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2024  
NJ COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
OPPORTUNITY SUMMIT

# Building Pathways

to Equity & Economic Prosperity

The title 'Building Pathways' is accompanied by several decorative arrows. A light blue arrow points right from the end of 'Building', then curves up and right. A dark blue arrow points right from the end of 'Pathways', then curves down and right. On the left side, a light blue arrow points left from the end of 'Pathways', then curves down and left. A dark blue arrow points left from the end of 'Building', then curves up and left.

**June 11-13, 2024**

Bally's Atlantic City  
Hotel & Casino

[NJCommunityColleges.org](https://NJCommunityColleges.org)

# SERVING NEW JERSEY'S JUSTICE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS



**The Honorable James McGreevey**

Executive Director, NJ Reentry Corporation



**Honorable Judge (Ret.) Mark Sandson, J.S.C.**

Judiciary Opportunities for Success, JOBS Program



**Lori Margolin**

Associate VP, Continuing Ed and WF, and Director, Programs for Justice Involved Individuals, Hudson County Community College



**Dr. Alexandra Fields**

Professor of English and Academic Director, Center for Justice-Impacted Students, Middlesex College



**Genevieve Van Doren**

Director of Returning & Incarcerated Student Education (RISE) Program, Raritan Valley Community College

**Moderated by:**

**Dr. David Stout**, President, Brookdale Community College

# SERVING NEW JERSEY'S JUSTICE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS

**Dr. David Stout**

**President,  
Brookdale Community College**



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Mark Sandson, J.S.C.**

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**JOBS Program**



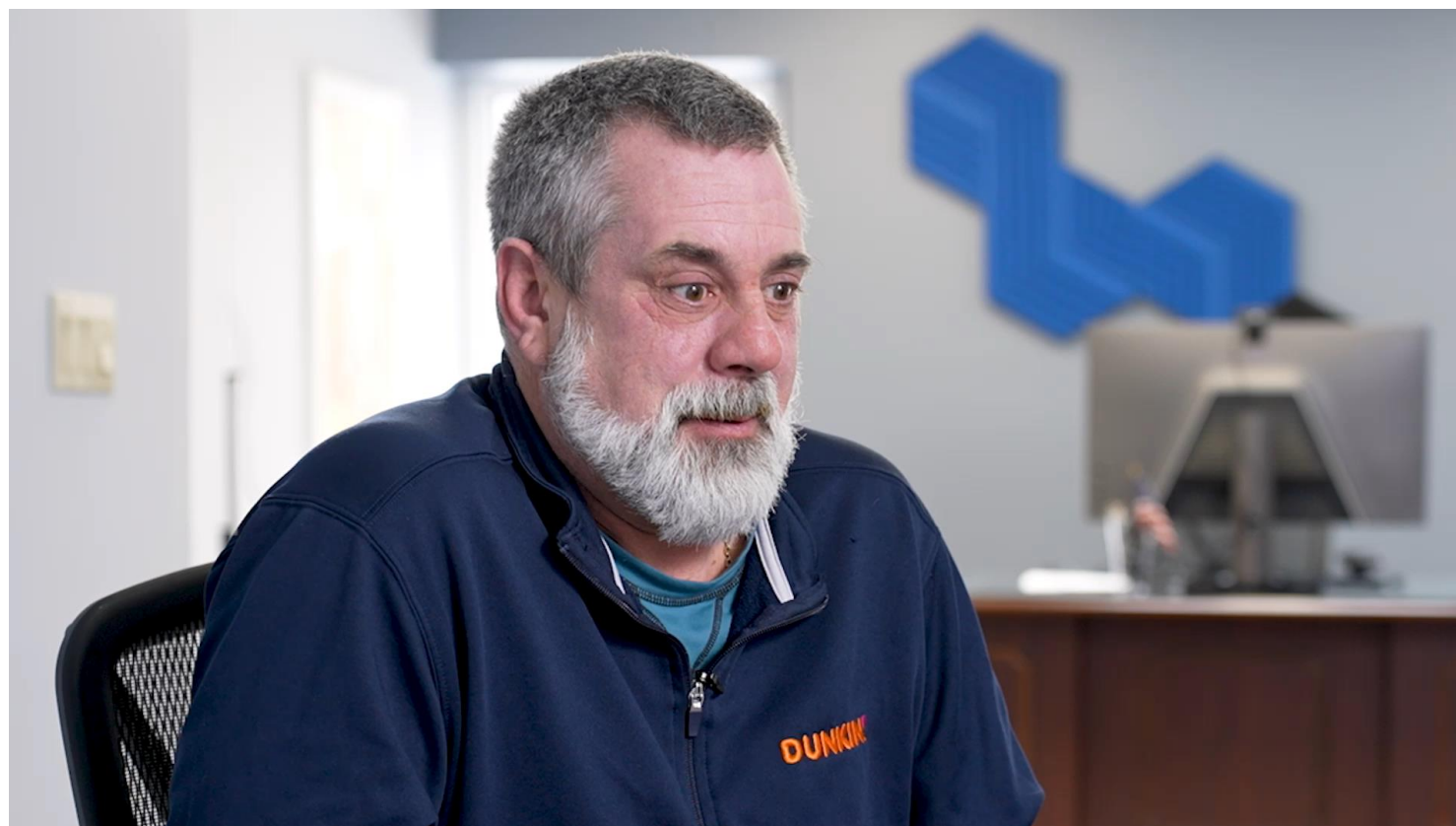


# Judiciary Opportunities for Building Success “JOBS” Program

New Jersey Council of County Colleges Opportunity Summit  
June 13, 2024

A PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP ENHANCING THE WORKFORCE WHILE HELPING THE COMMUNITY

# JOBS Video





# Probation JOBS Statistics

- ▶ # of people supervised on Probation **130,000**
- ▶ # of Probation Officers engaged strictly in job coaching = +/- **50**
- ▶ # of jobs started by our clients in Q1 of 2024 = **1,336**
- ▶ # of jobs obtained since start of the JOBS program = **+4,000**

# The Why

This initiative is an important step in helping the probation clients we serve build a foundation for their future success and become gainful members of the community.

This initiative provides a platform for public, private and government organizations to help strengthen and support our communities.

