

IGNITE[®] INSIGHT



Mission Statement

IGNITE®'s dedicated mission is to transform the lives of those incarcerated in county jails by providing education and life skills as well as instilling hope. We aim to cultivate a positive self-perception and reshape societal views, fostering a mindset shift. Prioritizing measurable results, IGNITE® is committed to disrupting the cycle of recidivism and empowering individuals within the system to envision a future of positive societal contribution. Concurrently, our goal is to enhance the safety of jails, communities, and correctional staff by creating an environment conducive to rehabilitation and personal growth.



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A SHERIFF'S JOURNEY

SHERIFF ERIK SMITH: ALPENA COUNTY, MI



ALPENA, Mich. — Sheriff Erik Smith of Alpena County has joined a growing coalition of Michigan sheriffs adopting the IGNITE initiative, a corrections-based education program aimed at reducing recidivism and preparing incarcerated individuals for life beyond bars. Alpena County becomes the third in the state to implement the program, marking a shift in the county's approach to incarceration.

With 23 years in law enforcement, Sheriff Smith's career began on a day seared into the nation's memory—September 11, 2001—when he took his first job as a deputy in neighboring Alcona County. Now in his third year as Alpena County's sheriff, Sheriff Smith, who was first appointed and later elected to a four-year term beginning in January 2025, has turned his focus to reshaping corrections through rehabilitation.

The Alpena County Jail, which houses up to 108 individuals—including eight in temporary housing—will offer incarcerated individuals educational opportunities and skill-building programs through IGNITE, an initiative that aims to prepare them for reintegration into society. Sheriff Smith first encountered the program at a Michigan Sheriffs' Association conference, where he heard Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson speak about its impact.

"The biggest thing I was looking forward to with the IGNITE program is giving students tools to enter back into society successfully," Sheriff Smith said in an interview. "This is done by rethinking the way we do corrections. It not only benefits the students we serve but is also helpful for corrections because it is a behavior modification tool."

But the path to implementation was not without obstacles. Securing buy-in from staff, Smith acknowledged, proved to be the most significant challenge. "Change is hard," he said. "But leadership is about inspiring and guiding those transitions."

Smith's approach to corrections has evolved throughout his tenure. He sees a direct link between community support for law enforcement and the quality of rehabilitation services a department provides. "When you are providing a good service, your community will fight for your agency and will give support, making it easier," he said.

By championing the IGNITE program, Sheriff Smith is betting on education as a means of reducing recidivism and reshaping the role of county jails. His vision for Alpena County's corrections system extends beyond confinement, aiming instead to provide those in custody with a second chance—one built on learning, skill development, and the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to society.

A SHERIFF'S JOURNEY

SHERIFF TONY HARRIS: WILKIN COUNTY, MN



WILKIN COUNTY, Minn. — In a quiet corner of Minnesota, where law enforcement serves as both a safeguard and a community pillar, Sheriff Tony Harris is charting a path toward rehabilitation in the county's correctional system. With nearly two decades as a licensed peace officer and two years as the elected sheriff, Harris has overseen a shift in Wilkin County's approach to incarceration, emphasizing education and opportunity alongside public safety.

The Wilkin County Jail, a 22-bed facility that primarily houses local detainees and offers space for neighboring counties without jails of their own, maintains an average daily population of 10 to 15 individuals. Under Sheriff Harris's leadership, the facility has embraced a philosophy that views incarceration not merely as confinement but as an opportunity for growth.

Central to this effort is the IGNITE program, an initiative designed to provide incarcerated individuals with education, job skills, and reentry resources. The program's launch in Wilkin County can be traced to Lead Correctional Officer Camden Schweiger, who proposed the idea in May 2024. Working closely with the jail administrator, Schweiger has spearheaded the program's implementation, overcoming logistical hurdles and forging partnerships with local businesses and schools to expand its reach.

"The biggest challenge we've faced is the time it takes to get this program where we want it to be," Sheriff Harris said. "Schweiger has done an incredible job balancing his daily duties while staying proactive in securing community support. The response from businesses and schools has been overwhelmingly positive."

IGNITE extends beyond the confines of the jail, strengthening ties between incarcerated individuals and the broader Wilkin County community. By engaging local employers and educators, the sheriff's office has built a network of opportunities designed to give participants a second chance upon release. Sheriff Harris believes the program's success hinges on consistency—a challenge in any law enforcement setting but one that has proven critical to sustaining its momentum.

Looking ahead, Sheriff Harris envisions IGNITE becoming a cornerstone of the county's rehabilitation efforts. "We look forward to seeing this program grow—not just for our community, but for the lasting impact it can have on those in our custody," he said.

The Wilkin County Sheriff's Office has credited the program's success to the businesses, schools, and community members who have embraced its mission. For Sheriff Harris, initiatives like IGNITE highlight the importance of collaboration—ensuring that law enforcement is not only about enforcing the law but also about fostering a safer, more connected community.

