



November/December
Volume 19, Issue 3

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Correctional Education Association - Wisconsin

Inmates Can Be Match for Hard-to-Fill Jobs



Perennially low unemployment in south-central Wisconsin is the result of jobs growing faster than the population. That pressures area employers to find and keep workers, and it's going to get worse.

Terry Ludeman, chief economist for the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, told about 150 employers and employment trainers at a summit last week that the six surrounding counties will grow by 180,000 jobs in the next 25 years - but the labor force will grow by only 110,000.

"The demand for workers is going to grow at an alarming rate," Ludeman said. "We're going to have way more jobs in south-central Wisconsin than we're going to have people to fill them." While employers and academics gathered at the Monona Terrace Convention Center to talk about how to handle expected worker shortages, about 150 inmates assembled for a job fair in a gymnasium about 11 miles away. The setting was Oakhill Correctional Institution, where about 15 employers and 24 service agencies offered inmates job opportunities to consider after they leave the minimum security prison.

"I don't know if people really know the talent we have in prison," Warden Dick Verhagen said. Some inmates had acquired job skills before they committed crimes, he said, others have picked up skills through prison training programs.

At 2.3%, the Madison area unemployment rate is the sixth-lowest among the nation's 331 largest metropolitan areas. It's less than half the rate of the four-country Milwaukee area and well below the U.S. rate of 5.4%. While much of the country continues to recover jobs lost in the recession, the Madison area has barely missed a beat. Similar to other state capitals with major universities, Madison has stable employment that also tends to be growth-oriented. The Milwaukee area is still down nearly 24,000 jobs from its employment level four years ago; the Madison area is up 11,200.

Continued on page 3

Friends of Correctional Education Award Correction

In the last issue of this newsletter, we incorrectly identified the nominator of the volunteers involved in Lincoln Hills School's Victim Impact Program.

We identified the nominator as LHS teacher Elaine Miller. Elaine nominated UW-Stevens Point Professor Donna Decker who coordinates poetry workshops, which involve UWSP students with LHS youth.

The Victim Impact Volunteers were nominated by Dave Juliot. Dave compiled the extensive information on each of the volunteers with resulted in their selection as CEAW Friends of Correctional Education award winners.

Thanks to Dave for the nominations and we are sorry for the confusion.

Scholarship to Help Member Pursue Computer Science Degree

Again this year, the Wisconsin Chapter of the Correctional Education Association is pleased to award a scholarship designed to help a CEAW member or a family member pursue a college degree.

This year's \$500 scholarship goes to Elizabeth Kraft, library assistant at the Wisconsin Resource Center. Libby has been a CEAW member since 2000. She was one of the founding members of the CEAW Creativity Project. She participated in the screening and selection of works for the Creativity booklets and served a term as co-chair of the Creativity Project Committee.

Libby plans to finish her Associate Degree in the computer field. After graduation, she would like to attend University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to earn her Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science. Her goal is to work with Pre-Release inmates to teach them the basics of computers before they are released.

Libby's current work with inmates in the library at the Wisconsin Resource Center has enabled her to see the effect learning something new has on inmates. She gets a feeling of satisfaction from being part of inmate's little accomplishments like a lower level reader finishing a book for the first time or an inmate learning something new on the law library computers.

CEAW is pleased to be able to help Libby in the pursuit of her goals.

Executive Officers		<p>The CEA-W News Review is published by the members of the Correctional Education Association Wisconsin Chapter.</p> <p>The opinions herein are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the executive officers, the Department of Corrections, or the body as a whole.</p> <p>It is our hope that this newsletter will be used to communicate information concerning activities, special events, new directions and policies of the CEA-W and DOC.</p> <p>Reports or articles for publication may be submitted to CEA-W News Review Editor at: The Wisconsin Resource Center, PO Box 16, Winnebago, WI 54985-0016</p>
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Low unemployment in the Madison area has put a persistent strain on employers to retain and recruit the workers they need to continue growing.

