

**Title of Session:** Alternative/Correctional Education

**Moderator:** BJ Berquist

**Guest Speaker:** Nathalie Goldrain

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Room: Alt/Correctional Ed Group

**DavidW** joined the room.

**BJB2** waves to David.

**BJB2:** David, two very interesting people here for you to meet :-)

**BJB2:** Nathalie and John, can you please introduce yourselves?

**BJB2** . o O ( tell David where you are located and where your interests lay )

**JohnHo:** my name is John Holt. I presented a workshop at the CEA conf in Atlanta entitled Prem Rawat - Opening windows of understanding. I live in Santa Barbara CA.

**DavidW:** I'm David Weksler. Like Bj, I'm one of the HelpDesk volunteers in Tapped In. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

**NathalieG:** My name is Nathalie and I am a doctoral student in Silicon Valley, California. I'm involved in a number of projects with male, female inmates and juveniles. My studies are in juvenile correctional education.

**DavidW:** Nice to meet you, Nathalie, John

**JohnHo:** likewise

**BJB2** cheers for two CEA members who actually logged in! Gold stars for you both!!!!

**JohnHo:** thanks

**BJB2:** Nathalie, did you see my recent post to the Women's group on the new CEA discussion list?

**NathalieG:** No

**BJB2:** John is hopefully going to be a presenter at the next Alt/Correctional Ed discussion

**DavidW** smiles

**BJB2:** I ran across an article where the Girl Scouts are becoming active in working with girls whose moms are incarcerated

**BJB2:** PBS did a film on the topic...let me see if I can get that url

**NathalieG:** They are also very active in working with juvenile gangs, at least in California.

**BJB2:** that's interesting, Nathalie...so you're more aware of that ...tough crowd

**BJB2:** Nathalie was invited to be the guest speaker for today's discussion...small audience, but very attentive ;-)

**BJB2:** Nathalie, you mentioned that you would be able to discuss tutoring?

**BJB2:** was that for juveniles or adults?

**NathalieG:** Depends what kind of gang members one is dealing with. The Girl Scouts deal with the young juvies. I work on the other end of the spectrum, that is with OJ's (original gangsters) and hardcore members. My role is to help them pass the GED.

**BJB2:** do you see any changes when a gang member gets his GED?

**BJB2** . o O ( or her )

**BJB2:** At Hilltop Prison in Gatesville, Texas, a unique Girl Scout troop, Troop 1500, unites daughters with mothers who are serving time for serious crimes, giving them a chance to rebuild their broken bonds. Facing long sentences from the courts, the mothers struggle to mend their fractured relationships with their daughters.

**NathalieG:** I worked with a tutoring program called Each One Reach One at Hillcrest Juvenile Hall. What I've discovered is that the kids need as much help to pass the GED as they need adults to be advocate. I spend a lot of my time preparing them for court or to outline a transition plan.

**BJB2** nods. transition is tough...as you saw in the video A Hard Straight

**BJB2:** John, what population do you work with?

**BJB2:** here's the url for the pbs site <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/troop1500/>

**NathalieG:** Gang members who pass the GED can be setup with building programs that will at the end of the training offer a higher salary than working at a food chain. It's critical to their transition to have a good job.

**JohnHo:** Right now I have just tried working with teachers and also getting the Words of Peace TV program onto the Transforming Lives network. It's due to start very shortly.

**BJB2:** great, John.

**JohnHo:** Also WOP started about 3 weeks ago at San Quentin on their internal TV network. It shows every weekday at 4 PM

**BJB2:** do you have a url that we can look at to find out more?

**JohnHo:** People around the country have been contacting me about providing this program to inmates and my focus is to help them.

**DavidW:** What is Words of Peace, John?

**JohnHo:** Yes [www.wordsofpeace.org](http://www.wordsofpeace.org)

**NathalieG:** John - definitely try to get the program into Pelican Bay. The inmates in the 23hrs/day lockdown need something positive and they do have monitors in their room.

**DavidW** looks

**JohnHo:** All CA State facilities are subscribed to the Transforming lives Network so I hope lots of people will have access to this show.

**JohnHo:** Do you have a contact in Pelican bay?

**NathalieG:** Not the administration - I send these inmates postcards here and there. Just contact their education department

**JohnHo:** If you would like to email me my address is [iinside@mac.com](mailto:iinside@mac.com)

**JohnHo:** OK

**BJB2:** what do you find is the biggest obstacle to inmates getting their GED, Nathalie?

**BJB2:** John, is words of peace something to be studied/learned independently?

**NathalieG:** In the California Youth Authority system, the kids don't have an option to get their GED if they are gang members. They use to put them in cages in the classroom but the governor went nuts and told them to get rid of the cages. Now they are on lockdown and there aren't enough correctional educators to teach them. They come out without any educational skills.

**DavidW** . o O ( that doesn't seem to be the best strategy )

**BJB2:** good grief! What a waste

**JohnHo:** Outside of prison it can be studied independently. But inside I believe it can be part of a curriculum of classes. Some universities around the world have started offering it as a class

**NathalieG:** It is also very difficult for the kids to work in a classroom because they're all at different levels. That's why tutoring programs are so successful.

**BJB2** nods to Nathalie. Individualized lessons are pretty much required. Who provides the tutoring? Is it volunteer?

**NathalieG:** All volunteers

**BJB2:** John, is your program also introduced to institutions by volunteers?

**BJB2** wonders where all the volunteers come from?!

**NathalieG:** Universities, church groups, rotary clubs

**DavidW:** are there paid, correctional educators in some/many/most states?

**JohnHo:** Yes entirely, although some of the volunteers are professionals who already work in corrections. I am thinking of one lady in RI who is presenting the "Keys" to inmates in a max security facility, as a volunteer. The person who introduced San Quentin to this works as a nurse there. She introduced the inmates representative to it and he was so enthusiastic that he got it on their TV system

**BJB2:** We used to have volunteers in our institution, but now you have to get clearance and it's a real hassle.

**BJB2:** juvenile facilities have to have teachers, David...NCLB

**DavidW** waves to Nathalie

**BJB2** waves bye to Nathalie. Thanks again for joining me

**JohnHo:** bye maybe see you in San Jose in November

**JohnHo:** well this is interesting. be great if it was a video conference too

**BJB2:** John, I'd be happy to add your project to the resources in the group room....

**JohnHo:** OK, how do we proceed?

**BJB2:** and my invitation to be a guest speaker in September is still open

**JohnHo:** I'm going to be in Australia from Sep 17 -29

**BJB2:** what I would need from you is a short description of what you will be discussing.  
How about October then?

**JohnHo:** That would be better

**BJB2:** October 18

**JohnHo:** perfect

**BJB2:** cool...when you get a chance, send me a paragraph or two describing what you want to discuss

**BJB2:** and I'll put you on the October calendar

**DavidW:** I'm going to say goodnight

**BJB2:** me too!