Through our partnership, we can solve problems to meet business and governmental needs.

*“Life's most persistent and urgent question is,  
'What are you doing for others?’”*

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



# **SERVING NEW JERSEY'S JUSTICE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS**

**Lori Margolin**

**Associate Vice President Continuing  
Education and Workforce  
Development,**

**and Director, Programs for Justice  
Involved Individuals,**

**Hudson County Community College**



HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Jersey City, Secaucus, and Union City,  
New Jersey



# A TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING PATHWAY MODEL FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED STUDENTS



2024 Bellwether Finalist  
Instructional Programs and Services



2023-24 Innovation of the Year Award from the League for  
Innovation in the Community College

# THE CRITICAL ISSUE

Justice-involved individuals need educational opportunities to achieve upward social and economic mobility.



# EDUCATION PROMOTES UPWARD MOBILITY



33%

of individuals who are justice-involved are likely to have future involvement with the justice system after release.

48%

are less likely to return to incarceration as a result of educational programming.

# ADDRESSING THE CRITICAL ISSUE

## HCCC's Justice-Involved Undergraduate Success and Training (JUSTice) Program

- Two arms of programming
  - Students who are currently incarcerated
  - Students who were previously incarcerated (reentry)
- One of a few degree programs nationally that is offered virtually in a county jail.
- In-person Student Success Coach
- Academic and workforce tracks



# ABILITY TO ADDRESS THE CRITICAL ISSUE

- 1** Alignment with Overarching Priorities
- 2** Commitment to Community and Partnerships
- 3** Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- 4** Connection with Students Support Services





# HCCC'S TWO PRIORITIES

- Student Success
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- New Jersey Reentry Corporation
- Hudson County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- Hudson County Department of Family Services and Reintegration
- Hudson County Economic Development Corporation
- Hudson County/Jersey City Workforce Development Board



# EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

71

HCCC faculty have earned at least one credential from the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE).

4

HCCC faculty have been awarded AACCC's Dale P. Parnell Faculty Distinction Recognition since 2019.

4

Fall 2023 professional development workshops for teaching Justice-Involved students.