One source of relief for the expected labor shortage is the faster-growing ethnic minority populations, Ludeman said, which are projected to generate 70% of the U.S. workforce growth in the next couple of decades.

The snag for the Madison area is that minority residents are scarce. The nation is 75% white, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, while Dane County is 89%, the same as the rate statewide. "There isn't a great deal of diversity in south-central Wisconsin," Ludeman said in an interview. "I think south-central Wisconsin has to find a way to interact with southeastern Wisconsin. We have to find a way to engage our populations from Milwaukee and Racine." Those two counties are home to about 21% of the state's population and 58% of its minority residents.



Southeastern Wisconsin also accounts for 40% to 45% of the population at Oakhill Correctional, where a little more than half of the 605 inmates are African-American, American Indian or Latino. Of the state's 22,000-plus prisoners, 57% are minority group members, representing a relatively large pool of untapped workers.

A few hours after her opening remarks at the employment summit in Madison, Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman addressed employers and volunteers in a small lunchroom downstairs from the prison's job fair. Department of Corrections Secretary Matthew Frank also spoke, signifying inter-agency collaboration to develop the inmates. "What we are really here for today is to really offer hope," Gassman said after inmates prepared and served a meal of lasagna, chicken cacciatore, tossed salad and three desserts. "What this fair is about is opening up doors and opportunities." Jobs not only benefit ex-offenders and their families, Gassman said, they also reduce recidivism and make taxpayers of inmates, who cost the state about \$27,000 a year.

"What this fair is about is opening up doors and opportunities."

Some African-American inmates from Kenosha and Beloit complained that there weren't employers from their hometowns at the fair. But Isaac Brown, who is from Madison, beamed. "The job fair is helping some people, but it depends where you're from," said Brown, who's 41 and expects to be released in the next month after three years in prison for dealing cocaine. "I don't care what I'm working at, as long as I'm working," Brown said. "The more idle time you have, the more trouble you can get into."

He was particularly pleased because at the job fair he met Janice Johnson, human resources coordinator for Baker Manufacturing Co., a 150-employee foundry in Evansville, south of Madison. She has been hiring men from a prison work-release program for the last five years and found most to be good workers. "It's far better than what we hire off the street," Johnston said. But most move back to their hometowns in southeastern Wisconsin or other places too far away to commute, she said. "What we would ideally like is people from this area," Johnston said, "so we could retain them."

By: Joel Dresang
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
Reprinted with permission

Stanley Correctional Institution Celebrates Inmates Earning Diplomas

An important measure of rehabilitation was celebrated by 21 inmates, their visitors, tutors, and staff members in the visiting room at Stanley Correctional Institution on Friday morning, October 1st. Eight men graduated from the high school equivalency program and another 12 graduated from the custodial skills vocational program, earning a 14-credit diploma from Chippewa Valley Technical College. One man received two certificates for completing both diplomas since SCI's Windy Meadows School held its last graduation ceremony in June.



Congratulations and recognition were offered in addresses by Warden Dan Benik and Education Director Peggy Meyers. High school equivalency graduate Otis Goodlow, who dropped out of high school 26 years ago, told the assembly about the struggles he faced and the classes and rehabilitation programs he has completed while in prison. Rickey Collins, a vocational program graduate, spoke of education as his chance to leave behind a world of youthful ignorance and irresponsibility and become independent.

The keynote address was presented by Denise Symdon, Division of Adult Institutions Assistant Administrator. Ms. Symdon is particularly well qualified to congratulate and offer encouragement to inmates who are working hard to succeed as they prepare to return to their communities. Symdon has been with the Department of Corrections since 1984 and has worked as a social worker, correctional officer, corrections field supervisor in Probation and Parole, and then held management positions in Probation and Parole. She is well aware of the obstacles inmates face as they try to reach their educational goals while in prison, and then try to keep succeeding after their release. She congratulated the men and talked about the vital importance of these diplomas to securing good jobs and a successful future as they are released.

A special lunch, catered by the SCI kitchen, was served by education staff members to the graduates, their guests, and staff members.

