

EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE AND THE PETEY-GREENE PROGRAM

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Praxis Fieldwork Seminar:
Social Justice and Social Change
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with thanks to Fiona Flynn
and Colleen Daily

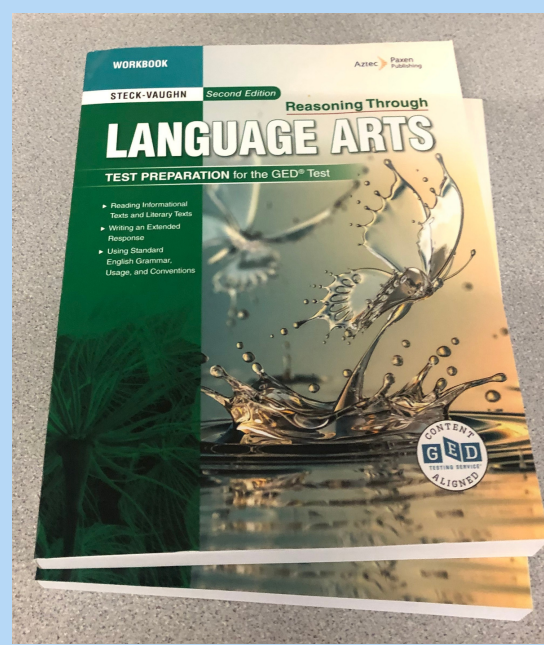
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THE PROGRAM



- The Petey-Greene Program provides tutoring to current and formerly incarcerated folks.
- Focuses on **educational justice** and addressing a system that continues to harm Black and other marginalized communities.
- Combines tutoring and social advocacy.
- **Mission statement:** *The Petey Greene Program supports the academic goals of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people through high-quality volunteer tutoring programs, while educating volunteers on the injustice manifest in our carceral system.*
- **Vision statement:** *We envision a world in which all incarcerated people have access to high-quality academic programs, and we strive to inspire our alumni – both students and tutors – to become advocates and take on leadership roles that reimagine the criminal legal system.*



MY FOCUS & EXPERIENCE



- Original plan to tutor with the College Bridge Program at SCI Phoenix
- Tutor clearances didn't go through and we pivoted to Beyond Literacy, a GED prep program in Philadelphia.
- We received numerous trainings over Zoom. Topics ranged from tutoring strategies to food justice in prisons. This was also an opportunity to meet and talk with tutors from other regions.
- We worked with students on the Reading and Language Arts section of the GED, working through practice problems every week.
- We also supported the College Bridge Programming from the outside by providing feedback on students assessments and serving a TA role.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

- It can be difficult for those on the outside to get cleared to access and bring services into prison. For us, this meant delays and eventually having to move to a program outside a facility.
- We did a lot of waiting to hear back from prison and there was a lot of uncertainty in the process.
- The GED is a frustrating and tricky test that is a poor measurement of intelligence and knowledge.
- We were able to have conversations about the staggering limitations of standardized testing and how difficult our society makes educational success.
- While frustrating, the setbacks connected us with the people at Beyond Literacy and gave us a new opportunity to connect.
- Also, they showed the persistence and kindness of the PGP who supported us throughout and worked to continue providing educational services into places that are hostile towards them.

TAKEAWAYS AND MOVING FORWARD



- Mary is a great carpool and tutoring buddy! I got to know a lot of cool and lovely people throughout this partnership.
- Working within the prison system is difficult and trying work. Prisons do not want to support humanity-affirming services and inside-outside connections.
- This type of work is important and valuable but must exist alongside other advocacy work to dismantle the Prison Industrial Complex.
- In the future, I want to continue imagining what alternatives to prisons can and will exist in our world.
- Education is both a site of harm and healing, especially for communities most directly affected by state violence. Approaching tutoring requires consideration of former schooling experiences and must center student-led approaches.
- The PGP team wants to foster connections and support both tutors and students. They worked hard to place us and include us in this process.