A SHERIFF'S JOURNEY

SHERIFF CHRIS ROSLER: WAYNE COUNTY, PA



in the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) magazine. Recognizing the limited resources available for post-release, he saw IGNITE as a powerful tool to give incarcerated individuals a sense of purpose and equip them with essential skills for a successful transition back into society.

"There's not much to do here to really help inmates prepare for release. I feel IGNITE will give them a better sense of purpose and help them with daily living."

Sheriff Chris Rosler

Wayne County, Pennsylvania, has become a leader in correctional education by launching IGNITE, making it the second county in the state and the 21st in the nation to do so. Under the leadership of Sheriff Chris Rosler, Wayne County is now providing incarcerated individuals with a transformative opportunity to develop critical life skills and prepare for successful reintegration into society.

Sheriff Rosler has dedicated 20 years to law enforcement, spending 19 of those years with the Wayne County Sheriff's Office. His commitment to public service extends beyond his role as sheriff—he also works shifts at Honesdale Boro Police Department, the same department where his father retired after serving as Police Chief for 28 years. His deep ties to his hometown and lifelong dedication to law enforcement have shaped his approach to criminal justice, emphasizing rehabilitation and community support.

Sheriff Rosler first learned about IGNITE through Sheriff James Custer and articles

The IGNITE program in Wayne County is already making a positive impact, not only for the students but for the broader community. Sheriff Rosler believes the program serves as a reminder of the privileges and opportunities many take for granted while reinforcing the importance of giving back. "It makes us feel lucky to have the life we were given and that we can give a little back to the inmates that want the help and the benefit of the program," he shared.

Sheriff Rosler's leadership and commitment to innovation in corrections ensure that individuals in Wayne County have access to resources that will help them break the cycle of incarceration and build a better future.

Wayne County's successful IGNITE launch serves as a model for other counties looking to expand opportunities for incarcerated individuals. Under Sheriff Rosler's leadership, the county continues to demonstrate that true public safety includes not just enforcement, but also rehabilitation and second chances.



A LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

SHERIFF MATTHEW HUTCHINSON & WARDEN BILLY MASSINGILL: EDDY COUNTY, NM



To break incarceration cycles and equip individuals with the tools necessary for reintegration, Eddy County has introduced IGNITE into its correctional system. The initiative initially began with Sheriff Mark Cage and became a priority for him during his time as New Mexico's NACo President. Warden Billy Massingill began work with the National Sheriffs' Association IGNITE team, seeking to provide incarcerated individuals with education and life skills in an effort to reduce recidivism. When Sheriff Matt Hutchinson took office in January of 2025, he continued to support IGNITE and its growth in Eddy County.

Sheriff Hutchinson, who has dedicated his 18-year career to the Eddy County Sheriff's Office and assumed his current role just three months ago, first encountered IGNITE through the National Sheriffs' Association. Recognizing the program's potential to curtail reoffending rates, he viewed it as an opportunity to offer meaningful rehabilitation to those passing through the county's criminal justice system.

Warden Massingill, a 34-year veteran of law enforcement and the county's warden for the past decade, is at the helm of a facility with a 402-bed capacity. He saw IGNITE as a means to expand educational offerings, from classroom instruction to GED preparation, and address substance dependency—one of the root causes of repeated incarceration.

The path to implementation, however, was not without its challenges. Integrating the program into the jail's existing tablet system required complex contract negotiations, and the facility's staffing structure had to be adjusted to create a dedicated program coordinator role. Yet, despite these logistical hurdles, both Hutchinson and Massingill continued working to ensure IGNITE made its way to Eddy County.

For Sheriff Hutchinson, the impact of substance dependency is not an abstract issue—it is a struggle familiar to many in the community. By offering incarcerated individuals the chance to develop skills and knowledge, he hopes to disrupt the patterns that have led so many back into the system. While he oversees the program from a leadership standpoint, he credits Warden Massingill with managing its day-to-day execution.

Warden Massingill, whose motivation to support IGNITE is deeply personal, has witnessed firsthand the devastation that substance abuse can bring to individuals and families. His vision for the program extends beyond its initial implementation; he aims to expand its reach, ensuring that more individuals have access to the educational resources that could alter the trajectory of their lives.

As Eddy County embraces this new approach to incarceration, its leaders remain optimistic that IGNITE will serve as more than just a program—it will be a turning point. By prioritizing education and rehabilitation, the county hopes to provide second chances, paving the way for a future where fewer individuals find themselves returning to the justice system.

BURNING BRIGHT: RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION OF STAFF

WAYNE COUNTY, PA: DEPUTY WARDEN JOHN MASCO



Deputy Warden John Masco of the Wayne County Correctional Facility in Pennsylvania has emerged as a driving force behind the implementation and success of IGNITE in his county. Since launching in December 2024, Deputy Warden Masco has demonstrated dedication to transforming the correctional landscape through education and rehabilitation.

