



June 2014
Promoting Reentry Success through College Opportunities

DYS has a notable program that offers youth a smoother path from a juvenile correctional facility to post-secondary education. Our partnership with Ashland University offers off-campus courses at all of our facilities to youth who have graduated from high school or who have earned a GED. Currently, a total of 57 youth are taking classes in this program.

The general courses offered are comparable to those taken by students in their first year or two of college and include subjects like University Study Skills, English Composition, Problem Solving, General Psychology, and Management 101. Youth who successfully complete the classes are able to transfer credits to other colleges and universities. But the benefits don't end there. Youth who take the classes demonstrate gains in maturity, behavior, motivation, and confidence.

According to Youth A who is currently taking his second course through the program, "The Ashland program has made a tremendous impact on my life. I feel without the Ashland program I would still be reluctant to enter college, but now that I am part of the program, I plan on getting out and attending college. It has made an impact on my life besides academically. I have recently realized that life is important, and I now plan to succeed. Before entering the Ashland program, I was basically careless about a lot of things, but the program has changed my perspective. I enjoy attending this program, and I would like to thank Ashland for their support."

Daniel Naymik is one of our teachers at Indian River JCF. He explains, "The Ashland program has allowed some of our grads to visualize and grasp the college experience. It has shown them that if they apply themselves they can be successful. For these students, college is no longer an abstract concept for other people, it is something obtainable. Furthermore, the students believe that this program and college in general are an important part of their future. The youth ask me questions about colleges, credits, majors, requirements, and college life. I believe they are getting a genuine glimpse of life beyond DYS and beyond their prior life experiences. Most importantly, I think they are proud of their own accomplishments and are starting to believe in themselves. They still have some kinks to work out and room for growth in academic skills and personal discipline, but it is a strong start."

We appreciate the unique partnership with Ashland University that provides these benefits for youth. Our hope is that youth will grab ahold of the goal of a college education and experience educational and career success. Ultimately we know that doing so will improve their chances of being responsible, contributing citizens.