# SUPPORTING STUDENTS



HCCC Student Success Coaches



## HUDSON HELPS

**The Hudson Helps Resource Center Is Open!**



# The JUSTice Program Team

## Hudson County Community College



Chris Reber  
President



Lori Margolin  
Associate Vice Presidents



Heather DeVries  
Associate Vice Presidents



Anita Belle  
Director



Marian Betancourt



Karina Arango



Fabiola Ocean

Student Success Coaches



Pooja Loka  
Student Success Coach (PT)

## New Jersey Reentry Corporation



James McGreevey  
Chairman and Executive Director  
Former New Jersey Governor



Robert Carter  
Chief Operating Officer



LaceyAnn Francis  
Director  
Systems Integration



Michael Hayek  
Facility Director  
Governor's Reentry Training  
and Employment Center

## The County of Hudson



Frank Mazza  
Director  
Housing and  
Community Reintegration



Jacqueline Jeter  
Division Chief  
Reintegration



Keith Davis  
Assistant Division Chief  
Reintegration



Hana Elezi  
Assistant Director  
Social Rehabilitation



Laurie Coppola  
Supervising Program  
Development Specialist  
Reintegration



# TIMELINE

2019

- Meetings with Hudson County Agencies
- Proposal to County for program for incarcerated students submitted and later redesigned

2020

- Planning paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic

2021

- Planning resumes
- Re-revised proposal submitted
- Proposal approved and funded by Hudson County
- First meeting with NJRC for reentry student program
- Classes for incarcerated men begin



2022

- Hudson County funds second year of program for incarcerated students
- Program for incarcerated students expands to include women
- Culinary and Welding programs for reentry students launched
- HCCC awarded \$100,000 Metallica Scholarship for welding tuition

2023

- Phlebotomy, GED Preparation Program, and Summer Training Institute launched for reentry students
- Two incarcerated students graduate
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Student Passport Program launched
- HCCC awarded additional \$50,000 Metallica Scholarship for welding tuition

2024

- Investigating additional training programs and enhancements

# OUTCOMES

HCCC is meeting and exceeding standard benchmarks.



Research shows that only . . .

48% of the general population completes some post-secondary education.

11% of incarcerated students complete some post-secondary education.

9% of incarcerated students complete a post-secondary credential.



# HCCC OUTCOMES

Currently Incarcerated Students

256

Students

316

Classes attempted

174 (55%)

Classes completed

3.71

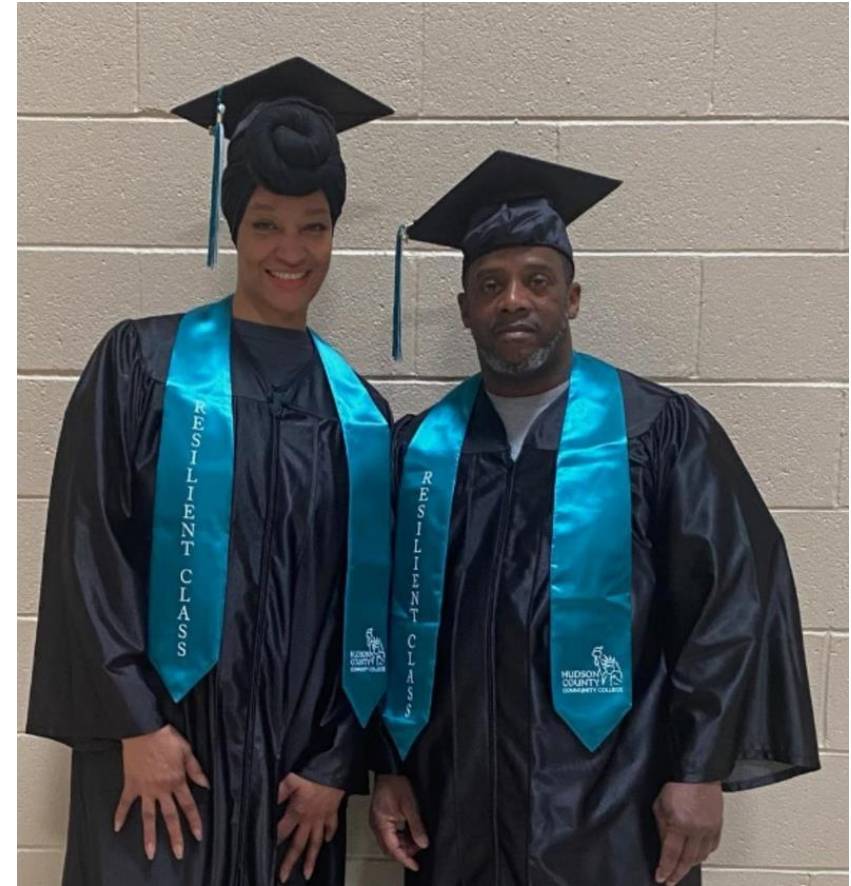
Average GPA

12

Students have continued their education at HCCC upon release

2

Students graduated with their associate degrees in spring 2023





# HCCC OUTCOMES

## Previously Incarcerated Students

412

Students

286 (69%)

