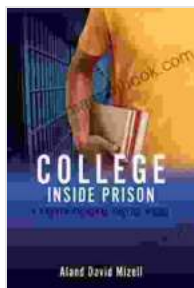


# College Inside Prison: A Proven Criminal Justice Model for Success



The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. In 2020, there were over 2.3 million people behind bars, and that number is only expected to grow in the coming years. This mass incarceration has had a devastating impact on communities, particularly communities of color.



## COLLEGE INSIDE PRISON: A PROVEN CRIMINAL JUSTICE MODEL by Fernando Darío González Grueso

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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One of the most significant consequences of mass incarceration is the lack of opportunity for inmates to receive an education. This is due to a number of factors, including:

- The high cost of college tuition
- The limited availability of college programs in prisons
- The stigma associated with being an incarcerated student

As a result, only a small percentage of inmates earn a college degree while incarcerated. This has a number of negative consequences, including:

- Increased recidivism rates
- Lower earnings after release
- Reduced civic engagement

However, there is a growing body of research that shows that college education programs in prisons can have a positive impact on inmates' lives. These programs have been shown to:

- Reduce recidivism rates
- Increase earnings after release
- Promote civic engagement
- Improve mental health
- Foster a sense of hope and purpose

## **The Bard Prison Initiative**

One of the most successful college education programs in prisons is the Bard Prison Initiative (BPI). BPI was founded in 1999 by Bard College and offers a rigorous liberal arts education to inmates at six prisons in New York State.

BPI's program is based on the belief that all people, regardless of their past, deserve a chance to learn and grow. The program is designed to challenge students intellectually and to help them develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they need to succeed in college and beyond.

BPI's program has been highly successful. Inmates who participate in the program have a recidivism rate of just 4%, compared to the national average of 44%. BPI graduates also earn higher wages after release than non-graduates.

The success of BPI's program has led to the creation of similar programs at other colleges and universities across the country. These programs are providing inmates with the opportunity to earn college degrees and to improve their lives.

## The Benefits of College in Prison

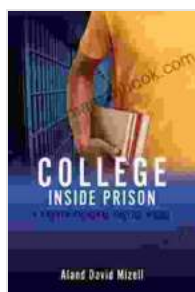
There are a number of benefits to offering college education programs in prisons. These benefits include:

- **Reduced recidivism rates:** Inmates who participate in college education programs have a lower recidivism rate than those who do not. This is likely due to the fact that college education programs help inmates to develop the skills they need to be successful in the community.
- **Increased earnings after release:** Inmates who participate in college education programs earn higher wages after release than those who do not. This is likely due to the fact that college education programs help inmates to develop the skills they need to be successful in the workplace.
- **Promoted civic engagement:** Inmates who participate in college education programs are more likely to be involved in civic activities after release. This is likely due to the fact that college education programs help inmates to develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they need to participate in the community.
- **Improved mental health:** Inmates who participate in college education programs have better mental health than those who do not. This is likely due to the Tatsache, that college education programs help inmates to develop coping mechanisms and to build a sense of community.
- **Fostered a sense of hope and purpose:** Inmates who participate in college education programs have a greater sense of hope and purpose than those who do not. This is likely due to the fact that

college education programs help inmates to see a future for themselves beyond prison.

College education programs in prisons are a proven criminal justice model for success. These programs can reduce recidivism rates, increase earnings after release, promote civic engagement, improve mental health, and foster a sense of hope and purpose.

As the United States continues to grapple with the challenges of mass incarceration, college education programs in prisons offer a promising solution. These programs can help inmates to break the cycle of crime and poverty and to build a better future for themselves and their communities.



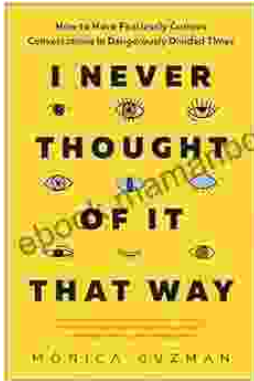
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