As a supervisor within IGNITE, Deputy Warden Masco has taken on a pivotal role in ensuring the program's success within Wayne County. His leadership has been instrumental in navigating the logistical challenges of launching IGNITE, particularly in overcoming technological hurdles such as setting up computers and integrating Edovo. This digital education platform serves as the backbone of the program in Wayne County.

Deputy Warden Masco's belief in IGNITE is fueled by the remarkable success stories he has witnessed from other participating facilities. Inspired by Warden John Lenkey's and Sheriff Custer's testimonies, he views IGNITE as more than just an educational program—it is a fundamental shift in how correctional facilities approach rehabilitation and reentry. To him, IGNITE represents a lifestyle change that can transform lives and communities.

One of the most compelling aspects of Deputy Warden Masco's commitment to IGNITE is his deep appreciation for the personal stories that underscore its impact. He has drawn inspiration from the experiences of individuals like Sergeant Adam Hernke from Hennepin County, Minnesota, and the impactful work seen in their jail. He also credits the groundbreaking efforts of Sheriff Swanson in Genesee County. These examples have solidified his belief in the power of education to break the cycle of recidivism and offer incarcerated individuals a genuine path to a better future.

With Deputy Warden Masco's enthusiasm and hard work, Wayne County's IGNITE program is on the right path. His dedication, problem-solving mindset, and passion for rehabilitation ensure that the program will not only take root but thrive—offering hope and opportunity to those who need it most. Wayne County is setting a new standard for correctional education and paving the way for lasting change.



KINDLING THE FLAME: STUDENT SUCCESS UNVEILED

RICHLAND COUNTY, ND: KEASHA KURTZ



Keasha Kurtz, a dedicated IGNITE student at the Richland County Jail, has shown remarkable perseverance in her education and personal growth. As part of IGNITE, she completed the Hustle 2.0 Program, a self-paced initiative rooted in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that covers substance abuse, anger management, victim awareness, and coping skills.

Through her commitment, Keasha earned multiple certifications, culminating in the Southern Utah University (SUU) Certificate in Leadership and Management. More than just an academic achievement, her success reflects a profound personal transformation—one that helped her regain confidence and resilience following the loss of her parents. Keasha's journey within IGNITE speaks to the power of education, second chances, and the belief in one's ability to grow and succeed.

With newfound confidence, Keasha has set clear goals for her future. She plans to return to school to study Business Management and aspires to open her

own bakery. Additionally, she has a strong interest in photography and hopes to develop her skills in that field.

Keasha had the honor of being invited by Sheriff Gary Ruhl to join the celebration of their IGNITE launch, where she had the opportunity to speak to a group that included representatives from other sheriffs' offices, elected officials, and community partners. Keasha's participation in the IGNITE Launch gave her the opportunity to connect with others and learn about similar programs in surrounding jails. She appreciated the chance to meet people and see how IGNITE is making an impact on various facilities. Witnessing the positive influence of education in the corrections system reinforced her belief in rehabilitation and personal growth.

"It is never too late to find a path to success to turn your life around."
Keasha Kurtz

One of her most significant takeaways from these experiences was learning constructive ways to express her emotions regarding the loss of her parents. She found strength in sharing her journey with others and learning from those who had faced similar challenges. Through structured programs like IGNITE, she gained the tools to channel her emotions into positive action, setting a strong foundation for her future.

Now, as she prepares for reentry, Keasha is determined to prove what she can

achieve as "Keasha 2.0." She is eager to contribute to her community, not just as a business owner but as someone who can inspire others facing adversity. By applying the skills she has learned and maintaining her commitment to personal growth, she hopes to be an example of resilience and determination.

Her story is the personification of IGNITE. With perseverance and a clear vision, Keasha is ready to build a future that honors her journey but proves that anyone can rewrite his/her story with the right mindset, support system, and resources.



BURNING BRIGHTER TOGETHER: STORIES OF TRIUMPHS

COLLIN COUNTY, TX: EQUINE THERAPY



In Collin County, Texas, IGNITE continues to redefine rehabilitation with its innovative and impactful courses. One of its most empowering offerings is the Equine Therapy Initiative, a program that integrates hands-on horsemanship with emotional healing. Designed to support justice-involved veterans, this class has proven to be a powerful tool in addressing trauma, building trust, and preparing participants for successful reentry into society.

The Equine Therapy Initiative is part of the Veterans Accessing Lifelong Opportunities for Rehabilitation (VALOR) program, which was created by Judge John Roach, Jr. and Sheriff Jim Skinner, both military veterans and experienced horsemen. With the expertise of legendary cowboy Pat Puckett and Hall of Fame horseman Punk Carter, this course provides incarcerated veterans with the opportunity to engage in trust-building exercises, emotional resilience training, and key coping strategies through their interactions with horses.

