

March 2, 2006

Greetings in the name of HOPE! I am writing this today to share my experience in starting up the very first HOPE program here on the Carol Vance Unit in Richmond, TX. It has been a very unique and challenging experience, but well worth the work put forward.

First of all I would like to clarify that I did nothing on my own. I was only capable of steering others and using my resources, all the while guided by Christ in all of us. It's taken little work and lots of prayer. My experience with HOPE Literacy tutoring began in 2003 at the Hutchins State Jail facility. I grew to love working with other inmates, and learning to coach men who just needed a little help and lots of encouragement. The HOPE Literacy program has given me the chance to use my gift in the most positive way. I enjoy doing this work not just to help my fellow inmates, but in doing so I believe I am doing what God wants me to do at this place and time.

We started our class here on the twentieth of February 2006 with six peer educators and six students. I'm working as a peer educator trainer and coordinator helping and guiding the other men to use their talents to the best of their abilities.

My goal for March is to train six more men and have them ready as soon as possible. Just like our program curriculum I am trying to lay a foundation for all of us here to build on. We all are staying patient and remaining diligent.

All glory and thanks go to our Father, Lord and Savior who made this all possible. Listed below are the people Christ is using to make this startup HOPE program a success.

Sincerely and humbly a servant in Christ,

Justin Prestwood
Certified HOPE Trainer

Peer Educators Volunteers
Benjamin Unruh, Judy Indermuehle
David Kendrick, Marquita Cantwell
Clarence Jones, Calvin Hoggard
Jacob Manuell, Justin Prestwood