



Freedom Through Education

On September 23, the UBB faculty, staff, and students joined with the Washington Department of Corrections to celebrate the opening of the UBB "campus" at Washington State Reformatory. To allow for an expanded UBB program there, Superintendent Scott Frakes dedicated two classrooms and an office to UBB, allowing for 160 hours of classroom instruction per week.

Guests at the celebration included Sen. Debbie Regala, Reps. Mary Helen Roberts and Roger Goodman, and senior staff from the Department of Corrections Joenne McGerr, Michael Paris, and DOC Secretary, Eldon Vail. UBB students presented the program, which included a "Hip Hopera" by UBB student Anthony Wright, a documentary film that grew out of Gilda Sheppard's Sociology 101 class, and pieces by student writers Atif Rafay and Arthur Longworth.



UBB students Paul Sutton, Anthony Wright, Bill Pawlyk, and Arthur Longworth at the ribbon cutting ceremony. Anthony wrote the Hip Hopera, and Art read an excerpt from his writing, included on the next page.



Volunteer Amy Robertson, program director Carol Estes, UBB student Malcolm Jackson, Representative Roger Goodman, and UBB student Noel Caldellis at the September 23 UBB ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Record UBB Enrollment

UBB enrolled 175 men and 25 women this fall, over 100 of them new students, and offered 17 different courses.

Courses for college credit included: Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Introduction to Philosophy, Small Business Operations, African American History, Human Biology, Shakespeare's Comedies and Shakespeare's Histories, Astronomy, General Psychology, Child & Adolescent Psychology, and Introduction to Sociology.

Not-for-credit classes include Advanced Writing, Studio Art, College Preparatory Math and English, and Playwriting.

Dear Friends of UBB,

It wasn't many semesters ago that the first four men earned college credit in UBB's business class. Since then, we've awarded over 570 hours of college credit to Washington Prisoners through Ohio University. This spring we expect to increase that total by about 1,000 hours, including 80 hours of credit to the women in our fledgling program at the women's prison in Purdy.



Also this year, we not only received our first major grant, from the RiverStyx Foundation, but two smaller grants as well: one from the Lucky Seven Foundation to develop a model education program aimed at the perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence, and one from the Simpson Center for the Humanities at the University of Washington to be a community partner in a workshop series called Transformative Education Behind Bars.

We also moved into our new office in Washington State Reformatory, changed our name to University Beyond

Bars, and began to create the public identity reflected in the brand new logo (on cover) and a soon-to-come website (universitybeyondbars.org) that will help us connect with volunteers, partners, prisoners families, and the public.

All this change, expansion, and energy has made it possible for the men and women in WSR and WCCW to close the door on the toxic prison environment for a few precious hours each week when they enter a UBB classroom. In class, they are college students instead of "offenders," competent, worthy human beings with careers and futures ahead of them, men and women who make their families proud.

Those of us who work and volunteer for UBB feel profoundly grateful to the students who've showed us how to live in a hopeless situation and not feel hopeless. We feel privileged to be present and assist as these men and women transform their lives.

So this New Year all of us, both inside and out, will be thinking of you, who have so generously made UBB possible.

Thank you.



Transformative Education Behind Bars

How can the education that UBB offers to prisoners be as powerful and as effective as possible? How can we develop a college readiness program that overcomes even the most serious educational deficiencies and for, many of our students, a history of failure in school—or even learning disabilities? How can we teach our students extraordinarily well?

The Simpson Center for the Humanities at the University of Washington has partnered with UBB to sponsor Transformative Education Behind Bars (TEBB), a project designed to help us answer these questions by combining the expertise of university faculty and community members.

Gillian Harkins, UW professor of English and chair of the UBB Board, heads up the project. She has organized a series of monthly meetings that began in September with a visit from leading prison educator Jody Lewen, director of the Prison University Projects at San Quentin. Other meetings have focused on developing curricula for college readiness in math and English, which will culminate in pilot classes at the prison this summer, and building partnerships with community colleges.

The next meeting is at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 17th in the UW Communications building, room 226. Future meetings will discuss teacher training and curriculum across the disciplines.

TEBB sessions are open to all. For more information, please contact Gillian Harkins at gharkins@u.washington.edu.

Estes and UBB Win Leadership Award

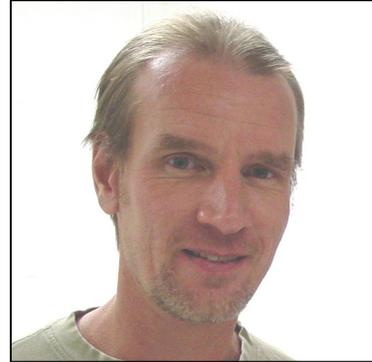
Seattle—At a festive holiday gathering of several hundred representatives of the Washington Association of Churches on December 5, UBB's program director Carol Estes and UBB received one of three "Ecumenical and Interfaith Leadership Awards." Vance Bartley, who attended UBB classes until his release from prison two years ago and now works as a paralegal in a downtown law firm, presented the award.

Volunteer with UBB?

If you are interested in teaching, tutoring, or guest lecturing with UBB, please email info@universitybeyondbars.org or call (206) 276-9128.

