working toward a common goal and are motivated to do better. We really have seen changes already."

Inmates had to apply to be accepted into the college courses which are taught on site at the prison and lead to a 2 year Associate's Degree if completed. Each applicant was required to pen an essay which were then reviewed by WNC administrators and 15 inmates were chosen. The first classes offered are Sociology, Business Math and U.S. History and will be taught through the fall semester.

"We expect the inmates who go through these programs to be better equipped for the real world when they get released," added Warden Wickham. "Ultimately, this is a win - win for us and for the community."

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