

Community Partners Inside and Outside Prison by Julie Zimmerman

Over College Guild's 19 years, the organization has teamed up with colleges in Maine (Bowdoin and Bates), Tennessee (Vanderbilt) and Georgia (Young Harris). Students have been able to participate as readers, board members, office volunteers, summer interns, and special events supporters and coordinators.

In 2018, we received a letter from a member of the National Lifers of America (Chapter 1023) at Muskegon State Prison in MI. He asked if it were possible to use College Guild courses for their chapter. CG courses are free to such groups who want to engage with other prisoners in education when so few opportunities are available to them.

Leaders of the NLA have recruited and trained tutors to provide feedback to members taking CG courses. An average of 8-10 tutors participate in the program, and we provide Certificates of Recognition for their work. NLA's most recent Progress Report documented the milestone of 314 total enrollments: including 178 Certificates of Completion awarded!

I would like to tell you about the College Guild Discussion Groups that we have been conducting this past month. You may recall my mention of plans to hold study groups to work through CG courses in groups. Well, in short, the experiment was a huge success. The participants loved it. We had great interaction, tons of questions, excellent peer support, and a good overall experience... I can tell you that at least one of the people who participated in the discussion groups is functionally illiterate, yet he processed the questions and verbally gave appropriate answers consistently throughout each session. If he were only given the CG correspondence opportunities, he would have been entirely excluded from participation due to his inability to read and write. But one of our CG tutors was there to write his answers during class, so the student was able to complete CG courses and dis-

CG has made a great impression on me. I discovered how practical learning for enjoyment can be.

Bruce, NLA

cover enjoyment in programming. CG has done so much for us, we deeply appreciate the chance that you have taken in choosing to work with the NLA.

Bruce

This fall we were pleased to welcome another "inside" community partner. NAACP Branch #4011 is located at Northeast Correctional Facility in Bowling Green, MO. The program requested writing courses to start with, and began studying Creative Language in January 2020. Northeast CF has an enthusiastic fund-raising population that supports non-profits, and NAACP has contributed generously to College Guild as a way to give back.

December 8: Our total expected enrollment for January is expected to be 14. We will conduct another membership drive in February and have set a goal of ten additional members.

December 26: The course demand is proving higher than we expected – and sooner... Our brand has 42 members and we expect most of them to enroll before February..... I really hope things work out on our end. If this

model is successful, I plan on proposing similar CG/NAACP Prison-Branch partnerships with the other 8 prison branches in Missouri. I am really in awe and appreciative of what you are doing for us. Thanks for giving us hope ad a chance to truly better ourselves. Joe

The most recent community partner to join us is through the Education Department at Loretto Federal Prison in Cresson PA. They began with the Health course and already eight participants have received Certificates of Completion.

I just recently took the College Guild Health course. It was outstanding! The course material was very helpful to stay healthy and strong...I highly recommend this course to anyone looking to learn and better their personal health.

Kenneth

continued on page 2

cont'd from page 1

I feel as though I learned a great deal about how my body functions...I learned new ways to think about endurance and some new concepts such as trigger point therapy, shiatzu and foot reflexology....The nutrition sections were particularly helpful and made me rethink my personal food choices....I learned about inflammation, injuries and pain and how to better prevent those injuries in the future....Overall, I enjoyed this course, learned much from it and would be interested in participating in other programs of similar design and scope.

Rashawn

Loretto students have now moved on to the Travel course. Each of the three groups has selected different courses to start, but they are all eager to give their members as many choices as possible.

CG has signed contracts with these three groups, specifying that courses will be used as intended and free to all prisoners. Because the participants' work is reviewed by tutors at the prisons and not under the supervision of College Guild, course headings and Certificates of Completion show the chapter's or institution's name, followed by: *courses used with permission of College Guild*. The CG copyright remains on the courses. Certificates of Completion are printed at our office and

sent to either individual participants or Education Supervisors.

Our thanks to the administrations of the Muskegon State Prison in Muskegon MI, the Northeast Correctional Center in Bowling Green MO, and Loretto Federal Correctional Institution in Cresson Pa. Their support of education in their institutions has made possible our collaboration with the National Lifers of America, the NAACP and the Loretto study group. College Guild's waiting list remains long, but many prisoners not enrolled as CG students are benefiting right now and encouraging each other through their use of College Guild courses.

We incarcerated people can be a handful in many ways but you seem to understand that people are that way sometimes, and I am so thankful for your willingness to give us a chance. CG has made a great impression on me, and I hope to share principles that I have learned from you such as focusing less on practical knowledge and more on a pleasant programming experience. That concept was so foreign to me before I met you, but once I grasped it, my whole paradigm changed and I discovered how practical learning for enjoyment can be. CG will remain in my prayers.

Bruce, NLA

A Perspective on Ongoing Engagement by Cully Brownson

In 2010, as a first-year Bowdoin student, I attended a College Guild reader orientation a bit on a whim. I was interested in pursuing a degree in education and this seemed like an interesting and exciting way to provide a much needed service while also supplementing my development as a teacher. This may have been what piqued my interest in attending that initial event, but is not what has motivated me to remain an active volunteer with College Guild.

Throughout the last 10 years I have served College Guild as a volunteer reader, board member, and am currently the chair of the board of directors. The reason I've stayed involved with College Guild is due to the importance of our work in transforming community and the excitement that comes along with this transformation.