Classes completed

7

Students graduated with a  
proficiency certificate in  
spring 2023

209 (70%)

Students earned an industry  
recognized credential (of the  
297 students in an industry-  
recognized credential  
program)

36

Students enrolled in GED  
Preparation Program

240

Justice-involved youth served  
by Summer Training Institute



# THANK YOU!

Lori Margolin

Associate Vice President, Continuing Education and Workforce Development

[lmargolin@hccc.edu](mailto:lmargolin@hccc.edu)



# **SERVING NEW JERSEY'S JUSTICE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS**

**Dr. Alexandra Fields**

**Professor of English,**

**and Academic Director, Center for  
Justice-Impacted Students**

**Middlesex College**





# Middlesex College's Center for Justice-Impacted Students

*Alexandra Fields*

*Center for Justice-Impacted Students*

*NJ Community College Opportunity Summit, 2024*

# Who We Are

Middlesex College's Center for Justice-Impacted Students aims to expand access to transformative higher educational opportunities and empowering curriculum for students impacted by the justice system.

We have a team of four staff along with a rotation of work-study students:

Program Manager: Chanel Cortijo

Enrollment Navigator and Student Success Coach:  
Spencer McCray

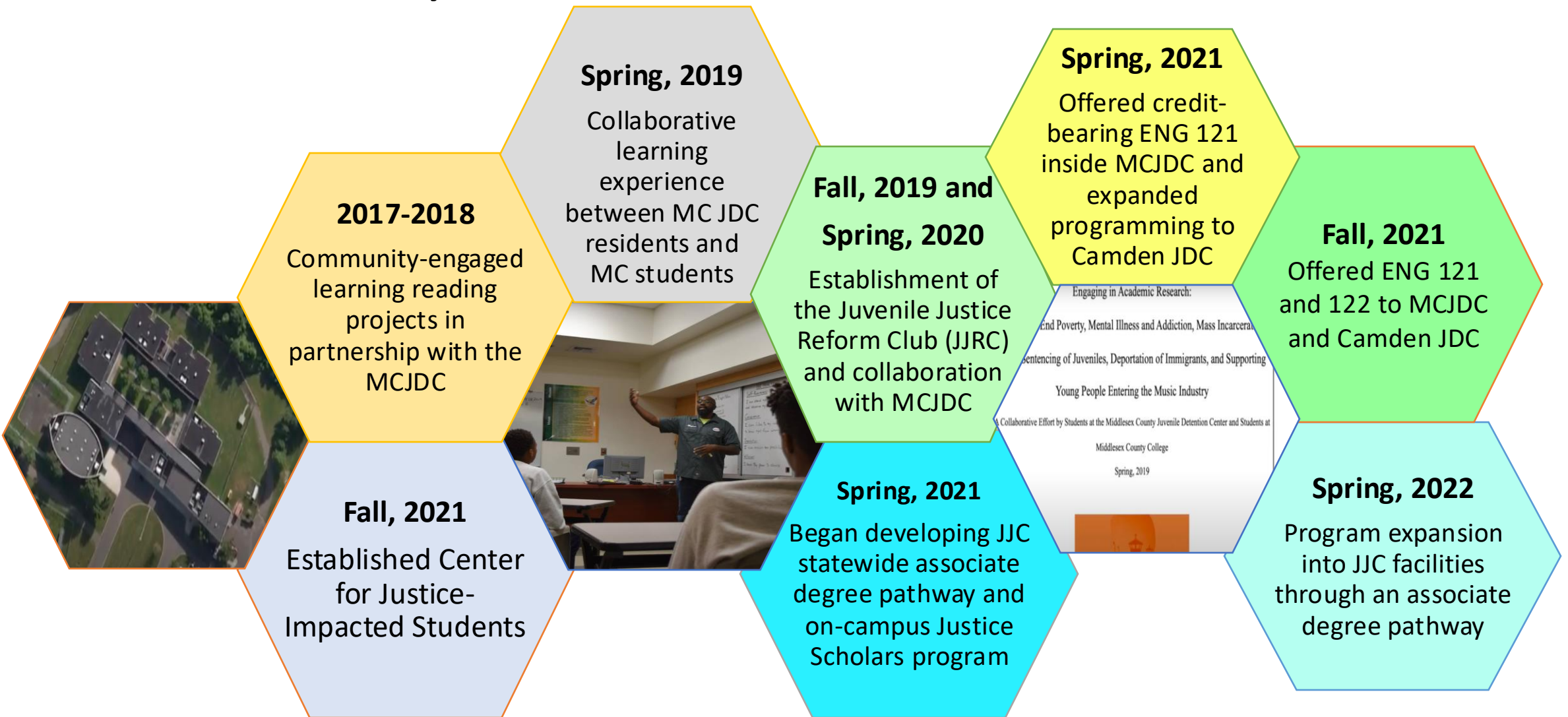
Program Coordinator: Vanessa Velez

Founding Academic Director: Alexandra Fields

*We define justice-impacted students as individuals who have been incarcerated or detained in a prison, immigration detention center, local jail, juvenile detention center, or any other carceral setting, those who have been convicted but not incarcerated, those who have been charged but not convicted, those who have been arrested, and those who have otherwise been justice-impacted, such as due to having immediate relatives who are/have been incarcerated. (LSAC, 2017)*



# Our History



# Where We Are Now

## Juvenile Justice Commission Facilities – Associate Degree Pathway

- Offered at 10+ secure-care facilities and community programs state-wide
- Cohort model with 10-15 students joining each cohort
- Two core remote-live cohort classes offered each semester with the opportunity for additional online classes
- Pre-semester orientation and weekly student success coach meetings
- Supplemental programming including a debate program and paid policy advocacy project

## Justice Scholars Program

- Reentry support, resource hub, and networking community for on-campus students