“About Education” -- From an essay by Arthur Longworth

When I was sent to prison many years ago as a young man, I had only a seventh grade education and didn't read or write very well. I wanted to go to school, which was something that was not available to me before I came to prison, but I soon discovered I wasn't allowed to attend school inside either. Prison officials said it would be a waste of their time and resources to educate me because I had a life sentence. At that point, I didn't even know if it was possible for me to learn—if I had the same abilities as others—but I had made up my mind to try, so I set out to educate myself. I went to the prison library and began to check out books. It was a small library and poorly stocked, but I read everything I could—biography, history, philosophy, language. Then I made tests and gave them to myself in order to ensure I had retained all that I was pouring into my mind.



Being in prison in this country is different now than it ever has been before. And sentences are longer and harsher than ever. Is that because people are worse today than they were in the past? Worth less? Less able to redeem themselves, or less deserving of the opportunity to do so? And young people—the ones with the greatest potential to reform themselves—are given those sentences. Getting a sentence of Life Without Parole when you are young is hopelessness.

Continuing on after that, learning to survive in an American prison and proceed forward as decades stack one atop another, and you have long since forgotten what is on the other side of these walls, is perseverance of human spirit.

Arthur Longworth was awarded First Place in Memoirs in the PEN 2010 Prison Writing Contest

From “Never Count Us Out” a poem by Charles Landry

Dedicated, we truly are the premier difference amongst these walls
Focused to abandon the past, utilizing our minds to create new journeys
Through knocking dust off books, seeking advance learning
One hundred intelligent minds to establish the path for the young

A Letter of Thanks

September 18, 2010

Dear Ms. Estes & UBB,

I received a response from a Sarah Frost informing me that “all sections requiring billing information should state University Beyond Bars” and I'm so overjoyed that I want to thank you and UBB for blessing me with this unique opportunity. I know how much college costs, so for me to be considered, let alone chosen, to be sponsored means a lot to me and I will not disappoint. I will take full advantage of this precious opportunity.

Not long ago, I wrote my final essay for the English 151: Writing & Rhetoric course on the lack of education throughout the prison-system, but UBB alone has given me not only hope for myself, but hope for a failed system.

I'm very aware of the doors that can and will be opened for me because of this gift that UBB is giving me, so on behalf of myself and my family, I need you to know that I truly appreciate everything. Thanks again.

Sincerely,
Edward Howard

WHERE DOES YOUR CONTRIBUTION GO?

\$360 = Tuition for a 5 credit course. On average, students take 2-3 courses per semester.

\$300 = General supplies for 165 students. Includes a folder, notepad, pencils, and pens.

\$180 = Annual textbook costs per student

\$40 = One used graphing calculator

\$25 = Admission fee to Ohio University

Who We Are

University Beyond Bars offers college classes to men incarcerated at the Monroe Correctional Complex (WSR unit) and women at the Washington Corrections Center for Women. UBB is supported by donations from individuals, including prisoners and their families, as well as grants. We receive no state or federal funding.

Mission

To transform Washington State's prisons into communities of learning by providing post-secondary education to the incarcerated, particularly to prisoners of color; and

To educate the public about the injustice, wasted human potential, violence, and expense that result when we attempt to solve social problems through mass imprisonment.

Advisory Committee

Prisoners themselves play an important role in the operation of UBB. The Prisoners Advisory Committee, made up of 12 prisoners who have demonstrated a commitment to higher education, meets weekly with staff to discuss program logistics and address student needs and concerns. This committee ensures that UBB stays closely linked to the desires of the prisoners and understands prison life, rules, and procedures. UBB welcomes students, teachers, journalists, legislators, and other visitors at its weekly meetings.

Students

UBB is open to prisoners who have completed a GED or high school diploma. Over 100 students enroll each semester, ranging from 20 to 70 years of age. Graduation ceremonies are held annually to recognize student achievements and award certificates for course completion.

College Readiness Courses

New students are required to complete or test out of UBB's two college preparatory classes, math and English, before they can take for-credit coursework.

Faculty and Staff

All instructors and tutors are volunteers from area colleges and universities. UBB has attracted distinguished volunteers from Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, University of Washington, Evergreen State College, University of Puget Sound, and Shoreline Community College. UBB also has a staff of three: a program director, a program assistant, and an operations director.

College Program for the Incarcerated

UBB offers college credit through Ohio University's College Program for the Incarcerated. UBB keeps its standards high and expenses low by using OU's distance learning Course Credit by Examination (CCE) option. Volunteer instructors teach the course, using OU's textbook and general standards. The

class is a semester long course, and if the students pass the instructor's in-class final, they are permitted to take OU's exam for college credit. Tuition is paid only when a student has completed course requirements and passed the qualifying exam.

Degree Options & Advising

The College Program for the Incarcerated offers five degree paths for an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Business, Associate in Individualized Studies, and a Bachelor of Specialized Studies. Students are encouraged to visit the UBB office to receive help with degree planning, credit transfers, and general academic questions. Staff and volunteers meet with UBB students in the advising office three days a week.

Salon Series and Other Special Events

UBB holds Salon Series presentations on the first and third Saturday of each month. Guest presenters, from actors to astronomers, are invited to present to UBB students and other interested individuals.

For More Information

If you are interested in teaching, guest lecturing, fundraising, or helping with other program events, please email info@universitybeyondbars.org or contact Carol Estes at (206) 276-9128.

UBB relies on contributions from supporters like you to keep the program running and students in the classroom. Your donations are what make college possible for our students. All donations are tax deductible.

PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATION TO:

UNIVERSITY BEYOND BARS
POST OFFICE BOX 1267
POULSBO, WA 98370

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other _____

To contact us, send an email to info@universitybeyondbars.org
or call (206) 276-9128

