

The College and Community Fellowship
JustLeadershipUSA
The Center for Community Alternatives

FACT SHEET: **Restoration of Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) Eligibility**

The **Education from the Inside Out Coalition** supports policy change that would restore TAP eligibility for incarcerated students and re-establish the opportunity for otherwise eligible students in prison to obtain college financial aid through TAP funding for postsecondary education programs.

In 1995, New York Governor George Pataki followed the lead of the federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which dismantled higher education in prison by eliminating incarcerated students' eligibility for Pell Grants, and eliminated the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) funding for incarcerated students in New York. Providing access to higher education has a ripple effect that extends far beyond the rehabilitation of incarcerated people. Higher education has a positive impact on society by reducing recidivism, increasing public safety and strengthening communities.

Incarceration without Education is a Bad Investment

Nationally, corrections cost \$40 billion each year.ⁱ In New York State alone, the cost of prisons is \$3.6 billion each year.ⁱⁱ 77, 737 people are incarcerated in New York; more than 2/3 of incarcerated people are re-arrested for a new offense within three years of their release, a clear indication that current correctional policies are failing.

Extensive research literature has indicated that education reduces recidivism, thus lowering incarceration costs. For every dollar invested in correctional education programs, \$4-5 dollars are saved through prevented recidivism.ⁱⁱⁱ

Increasing Access to Higher Education Pays Off

The value of higher education is clear

Higher education:

- Improves physical and mental health
- Increases employment rate
- Decreases reliance on public assistance^{iv}
- Elevates quality of life for children
- Strengthens communities
- Reduces taxpayer expenditures on prison.

Postsecondary education in prison is one of the most successful and cost-effective methods to prevent crime and increase public safety.

Restoring TAP Grant Eligibility Will:

- **Reduce Recidivism:** Many people leave prison unskilled and undereducated, both factors that correlate to increased recidivism rates, leaving them unprepared for life on the outside. Research has shown that incarcerated individuals who participated in correctional education programs were 43 percent less likely to recidivate than those who did not.^v
- **Save money:** In 1995 \$5 million out of the \$586 million appropriated for TAP funded post-secondary correctional education for 3,500 incarcerated students. The cost of providing a college degree to an incarcerated student is relatively low; a year of post-secondary correctional education cost \$2000 to \$3782^{vi} while the cost of incarcerating a person for 1 year in NYS is \$60,000.^{vii} A small investment in post-secondary correctional education can save taxpayers' money over time.
- **Strengthen Underserved Communities:** Formerly incarcerated people are frequently released to communities that have little to no capacity to provide them with productive employment or reentry assistance. With ever-increasing prison sentences and recidivism rates, incarcerated people are released without the essential tools necessary for reintegration into society.
- **Increase Employment:** Higher education for incarcerated people is valuable in a society where postsecondary credentials are increasingly necessary to gain access to living wage jobs. Researchers at the RAND Corporation found that incarcerated individuals participating in correctional education programming also had a 13 percent higher chance of finding employment post release.^{viii}
- **Reduce Poverty**—Success in higher education in prison carries far beyond prison walls. More than 50% of incarcerated people have children. When parents participate in postsecondary education the likelihood their children will go to college increases, creating more opportunities for multiple generations to climb out of poverty.^{ix}

The Education from the Inside Out Coalition is a nonpartisan collaborative of advocates, led by the College and Community Fellowship, JustLeadershipUSA and the Center for Community Alternatives. Our mission is to remove barriers to higher education funding facing students in prisons, both in New York State and nationwide.



THE COLLEGE & COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP

College and Community Fellowship (CCF) is unique among organizations aimed at helping people reclaim their lives after criminal conviction. Many programs try to address the basic needs of people returning to the community after conviction and prison, but only CCF guides them through the stages of higher education while promoting their leadership, self-advocacy, artistic expression, civic participation and long-term economic security. We see beyond reentry. We see limitless possibilities for our participants, their families and their communities.

Visit www.collegeandcommunity.org to learn more.



THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES

The Center for Community Alternatives (CCA) is a leader in the field of community-based alternatives to incarceration and reentry. CCA's mission is to promote reintegrative justice and a reduced reliance on incarceration through advocacy, services and public policy development in pursuit of civil and human rights.

CCA's work takes it into the neglected places of America – its ghettos and prisons – the places that many prefer to keep secret. CCA is committed to its responsibility to speak out, not only for progressive alternatives to the criminal justice system but also against those policies and practices that create barriers for people with criminal history records to personal development, transformation, and reintegration back into the community in a healthy, productive and fulfilling way.

Visit www.communityalternatives.org to learn more.



JUSTLEADERSHIPUSA

JustLeadershipUSA (JLUSA) is dedicated to cutting the US prison population in half by the year 2030 while reducing crime. JLUSA empowers people most affected by incarceration to drive policy reform.

Visit www.justleadershipusa.org to learn more.

ⁱ <http://www.vera.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/price-of-prisons-updated-version-021914.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.vera.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/the-price-of-prisons-40-fact-sheets-updated-072012.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.rand.org/news/press/2013/08/22.html>

^{iv} <http://www.ihep.org/sites/default/files/uploads/docs/pubs/learningreducerecidivism.pdf>

^v http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_report_s/RR200/RR266/RAND_RR266.pdf

^{vi} National Association of State Budget Officers, "2009 State Expenditure Report," National Association of State Budget Officers

^{vii} http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/24/nyregion/citys-annual-cost-per-inmate-is-nearly-168000-study-says.html?_r=0

^{viii} http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_report_s/RR200/RR266/RAND_RR266.pdf

^{ix} Eric F. Dubow, Paul Boxer, and L. Rowell Huesmann, "Long-term effects of parents' education on children's educational and occupational success: Mediation by family interactions, child aggression, and teenage aspirations," *Merrill Palmer Q* (Wayne State Univ Press) 55, no. 3 (2009), 224-249.