The benefits of the class extend far beyond the arena. Participants in the program have reported improved

emotional regulation, increased confidence, and a renewed sense of self-worth. Many veterans face challenges such as PTSD, substance abuse, and the loss of structure following their military service, which can lead to incarceration. This program offers a structured, nonjudgmental environment where they can begin to heal and develop the skills necessary for a successful transition back into society.

“Horses are incredibly intuitive animals. They sense emotions and react accordingly. The connection inmates feel with horses goes deeper than riding—it enhances their ability to confront trauma, rebuild trust, and rediscover their sense of self.”

Sheriff Jim Skinner

Not all participants come into the program with experience handling horses. Many are initially intimidated or even fearful when working with the large animals. However, these moments often lead to some of the most profound breakthroughs. One veteran recalled a powerful experience where, after working through his initial fear, a horse placed its head in his lap—a sign of deep trust and connection.

For others, the class has opened doors to new opportunities. A 27-year-old Army veteran who struggled with addiction credits equine therapy with giving him the confidence and stability he needed to turn his life around. He has since secured employment at a horse ranch in California, where he will learn to pack mules and lead mountain camping trips—a future he never imagined possible before the program.

The success of the Equine Therapy Initiative underscores the importance of innovative rehabilitation programs in jails. By providing structure, purpose, and emotional healing, this course helps veterans break cycles of trauma and recidivism. IGNITE continues to set a high standard for correctional education, demonstrating that meaningful transformation is possible when facilities invest in the right programming.

While implementing an equine therapy program requires dedicated resources, including acreage, trained specialists, and proper facilities, the long-term benefits far outweigh the costs. With funding opportunities available through state veterans commissions, nonprofit organizations, and professional therapy associations, other facilities can replicate Collin County’s model to bring equine therapy to justice-involved individuals nationwide.

The Equine Therapy Initiative in Collin County’s IGNITE program is more than just a class—it is a lifeline for incarcerated veterans seeking a second chance. Through their interactions with horses, participants learn emotional resilience, trust, and discipline, all of which are critical for successful reintegration into society.

FUELING SUCCESS: THE POWER OF MERITOCRACY

GENESEE COUNTY, MI: IGNITE UNIVERSITY

In Genesee County, IGNITE has long been synonymous with family reunification and regular graduation ceremonies, but it has now taken the concept of meritocracy to a new level. As participation in the program surged, jail administrators found themselves faced with a growing demand for educational opportunities. In response, they implemented a merit-based system designed to reward top-performing students with placement in a specialized housing unit—thus, IGNITE University was born.

The creation of IGNITE University has established a clear standard for excellence and offers a structured pathway for those who are incarcerated to achieve substantial personal progress. This distinct section of the facility is reserved for individuals who exhibit exceptional levels of commitment, discipline, and academic achievement. In stark contrast to the traditional jail environment, IGNITE University fosters a culture of self-improvement, proactive problem-solving, and personal growth.

Earning a spot in IGNITE University offers more than just a symbolic achievement; it is a gateway to tangible rewards that further motivate continued advancement. Participants gain increased autonomy, enjoy expanded privileges, and are entrusted with greater responsibilities—reinforcing their ability to make responsible decisions. They also benefit from significantly enhanced living conditions, including upgraded mattresses, better uniforms, and improved accommodations, all of which contribute to a more supportive environment that is conducive to both learning and personal development.

At the heart of IGNITE University's success is its emphasis on exclusive educational and leadership opportunities—specialized courses, mentorship programs, and leadership training—that equip participants with invaluable skills to facilitate their reentry into society. These opportunities go beyond mere academic achievement; they provide a robust foundation for personal and professional growth. The program's design also fosters positive staff engagement, promoting increased interaction between inmates and correctional officers. This enhanced communication builds trust, cultivates a rehabilitative atmosphere, and strengthens the community within the facility.

By directly linking privileges to effort and achievement, the program enhances student engagement and motivates greater participation in educational and vocational training. This, in turn, leads to better rehabilitation outcomes. The clear and structured reward system also addresses behavioral issues, as it fosters discipline and improves overall jail morale.

What sets IGNITE University apart is its ability to shift the focus from punishment to rehabilitation, turning a traditional correctional facility into a center of learning and personal transformation. By instilling a mindset of responsibility, the program prepares students for a successful reintegration into society, equipped with skills that support both personal and professional achievement.



How to implement IGNITE University:

Identify Top Performers: Evaluate students based on their commitment to education, positive behavior, and leadership potential. Establish clear criteria for selection to ensure that only the most dedicated individuals gain entry.

Dedicate a Section of the Jail: Designate a specialized housing unit exclusively for IGNITE University participants, reinforcing the program's prestige and exclusivity.

Implement Merit-Based Rewards: Offer tangible incentives—such as improved living conditions, educational benefits, and increased privileges—to motivate continued excellence.

Foster a Unique Culture: Cultivate an environment where growth and self-improvement are prioritized, encouraging students to develop resilience, critical thinking, and constructive problem-solving skills.

FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Hennepin County, MN



The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office continued its efforts to enrich the lives of individuals in custody through the HOPE program. In response to high demand, the program doubled the number of LifeSkills workbooks available and worked to provide virtual reality training to as many residents as staffing and capacity allowed. Support from the community remained strong, with many individuals reaching out after local media coverage to express their appreciation and offer help.

Chautauqua County, NY

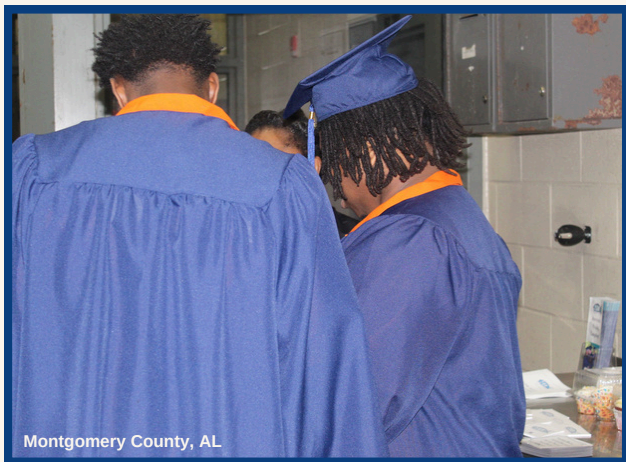
The Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office celebrated the graduation of its first IGNITE U. class on the EDOVO platform, where participants completed courses in reading, writing, math, communication, and job preparation. Graduates also completed additional training through EDOVO, CYPHERWORX, and in-house programs. The inaugural Introduction to Electrical Training course for women was successfully completed, and the Barbering course resumed on February 21. On February 26, the Kitchen Trustee group passed the ServSafe certification test with high marks. Five individuals took their GED tests, and a partnership with Jamestown Community College expanded training opportunities for local manufacturing jobs.



Chautauqua County, NY

Montgomery County, AL

At the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Hope Inspired Ministries (HIM) of Montgomery, AL, held its first graduation ceremony on January 30, 2025, at the Montgomery County Detention Facility. A total of six graduates participated in the event. HIM focused on serving individuals who were chronically unemployed by preparing and equipping them to obtain, maintain, and excel in employment. Following the success of the first class, Montgomery County and Hope Inspired Ministries launched their second class on February 11, 2025.



Montgomery County, AL

FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS



Iron County, UT

The Iron County Sheriff's Office has offered the Hustle 2.0 program for over three years, providing students with valuable educational opportunities. Recently, Cat Jackson, the founder of Hustle 2.0, visited the facility for an event, where she learned about Iron County's use of the IGNITE model. The IGNITE poster was displayed proudly during the event, reinforcing its impact. GED graduations took place every other month, marking a record number of completions. The combination of IGNITE, strong support from the sheriff, and student recognition significantly increased participation, motivating individuals to work harder toward their goals.

Cass County, ND

In the Cass County Jail, the Elevate program returned in March for select minimum housing unit pods, continuing the jail's commitment to educational and rehabilitative opportunities. At the time, ten students were enrolled in the GED program, with several former students following up at the adult learning center to complete their GED, which the jail funded. Additionally, some individuals connected with ND Job Service after their release, building on skills gained during incarceration. The facility also welcomed new volunteers for the AA and Jail Chaplain programs, bringing the total number of volunteers to 80, excluding guest speakers. Overall, programming remained well-attended, with students consistently providing positive feedback on the variety and impact of available programs.



Bonneville County, ID

The Bonneville County Sheriff's Office became a Pearson Vue-approved Testing Center, and the new test center was successfully completed. Overcoming several challenges, including the requirement for participants to have an ID, removed significant roadblocks and created more opportunities for individuals to complete their GED. As a result, 29 participants earned their GEDs. The Solutions of North Texas class neared completion, with five participants on track to graduate on March 14. With these graduates, the total number of individuals completing the Solutions program reached 29. Discussions were also underway with Hustle 2.0 to introduce its self-paced, in-cell rehabilitation program into the facility. Additionally, efforts continued with Idaho Central Credit Union and the tablet vendor to integrate Stukent onto the tablets, with ICCU agreeing to fund the initiative. The Sheriff's Office also collaborated with the College of Eastern Idaho to expand workforce training in the classrooms, with hopes of introducing virtual equipment for job training within the facility.



FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Ulster County, NY

On December 10, 2024, the Ulster County Sheriff's Office hosted its second IGNITE graduation ceremony, marking one year since Sheriff Juan Figueroa launched the program at Ulster County Jail. Under his leadership, IGNITE expanded, providing incarcerated individuals with education and workforce readiness opportunities. Sixteen students earned financial literacy certificates, and eight received ServSafe certifications through the Aramark IN2WORK program. Eleven graduates were recognized at the ceremony, joined by family, staff, and community leaders. This success was made possible through the support of state and local officials, Aramark, Hudson Valley Credit Union, Ulster Literacy, Sheriff Swanson and his team, the National Sheriffs' Association, and dedicated instructors and volunteers. Special thanks were extended to the Ulster County Sheriff's Office staff and the incarcerated individuals who had committed to positive change.