By Joanne Curry, SCI

Message from the President

The past two months have been very busy for members of CEAW. For the first time, this organization took part in four separate conferences. At the WCA conference, members presented in two different workshops – “Why Bother Teaching Offenders” and “Nurturing Parents”. Two weeks later, CEAW participated at the Northern Wisconsin Teacher’s Convention and again at the end of October at the Teacher’s Convention in Madison. Along with the presentations, an informational table was available that provided information on CEA and how to become a member of the organization. The biggest event this past month was the presence of CEAW at the annual HSED/Adult Literacy conference that was held in Appleton. Not only did CEAW organize and plan several sessions, but also had an informational table and Silent Auction during the conference. Secretary Frank was present the second day of the conference and spoke at that day’s luncheon. So, why create all this extra work for us? EXPOSURE! Too many people in our communities have no idea that education even exists in correctional settings or what educational programs are offered in our correctional schools. Presenting at conferences and making information available is one way to make people in the community aware of what correctional education does for our incarcerated men and women. Awareness brings support and understanding

I want to thank everyone who helped at the conferences. Your hard work and dedication is greatly appreciated. I also want to thank those institutions that donated an item for our Silent Auction. Many people commented on the beautiful craftsmanship of the items. Thanks for making our current events a success.

*By: Peggy Meyers
CEAW President*

NEW PARENTING PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE



Hot off the presses are two new publications sponsored by CEAW. A Guide to Successful Parenting Programs in Corrections and the Parenting Connections newsletter are now available.

To provide an additional service to its members and all correctional educators within the State of Wisconsin, the Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin established a Nurturing Parents Special Interest Group.

The Nurturing Parents SIG is an organization of correctional educators and other staff who are involved in teaching Parenting classes, facilitating Fathers'/Mothers' Support Groups, supervising Parent/Child Book Projects, coordinating Fathers'/Mothers' Fairs, or promoting positive parenting skills in some other way.

The mission of the Nurturing Parents group is to promote staff development and enhance or create parenting programs in corrections

To coordinate the SIG's efforts, two of the parenting educators have been selected to serve as chair and co-chair of the SIG. Diane Birch, teacher at Stanley Correctional Institution, is the first chair of this group and Mary Dahl, teacher at Green Bay Correctional Institution, has been selected as co-chair. They will serve 2-year terms that are staggered so that a new co-chair is selected each year.

To provide administrative supervision, one of the DOC Education Directors will serve as a liaison to the DOC Education Directors Council. He/She will serve a 2-year term. Jerry Bednarowski, Education Director at the Wisconsin Resource Center, has agreed to take this responsibility.

One of the goals of the Nurturing Parents organization is to provide a vehicle for communications among staff in various institutions who are teaching or developing similar programs. A Guide to Successful Parenting Programs in Corrections is the first publication designed to accomplish this goal. The guide provides information on all Parenting classes, Fathers'/Mothers' support Groups, Parent/Child Book Projects, and Fathers'/Mothers' Fairs offered in Wisconsin correctional institutions.

Along with the initial "Guide", the inaugural issue of a bi-monthly newsletter has been published. Articles pertaining to any of the above mentioned programs are the mainstay of the Parenting Connection newsletter. Copies of the Guide and the newsletter have been distributed to each parenting program instructor and each DOC Education Director.

Anyone else who would like a copy of the Guide or newsletter may contact one of the people listed below. Anyone who would like to contribute an article on their program for the newsletter may also forward it to these addresses. Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

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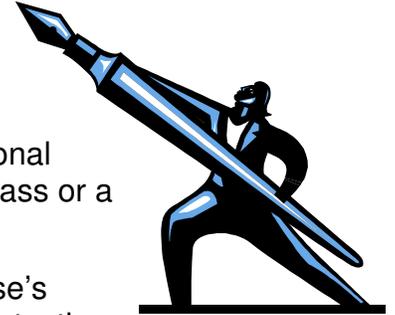
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Innovations in Correctional Education

CEA-W has established an award to recognize innovation in correctional education. The award may be given to an individual instructor of a class or a group collaborating to offer a program.