- Targeted recruitment of justice-impacted individuals across the county
- Trauma-informed student success class
- Youth Justice Reform Project: policy advocacy and credible messenger program

## Juvenile Detention Centers – Middlesex and Camden JDCs

- College programming and credit-bearing college courses
- Workshops and humanities-based advocacy efforts

## Juvenile Justice Reform Club

- Advocacy for a justice-impacted friendly campus
- Collaborative partnerships with Middlesex JDC

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# Justice Scholars Program: Creating a Supportive Community for Justice-Impacted Students

**On-campus justice-impacted students who join the Justice Scholars Program have the opportunity to:**

- Receive holistic case management support
- Receive academic advising and financial aid support
- Participate in a three credit-bearing student success course— creates a community of care and reentry support network - receive a \$500 stipend
- Participate in a four-semester policy advocacy and credible messenger program – receive a \$1000 per semester stipend



# **SERVING NEW JERSEY'S JUSTICE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS**

**Genevieve Van Doren**

**Director of Returning & Incarcerated  
Student Education (RISE) Program**

**Raritan Valley Community College**



# RARITAN VALLEY

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RETURNING & INCARCERATED  
STUDENT EDUCATION



# What Is RISE?

- AA degree in Liberal Arts offered at 5 prisons
- 400-500 students/semester
- Mission is to provide same rigor & curriculum as degree on campus
- Old-fashioned teaching: no access to technology or Internet
- Safety prioritized





# RISE Partners

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**NJ-STEP Consortium:** NJ Scholarship and Transformative Education in Prisons, a nationwide model. Partners:

- **NJ Department of Corrections**
- **RVCC:** AA degree in Liberal Arts
- **Rutgers University:** BA degree in Social Justice
- **Drew University:** Master's certificate in Religion
- **Princeton University's Prison Teaching Initiative (PTI) and colleges in region:** Provide teachers, tutors



# RVCC's History in Prison Education

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Started at Edna Mahan Women's Correctional Facility in 2009

In 2016, became exclusive statewide provider of AA degree in 7 NJ prisons, one of 39 original Second Chance Pell Experimental sites

From 2016, NJ prison population has declined by 35%, with 2 of our prison locations closing