Ulster County, NY

Fayette County, PA

Fayette County's fourth IGNITE session reached its midpoint with new opportunities for participants. Dr. Dave Meredith, a professor from Penn State, led an Introduction to Gardening class (Yard to Table) for the female participants, while the county's Human Resources Department conducted mock job interviews as part of the Career Pathways course. Deputy Warden Kern facilitated Outlets, a creative expression group, and the March 25 graduation was set to showcase artwork created during those sessions. The program recently received media attention on WTAE in Pittsburgh, where Warden John Lenkey and two IGNITE students were interviewed, and the news crew filmed segments from the gardening class. Additionally, Butler County, PA's commissioners and jail administration visited to learn more about the IGNITE program. Preparations were underway for the fifth session, which was scheduled to begin in early April, with a graduation planned for May or June.



Fayette County, PA

Roanoke City, VA

Over the past several months, the Roanoke City Sheriff's Office made significant strides in its resident programs. Three residents successfully graduated from the Alpha substance abuse program, while three were baptized. Eight residents completed the faith-based Freedom program, and four graduated from a trauma-informed care program. Additionally, six residents earned certifications in disinfection specialist training, and eight graduated from the re-entry program. Thirteen residents completed the Clear Choice drug education program, three finished the Inside-Out college course within the detention center, and one successfully completed the 12-week therapeutic program. In total, residents completed 2,789 Edovo courses, contributing over 22,000 educational hours. Furthermore, the Sheriff's Office launched six new programs and welcomed thirteen additional volunteers.



Roanoke City, VA

FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Sandusky County, OH

The Sandusky County Sheriff's Office celebrated a significant milestone with its first GED graduate through the IGNITE program. Dejuan Couchot successfully earned his GED, marking an important achievement in his educational journey. This accomplishment highlighted the impact of providing educational opportunities within the facility. Dejuan's dedication and hard work served as an inspiration for others to pursue their own goals through IGNITE.



Sandusky County, OH



Genesee County, MI

Genesee County, MI

The Genesee County Sheriff's Office recently hosted an In2Work Banquet to celebrate the latest graduates of the In2Work program. Instead of a traditional graduation ceremony, graduates had the unique opportunity to invite a family member to share a home-cooked meal—one they had prepared themselves as part of the program. This special event highlighted their culinary skills and allowed them to celebrate their achievements with loved ones. The banquet was a great success, and the Sheriff's Office considered making it a tradition for future In2Work graduations.

Collin County, TX

The Collin County Sheriff's Office expanded its rehabilitative and reentry efforts through IGNITE, strengthening opportunities for education, employment readiness, and personal growth. Cornbread Hustle grew within the jail, providing structured job training and reentry support, while the Equine Therapy program expanded to promote emotional well-being and personal development. The implementation of 2ndOpp programming equipped individuals with entrepreneurial skills and financial literacy to support stability after release. Increased access to motivational speakers reinforced transformation and accountability, while the introduction of Hustle 2.0 in the Special Housing Unit ensured that those in restrictive housing received meaningful rehabilitative content. Additionally, daily learning hours using Edovo tablets in general population pods provided structured educational engagement and skill-building. Through these initiatives, the Collin County Sheriff's Office remained committed to delivering impactful, evidence-based programming that equipped individuals for successful reintegration into society.



Collin County, TX

FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Mecklenburg County, NC

The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) recently celebrated the grand opening of its Post Release Resource Center, now providing reentry support for released residents, including housing assistance, mental health services, substance use support, bus passes, and employment resources. In addition, MCSO is preparing to launch a recording studio, offering residents a creative outlet to express emotions through music, poetry, and instrumental work. The department is also proud to highlight the success of former MCSO resident Joshua, who graduated from the Next Great 50 program while in custody in April 2024. Joshua launched his own business, Reform Café Christian Coffee Truck, securing his LLC, Certificate of Authority, and vehicle registration within months of his October 2024 release. Now fully operational, Reform Café serves customers at Mint Hill Tool Rental —directly across from the facility where Joshua was once incarcerated. MCSO celebrates his resilience and determination, exemplifying the power of second chances and reentry support. Learn more about his business [HERE](#).



Mecklenburg County, NC

Richland County, ND

Since launching the IGNITE program in January, the Richland County Sheriff's Office has seen continued growth in educational opportunities for its residents. Four new individuals have recently joined the Hustle 2.0 program, bringing the total number of participants to eleven, with five successfully completing the program and earning the Southern Utah University (SUU) Certificate. To recognize these achievements, Jail Administrator Chief Steve Gjerdevig is planning a Certificate Ceremony in the near future. Additionally, the Edovo Program is set to launch within the next two months, providing residents with access to a wide range of educational and inspirational videos and courses. With these new opportunities on the horizon, the Sheriff's Office looks forward to celebrating even more accomplishments in the months ahead.



