



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

Media Release

From: Michael Terry
Community Relations Specialist, 352-797-3608

Re: HCSO Implements GED Program at the Jail

Date: July 9, 2019

In June, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office implemented a General Education Development (GED) program at the Hernando County Detention Center.

The facility purchased a GED learning system from Aztec Software and became an official Pearson VUE testing center.

The Aztec GED learning system is 100 percent computer based and requires no onsite instructors. The Aztec GED learning system evaluates students as it relates to their current level of education by utilizing "pretests."

These pre-test results place each student on the most efficient path towards learning and achieving the ultimate goal, attaining their GED.

The Aztec GED learning system is in line with Sheriff Al Nienhuis' vision to implement technology that will improve operation efficiency of the Sheriff's Office. In this case, the technology is designed to reduce recidivism and assist inmates to achieve gainful employment or continue on to higher education upon their release from custody.

The Aztec software was purchased at no cost to taxpayers. The system was purchased using Inmate Welfare Funds, which are proceeds generated from the operation of a detention commissary.

Re-Entry Deputy Krystle Dejesus is responsible for this new program. The GED program falls in line with its sister program, Project Re-Start.

Project Re-Start is a program that provides classroom instruction to pre-release inmates with a combination of different focus areas to include work maturity skills, marketable skills training, and supportive services.

In just over a month, the GED program has graduated two inmates who were close to their release date. There are currently 15 inmates enrolled in the GED program.

“The more tools we offer inmates to better themselves while they are in custody increases their chances of staying out of jail after release. That is our ultimate goal,” Captain Shaun Klucznik said.

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and remains accountable to them.