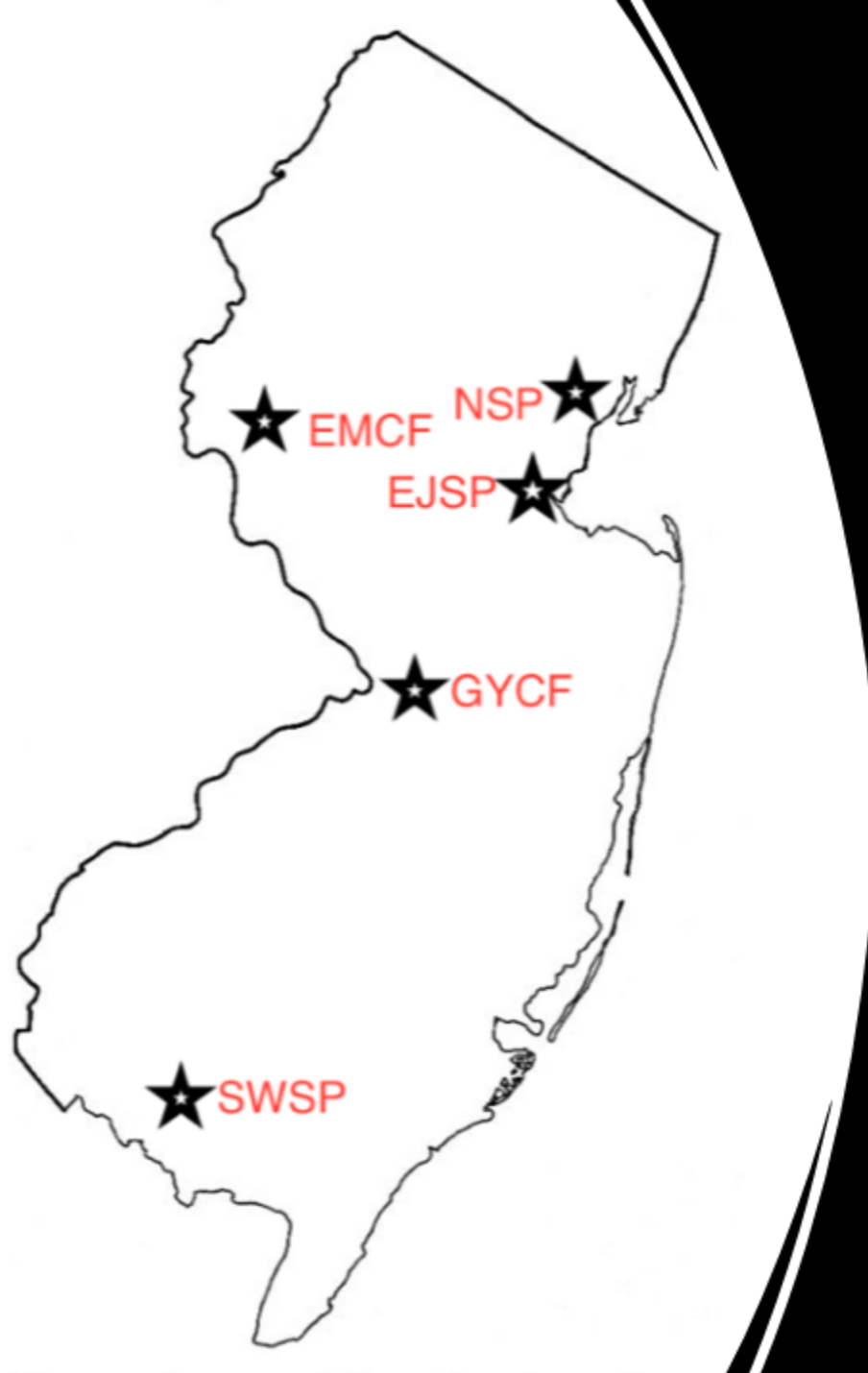
Currently teaching in 5 facilities – 3 of largest men's prisons, as well as state's only women's facility and only youth facility

In June 2023, transitioned to "Revised" SCP status, moving toward Prison Education Program (PEP)

Despite reduced inmate population, interest in program remains high, with waiting lists topping 400 at our larger facilities

