

Young Inmates Earning Regular High School Diplomas

Written by The Office of the Commissioners
Tuesday, 13 March 2012 11:00

Three young inmates at Armstrong County Jail, Jeremy Thomas, Lorenzo DiMartino, and Caleb Vaughn, recently earned a high school diploma from the schools they would have been attending before a criminal conviction interrupted their graduation.

Another, Jacob Antoszyk, is working toward that goal.

Administered by the Armstrong County School District, inmates between the ages of 18 and 21 can receive a diploma through the Armstrong County Jail Incarcerated Youth Education Program which for several years has been helping prisoners earn the credits they need to graduate.

Jail Educator, Carrie Satterfield, was quick to point out the diploma is not a General Equivalent Diploma (GED). She said it is the same document issued to all the other students at the inmate's respective high school.

Mrs. Satterfield, who has been teaching homebound students for Armstrong School District for

"I see the side of them that is crying out for help." Satterfield said, "But I also realize they are in here for a reason."

Satterfield said one graduate was so proud of his diploma that he insisted on washing his hands before touching it. He carefully examined every inch of it before looking up at her with a huge smile saying, "This is awesome. This is so awesome."

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"These are the moments that make all of the hard work involved in teaching worthwhile," said Satterfield.

She began her assignment with an enrollment of two males, and later picked up the third and two females. She said both young women were very bright but dropped out of the class for one reason or another before completion. Currently, she is working with a fourth male.

Classes are segregated by gender under jail guidelines and are conducted from

Inmates 21 years and older can earn a GED through a separate program during their incarceration.



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Youth Education Services teacher Carrie Satterfield shakes hands with Armstrong County Jail inmate Caleb Vaughn while presenting him with his high school diploma. Vaughn is one of several inmates to earning regular diplomas while serving time.