Richland County, ND

Wilkin County, MN

Since launching the IGNITE in January, the Wilkin County Sheriff's Office has been actively expanding educational and rehabilitative opportunities within the jail. A partnership with Minnesota State Technical and Community College has been established, with additional collaborations pending with two universities. The Sheriff's Office is also working with Adam Martin from the F5 Project to introduce violence prevention seminars. A recently released individual who participated in the program is seeking ways to give back to the community and IGNITE. Before his release, he initiated a peer support group within the jail, and efforts are now underway to formally implement this program, allowing individuals to receive credit upon completion.



Wilkin County, MN

FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Wayne County, PA

The Wayne County Sheriff's Office launched IGNITE in January and entered its initial phase. By then, 21 students had enrolled in the Edovo platform, marking the beginning of their educational journey through the program. As implementation progressed, the Sheriff's Office remained committed to expanding access to learning opportunities and fostering personal growth among participants.



Alpena County, MI

The Alpena County Jail got off to a strong start. Since its launch, the facility continued to offer an Adult Education Program while expanding its scope through a partnership with ORIJIN to provide tablets for learners. These tablets offered access to a comprehensive range of educational resources, including career navigation tools, certificate programs for secondary students, and self-help support classes. Additionally, the jail implemented live programs such as Workforce Development, Nutrition, Crossroads, and Anger Management, further enhancing opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Grayson County, TX

In February, the Grayson County Sheriff's Office celebrated the graduation of eight individuals from the Solutions Program. As the program continued to make a positive impact, efforts were made to expand its reach and provide more individuals with access to valuable resources and support. The Sheriff's Office remained committed to creating opportunities for personal growth and rehabilitation within the facility.

Pennington County, SD

The Pennington County Jail IGNITE program continued to expand, offering new opportunities for incarcerated individuals. A Creative Writing class allowed participants to explore various writing styles, analyze examples, and craft their own stories, fostering self-expression and growth. The AXXS Tablets provided access to the Reentry to Recovery platform, which covered topics such as workforce integration, personal finance, parenting, and GED study guides. To support those pursuing education, a Pre-GED curriculum helped individuals build foundational knowledge before tackling GED content. Program participation remained strong, with an average of 263 attendees per month over the past four months, 28 programs offered in January, and 102 volunteers contributing 1,631 hours in 2024.

Kalamazoo County, MI

The Kalamazoo County Jail reached the halfway point of its fourth Change of Status / IGNITE class. Throughout the program, the jail expanded its network of community partners and resources, working to establish connections with organizations that IGNITE graduates could turn to upon their release. Many graduates successfully integrated into the civilian side of the organizations that had mentored and supported them during their incarceration. The next graduating class was anticipated in the first week of April 2025.

Grayson County, TX

In February, the Grayson County Sheriff's Office celebrated the graduation of eight individuals from the Solutions Program. As the program continued to make a positive impact, efforts were underway to expand its reach and provide more individuals with access to valuable resources and support. The Sheriff's Office remained committed to creating opportunities for personal growth and rehabilitation within the facility.

FEEDING THE FIRE: LATEST SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Stearns County, MN

Since the launch in 2024, Stearns County IGNITE had grown steadily, with 10 students graduating from Parenting Inside Out (PIO) in early 2025 and 53 students enrolling in recovery programs to address substance abuse. Two embedded social workers assisted with reentry planning, including housing, treatment, and employment support. A key initiative was Virtual Reality (VR) training, offering certifications in welding, solar installation, HVAC, mechanics, auto painting, and siding installation to increase employability after release. Since June 2024, 13 participants engaged in VR courses, with one earning a welding certification and another completing solar panel installation training. Jail programming participation continued to rise, with 57% of the population engaged in January 2025 and 60% enrolled in educational opportunities in February.

Pennington County, SD

The Pennington County Jail IGNITE program continued to expand, offering new opportunities for incarcerated individuals. A Creative Writing class allowed participants to explore various writing styles, analyze examples, and craft their own stories, fostering self-expression and growth. The AXXS Tablets provided access to the Reentry to Recovery platform, covering topics such as workforce integration, personal finance, parenting, and GED study guides. To support those pursuing education, a Pre-GED curriculum helped individuals build foundational knowledge before tackling GED content. Program participation remained strong, with an average of 263 attendees per month over the past four months, 28 programs offered in January, and 102 volunteers contributing 1,631 hours in 2024.



DID YOU KNOW?