Correctional educators wishing to nominate their own or someone else's innovative teaching method or educational program may do so by contacting Chris Natzke at (262) 646-3341, ext. 468 or email: chrisnatzke@doc.state.wi.us.



The deadline for nominations is **January 3, 2005**. After Chris receives the nominations, he will send each nominee a form to provide more information on their program. These forms will be due February 1, 2005.

Entries will be evaluated on:

-  **Uniqueness**
-  **Effectiveness**
-  **Universality of application**
-  **Relevance to student needs**

To be eligible the teaching methods or educational program must be:

- Offered in an adult or juvenile correctional setting (this includes state and federal institutions, juvenile institutions, county jails, juvenile detention centers, and other agencies dealing with offenders)
- Developed or adapted by the program/class instructor

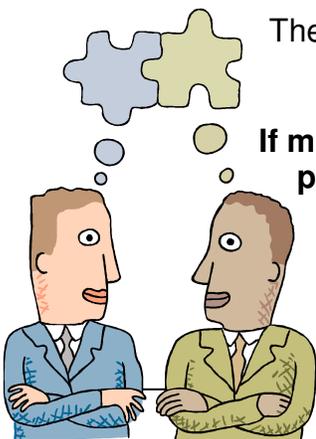
The winner will receive up to a \$250 stipend to present his/her innovative program at a choice of conferences including:

International CEA
Regional III CEA
Wisconsin HSED/Adult Literacy

OR

The winner can use the \$250 to purchase materials for his/her program.

If more than one instructor is responsible for the innovative method or program, the award will be shared by the instructors.



Correctional Education Association

2005

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

PURPOSE:

The Correctional Education Association of Wisconsin (CEAW), in cooperation with the International Correctional Education Association, has established the TEACHER OF THE YEAR award to recognize outstanding educational contributions by a teacher in a correctional facility.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE:

Teachers who have worked in correctional education for at least two years and currently spend at least two-thirds of their work time instructing students are eligible. Teachers who were nominated previous years, but were not selected as the CEAW TEACHER OF THE YEAR may be re-nominated.

NOMINATION PROCESS:

Other than the members of the CEAW Executive Board of Directors, anyone may submit a nomination for TEACHER OF THE YEAR. The nomination may be by a colleague, or the teacher him or herself. Nominees need not be members of CEA, but in order to represent Wisconsin at the Region III level, membership is required. The nomination deadline is **January 3, 2005**.

QUALITIES TO BE CONSIDERED:

- Teaching excellence
- Classroom and program innovation
- Professional development activities
- Ability to serve as a representative for correctional education in the state of Wisconsin

AWARDS:

The CEAW's TEACHER OF THE YEAR will receive a plaque attesting to his or her achievement. he/she will be furnished expenses to compete against winners from six other Midwestern States at the Region III CEA conference to be held this spring.

HURRY!!! Phone, Fax or Mail your nomination by **January 3, 2005** to:

Mike Breszee

CEAW AWARDS & RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

Waupun Correctional Institution

PO Box 351

Waupun, WI 53963-0351

Phone: (920) 324-1147 Fax (920) 324-7250

E-mail: michael.breszee@doc.state.wi.us

CEA Membership Application

Please print your name and address carefully.
List your name and address, as you would like them published in the annual Directory of Correctional Educators.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip/Postal Code _____

Mail to:

CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

4380 Forbes Blvd, Lanham, MD 20706

Phone: (800) 783-1232

Fax: (302) 918-1900

Referred By: _____

Membership #: _____

We Accept VISA or MasterCard

Card No. _____

Expiration Date: _____

Type of Membership:

- Individual \$50 year
- Institutional/Library \$85 year
- Student/Volunteer/Retiree \$30 year
- Clerical/Support Staff \$20 year

For More Information Contact:

Barb Rasmussen, CEAW Secretary

Phone: (262) 886-3214 Ext. 520

Email: barbara.rasmussen@doc.state.wi.us

check here if you are a Federal Bureau of Prisons Employee

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