



Newport News Sheriff's Office

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE: **Immediate**

DATE: **Thursday, August 03, 2006**

Six Inmates Earn GEDs

WHO: Six Inmates earn GED
WHAT: Graduation Ceremony
WHEN: Wednesday, August 16, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.
WHERE: Newport News City Jail, 2nd Floor

As you remember, the Newport News Sheriff's Office started an innovative approach to one of its adult education programs in June. We are permitting those inmates who earn their GEDs to have a Graduation Ceremony here at the jail.

The ceremony is small, but public. We will have representative(s) from the public school system attend, along with our Inmate Program Director, Vernessa Graves, other jail staff -- but most importantly: The inmates' invite family.

What is so special about the graduation is that they get to visit with their family without any Plexiglas separating them. Real hugs and a G-rated kisses will be shared between stories from home. It is a real intimate moment. The privilege of having physical contact with loved ones is the closest thing they will experience to being free until they are legally released from jail.

We hope that that opportunity, coupled with other guidance and soul searching, is powerful enough to assist them get on the straight and narrow.

It is also our hope that other inmates are watching what's going on at the Newport News City Jail. We want them to get excited and motivated about their future. As a correctional facility, we are in the business of helping people develop tools to succeed once they rejoin society. There is more to us than holding accused and convicted law breakers in a safe and secure manner.

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