“It is estimated that 63% of people in jail and 58% in prison have a substance use disorder. People with these disorders have challenges in getting appropriate treatment and often incarceration exacerbates their symptoms.”-- SAMHSA.gov



“When I came to Solutions, I was broken, aimless, and hopeless. Not only did Solutions give me the tools to live a sober life, I learned how to enjoy life sober. Led by an incredible staff that truly cares for every single resident, Solutions is not just the name, it’s the answer. I am eternally grateful to Solutions for giving me the gift of sobriety and a life filled with joy, family, friends, and hope.” -Solutions Graduate

The Solution offers a rigorous 12-week curriculum comprising 120 hours of practical and factual programming that focuses on addiction recovery, social and emotional skill building and effective reintegration strategies tailored for inmates. <https://sontx.org/justice/>



FIRESIDE CHAT: PARTNER COLLABORATIONS AND UPDATES

Scott Wisenbaker is a speaker, author, and founding executive director of Solutions of North Texas (SONTX). Clean and sober since 1995, Scott has worked in the addiction field since 1997. In 2006, he saw the need for a unique approach to fighting addiction on a community level. He then founded Solutions of North Texas, a robust re-entry program to reintegrate men and women recovering from addiction back into the community. SONTX is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), licensed as a Chemical Dependency Treatment Center by the State of Texas, and partnered with IGNITE® to provide nationwide addiction and reintegration programming. As of 2023, SONTX has provided direction and/or directly worked with over 20,000 individuals.



America's Credit Unions is excited to collaborate with IGNITE® to expand to more counties nationwide. As a national partner, we look forward to collaborating with sheriffs and their staff to connect them with credit unions in their local areas to provide financial literacy education as part of IGNITE®. The credit union philosophy is “people helping people” and creating financial well-being for all Americans regardless of their background.

Please contact Russel Sawyer,
Vice President of Leagues and
Industry Relations, at
rsawyer@americascrreditunions.org
to start today.



The National Association of Counties is honored to be a member of the IGNITE® Advisory Board and is excited to partner with IGNITE® on this initiative. At a time when counties across the country are facing workforce shortages, IGNITE® provides an opportunity for justice-involved individuals to receive the training and education needed to fill these existing gaps and bring the county workforce back to full strength.

IGNITE® also fosters a sense of community vital to creating a safe space within local jails. It emphasizes respecting the residents of these institutions, leading to better outcomes for these individuals' post-incarceration.

FIRESIDE CHAT: EDOVO UPDATES

Edovo, a leading corrections programming application, offers an unmatched reputation and programming catalog, built specifically for incarcerated individuals. Partnering with major tablet providers, Edovo delivers over 25,000 hours of content, directly supporting IGNITE®'s mission of providing comprehensive education, job certification, and post-incarceration opportunities.

This report showcases Edovo learner engagement data from IGNITE® facilities, demonstrating significant progress by incarcerated individuals towards achieving their full potential through active platform participation.

Hours spent learning in Edovo in Q4

1,470 hours spent on 11/30



IGNITE® SITES USING

edovo

- Bonneville County, ID
- Chautauqua County, NY
- Collin County, TX
- Fayette County, PA
- Genesee County, MI
- Grayson County, TX
- Iron County, UT
- Kalamazoo County, MI
- Mecklenburg County, NC
- Montgomery County, AL
- Roanoke City, VA
- Ulster County, NY
- Eddy County, NM
- Wayne County, PA

TOP 10 COURSES THIS QUARTER

1. Anger Management Job Seeking with a Criminal Record
2. Math - Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, and Division
3. Beyond Prison, Probation, and Parole
4. Rising Strong: A Substance Use Recovery Course
5. Neil deGrasse Tyson Teaches Scientific Thinking and Communication
6. Introduction to Artificial Intelligence

Q4 NUMBERS

These figures represent the combined efforts of learners across all 14 IGNITE Edovo sites since the program's inception. If you're interested in joining this impactful mission and bringing Edovo's transformative learning opportunities to your facility, we invite you to connect with our technology partner for a conversation.



4,837
ACTIVE LEARNERS



97.5K
TOTAL LEARNING HOURS



12K
COURSE COMPLETIONS



18
HOURS PER LEARNER



I actually am learning a lot and trying to cope with my anger. I'm going to start trying to think before I speak and not react so quick. I think I'm on way!!!

— Charles, incarcerated learner in North Carolina on Anger Management

IGNITE PAPARAZZI: SPOTTED AT NSA WINTER CONFERENCE



Thank You to Our Sponsors



IGNITE® IN THE NEWS

- “Wayne County launches new jail program to teach skills, reduce recidivism” ... [read more](#)
- “New Fayette County Jail preparing students for life upon release” ... [read more](#)
- “Eddy County to ‘IGNITE’ change at jail” ... [read more](#)
- “Alpena Sheriff’s IGNITE program aims to reduce recidivism, promote rehabilitation” ... [read more](#)
- “Rehab program for students comes to some North Dakota, Minnesota jails” ... [read more](#)
- Hustle 2.0 Monthly Update: Featuring Iron County, UT... [read more](#)

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