# Prison Facilities Where RVCC Operates

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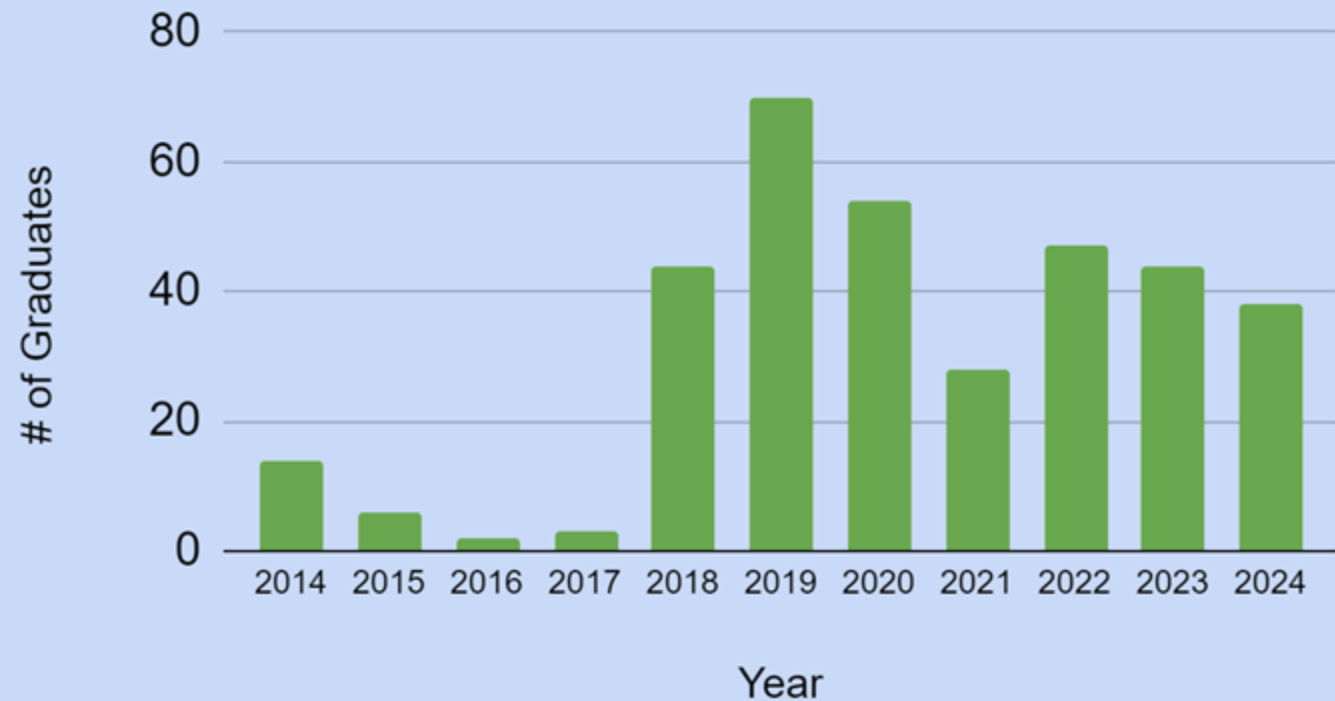
- Edna Mahan Women's Correctional, Clinton
- East Jersey State Prison, Rahway
- Garden State Youth Correctional, Yardville
- Northern State Prison, Newark
- South Woods State Prison, Bridgeton

# RISE Graduation Statistics

## Graduation Numbers:

- 2009-2019: 140
- 2020-2023: 174
- 2024 (anticipated): 76
- TOTAL – 390 RISE grads

# of Graduates vs. Year





# RVCC's "Inside" Graduations



- Total Grads to date in Program: 390
- 2024 Graduation Ceremonies:
  - East Jersey State Prison
  - Northern State Prison
  - South Woods State Prison
  - Edna Mahan Women's Correctional
- 11 former RISE students walked on campus in May 2024



# On-Campus Ceremonies



# Student Art Exhibits

## *Edna Mahan Women's Correctional*





# COVID Challenges

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- Created and delivered thousands of pages of instructional materials for students
- Tracked assignments to ensure timely feedback
- Got permission to use internal DOC messaging system to stay in direct contact with students
- Quarantining after return to in-person classes in Fall 2022 required creative problem-solving

# RISE Success Stories

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Paul Boyd, Truman Scholar

Paul Boyd, who received his Associate degree in Liberal Arts from RVCC while incarcerated in South Woods State Prison, last month received the prestigious Truman Scholarship. The prize, one of the most coveted academic honors in the nation, pays aspiring public service leaders \$30,000 a year for graduate studies.

While in prison, he enrolled in college after observing the number of incarcerated people who weren't able to read.

Boyd is currently a philosophy student at Rutgers-Camden while living in a halfway house. He plans to pursue a career helping formerly incarcerated people.



**Q & A**

# CLOSING REMARKS

**Dr. Aaron Fichtner**  
**President,**  
**New Jersey Council of**  
**County Colleges**





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