

Identifying and Scaling Higher Education in Prison Programmatic Resources: Grantee Profile



Resilience Education



Location | Charlottesville, Virginia

Facilities served:

- Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women
- Dillwyn Correctional Center
- Buckingham Correctional Center
- State Correctional Institution Chester
- Sing Sing Correctional Facility

[Additional Program Information](#)



Resource Overview: Teaching Behind the Walls: Preparing Instructors for Higher Education in Prison

Resilience Education's Teaching Behind the Walls: Preparing Instructors for Higher Education in Prison is an instructor training for HEP programs that includes a set of customizable training modules and supporting materials. By offering field-tested materials refined through instructor feedback and incorporating the voices of justice-impacted individuals and HEP programming alumni, this resource enables programs to effectively train instructors to navigate the complexities of teaching in the prison environment, understand the impact of trauma on learning, and apply culturally informed considerations essential for building bridges with students.



What the Resource Includes

Teaching Behind the Walls: Preparing Instructors for Higher Education in Prison provides practical guidance for teaching in correctional environments. The resource includes three main components:

- A Training Framework to define the training's structure, purpose, and learning outcomes
- Seven customizable training modules:
 - The History of Mass Incarceration & HEP Programs
 - Understanding Stakeholders in HEP Programs
 - Navigating the Correctional Landscape

- Understanding Your Students
- Trauma-Informed Support in the Classroom
- Understanding Your Own Experience as an Educator
- Classroom Management in a Carceral Setting
- A train-the-trainer guide providing step-by-step instructions for program staff or experienced instructors to customize and deliver the selected training modules



Resource Refinement and Scaling Journey

Through this grant, the Resilience Education team will engage in an evidence-informed cycle of continuous improvement to enhance applicability and transferability of these resources to the broader HEP field.

The Resilience Education team will improve and finalize the training materials through a series of hands-on refinement activities. This work will include reviewing existing research to guide the resource content, organization, and presentation; adapting and developing materials; and piloting resources with other programs to gather feedback. These steps will help ensure the materials are useful, practical, and based on solid evidence. The team will explore these key areas during the refinement and scaling process:

- Best practices in instructional design
- Best practices for classroom management in carceral settings
- Evidence-based instructional practices in nontraditional learning environments
- Understanding the sociodemographic backgrounds of incarcerated individuals
- Understanding and addressing vicarious and secondary trauma

Learn More About the Grantee

Resilience Education is a national nonprofit dedicated to advancing economic opportunities for justice-impacted individuals through business education and career support. Resilience operates across multiple correctional facilities in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York, training instructors and educators to deliver high-quality education in prison.

Developed through Resilience Education's decade of experience building, refining, and delivering training programs to more than 650 HEP instructors, *Teaching Behind the Walls: Preparing Instructors for Higher Education in Prison* is a specialized set of training modules tailored for practitioners teaching in the HEP space. The training recognizes that many instructors enter prison education programs without adequate preparation for teaching in a carceral setting—a key factor contributing to burnout and turnover. By equipping instructors with the tools and knowledge necessary for this context, the program supports instructor retention and wellbeing while directly improving student outcomes.

To learn more about the project's evidence-informed continuous improvement cycle, read the [Identifying and Scaling Higher Education in Prison Programmatic Resources one-pager](#). The insights and materials developed through this project will be shared with the broader HEP field to support ongoing improvement in prison education programs.



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