The importance lies in College Guild providing a service that is unique in that no one else is striving to reach incarcerated people the way that we are. The excitement is found in how directly we can impact someone's thinking or open their mind, especially given that College Guild readers may be the only perspective from beyond prison walls that our students can engage with. It is also found in considering the opportunities we have to grow as an organization and expand our offering to all who seek it.

Finally, it is also the piece of community transformation that keeps me involved. There are countless great organizations providing meaningful and important services to their communities, but not all are working to transform communities in the way College Guild is. By recognizing education as a human right, and valuing the impact of effective relationships on learning outcomes and personal growth, College Guild is providing a transformative experience to incarcerated people across the country.

If you reflect on your own education, you can likely recall some teacher or mentor who played a particular influence in shaping the trajectory of your life. Many College Guild students may not have had a person like this who invested their time, energy, and care into their development.

Cont'd on page 4

College Guild students share their talent

Drum Patterns

He drummed on
his snare drum rapping
with sharp cracks
and rat-tatting through the
melody of his bandmates

like gunshots through the night
in his neighborhood
the rat-tatting and sharp cracks
of men who bear arms
making the land quake.

He finds comfort
in these loud pops
being made on canvas
or as the stick strikes
a note on a rim shot

grateful for his position
in the band and in life
his life choices
are conducted by men
who do right

so he drums on...
rat-tat rat-tat rat-tat

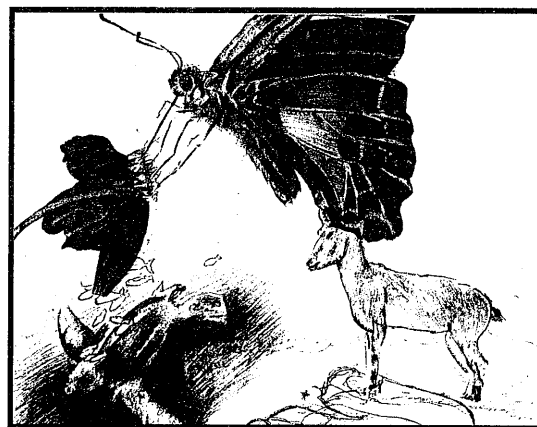
Tonie Future

I stand in the vastness
The sea in front and sand behind
A seagull soars and a crab tries to hide
I feel small surrounded by such grandeur.
My spirit flies with seagulls
And knows freedom with no limit
My heart hides with the crab
As it creeps to the edge and can go no further.
It disappears in the small cramped space for one
Just as I can go no further than wire mesh
And retreat into my own shell, a cell,
Where darkness surrounds, fear paralyzes
And pain reigns.

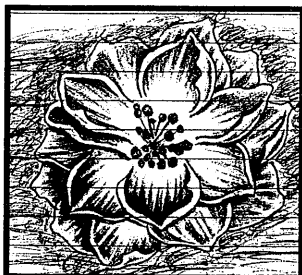
Gary Farlow

I never thought in a million years that I'd love writing.
I never knew the world I had in my head I can make real.
I never believed I had talent or was good at anything.
Now I know and I will create the world I see in my sleep.

Jan Carlos Sanchez



Henry Sotelo



Henry Sotelo

“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.” — Unknown

A Perspective on Ongoing Engagement - cont'd from p. 2

However, ~~now our students have~~ a group of dedicated reader volunteers who are invested in them and who respect them. This is the work of community transformation--that we respect and help those who have been outcast in order that they may see, experience, and create good in a world that has otherwise forgotten them.

These tenets keep me involved and engaged with College Guild. Through College Guild I am able to connect my passion for education to the mission of community transformation. This transformation is possible because of how critical our work is, and it is exciting in how we experience the changes in our students' thinking and perspectives. It is also exciting because there is an increasing need and desire for what we offer--we are challenged everyday to consider how we can expand our reach while staying true to our mission. I encourage you to reflect on why you volunteer for College Guild and are engaged in our mission. Having a dedicated group of engaged volunteers is critical as we continuously look to reach more students and play a role in transforming their lives.

Program Stats for January 2019 - January 2020

Average # of Students on Wait List	533
Total Units Sent Out	3260
New Students	436
Free Dictionaries given out	179
Certificates of Completion	418
Units Sent to Readers	2735
New Readers	145
Total Volunteer Reader Hours	4786
Inkind Donation Value of Reader Hours	\$114,870

Donations made in memory of:

Barbara Cady

Carolyn Harrington



Donations made in honor of:

Barbara Y.

Julie Z.

DONATE TO COLLEGE GUILD TODAY!

PO Box 696, Brunswick, ME 04011

Please consider becoming an ongoing donor to College Guild with a monthly recurring donation, whether \$10 a month or \$100 a month, we are very grateful for your support. Thank you on behalf of College Guild incarcerated students and volunteers and for your generous tax-deductible donations!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

\$60 (\$5 a month) puts dictionaries in the hands of 4 students, many who have never owned a book of their own.

\$240 (\$20 a month) allows us to cover the costs of delivering 4 courses during a year.

\$400 (\$33 a month) helps us move two names from the wait list to the active student list, allowing two more incarcerated people to become students of College Guild.

\$600 (\$50 a month) provides envelopes, paper and printing costs for 6 months so we can put course work into eagerly waiting students' hands.

\$1000 (\$83 a month) provides 3 months of postage to ensure course work, special requests and information gets out to students in hundreds of prisons across the country.

\$1200 (\$100 a month) enables 6 incarcerated people to participate in College Guild's life changing courses for a year.

Or any amount of your choice will be put to good use for our students.

To donate by credit card: www.collegeguild.org/support

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US: info@collegeguild.org