

# C-TECH Program Offers New Opportunities for Students at Logansport

By: Mary Beth Stevens, Vocational Education Teacher, Logansport Juvenile Correction Facility

**A**s students arrive at the Logansport Juvenile Correctional Facility Treatment Unit, academic placement tests are administered. Since the average age of the students at intake is over seventeen, most students are put on a dual track. They work towards obtaining high school credits, as well as preparing for the General Education Diploma (GED). This school year, the facility assisted 119 students in receiving a GED and issued approximately 850 high school credits. As students complete the GED program they are moved into the vocational area of the school.

In August 2009, Logansport Juvenile Correctional Facility (LJCF) began offering a new certification class through C-Tech, a certified communications program that provides entry level training. Students can obtain their certification in cable and fiber optics, which allows them to be qualified for jobs with any local telecommunication company. This telecommunications program gives students a variety of employable skills, allowing them a great advantage over others applying for the same companies. Since the beginning of the class, the Cable/ Fiber Optic teacher has certified 120 students as network cabling / fiber optics specialists. Prior to their transition back into the community, each student then works with the Vocational Education Teacher and the Transition Specialist in designing their own business cards and resumes. Their resumes and cards are then printed on professional paper. This helps prepare the students as they enter the work force and gives them the confidence they need in order to be successful. Due to the popular demand of this certification, a second cabling and fiber optics class is being offered by an additional certified teacher.

In addition to working with the cable and fiber optics students, the vocational staff work with other 17 and 18 year old students prior to their release. The students are assisted with applying for jobs online using such resources as Snag a Job, Monster, Indiana Career Connect, Work One, Pro Resources and other various job search sites. Over the past three weeks, eight students have actually had job interview dates and times prior to their release. An additional seven students have obtained jobs. If the students qualify for vocational rehabilitation, the Vocational Education Teacher contacts the student's county to set up an appointment. The Transition Specialist keeps a spread sheet on the students that have responded with updates concerning their employment and education status.

While employment is always a high priority, many students are also choosing to pursue college. Any student with higher education aspirations is given the opportunity to apply to Ivy Tech Community College. Placement tests are often administered at the Logansport Ivy Tech Campus location for transfer to the students' home campus. Students who show interest in other colleges are provided with information regarding their college of choice. College financial aid paperwork is completed to help with the financial needs of college.

The vocational program at LJCF strives on preparing students for the workforce within their community. The feedback the facility has received from the students and their family members has proven that the tools and skills they acquire prior to their release have given them the confidence they need in order to be successful in their transition. For questions about the C-Tech program, feel free to contact the facility. Inquiries can be made to: Richard Richardson, Chris Pfefferkorn, Mary Beth Stevens, Tracy Williamson or Lindsey Pounds.