

# College Helps Train Prisoners For Jobs

Story and Pictures  
By KATHY MORAN

Fifty men from the Detroit House of Correction are charged with developing a positive, self-confident attitude and learning a job skill before they leave the minimum security prison.

The men are participants in a three-part program started at the Plymouth Township jail by Schoolcraft College with complete funding through the federal Manpower Training Act.

It aims at helping men learn a job skill and finding jobs after on parole.

**THE INMATES** were selected by prison officials and assigned to the automotive mechanics, building maintenance and custodial programs depending on their interests and abilities.

"Hopefully by the time the men leave here, they will know how to add, subtract, multiply, divide, work with decimals and fractions, and develop reading and writing skills," says Ed McCarthy, who teaches the basic education classes that are an integral part of each program.

"We also try to teach self-confidence along with the basic skills," he said. "We would like them to develop a 'yes, I can,' attitude."

McCarthy estimates that the men have education levels ranging from the first to 12th grades. With such diversity, he can't conduct his classes as regular teachers do. Instead he spends time traveling between desks working with each person on his own level.

**MATERIALS USED** in the classes are all related to work situations. Reading materials might be on employer-employee relationships or human relationships rather than regular classroom materials of limited interest to adults.

Also, because of the nature

## Regional Affairs

of the classroom materials, none of the men know at what grade level their companions are rated.

The men spend two hours daily in basic education and the balance of their eight-hour day learning job skills.

Of utmost concern to them is that they actually be able to use that skill when they leave. That responsibility is on the shoulders of Corneleaus, Carter, counselor, who is working with several placement agencies to find work for the men.

Already he has helped place two men who were paroled early. He worked with Operation Help, a federally funded project in Detroit, to get the placements.

**FOUR FULL TIME** teachers and one counselor run the program. Unless it is renewed, the program will end in October when funds run out.

Roland Anderson, Schoolcraft's director of business education, wrote the proposal that laid the basis for the program.

Prime concern in starting the program was to find three that could be taught in a brief period because all the DeHoCo inmates have sentences under one year, Anderson said.

DeHoCo inmates have been convicted of misdemeanors carrying sentences up to one year. Prison officials selected those that are supposed to be in jail through October and who need a job skill.

**THOSE IN AUTO-** mechanics learn basic skills - changing oil, brakes, mufflers and those duties that are commonly performed in gas stations. The men sometimes practice on cars brought in by DeHoCo employees, according

to teacher William Schultz. LaVerne Evans teaches men in custodial classes about equipment, waxes and floor cleaners.

Those men in the building maintenance classes learn basic skills for such work as maintaining an apartment building. Teacher Dick Oldenberg teaches them basic plumbing, electrical wiring and carpentry.

Using donated sinks and brand new tools, men practice while partitioning off the



COUNSELOR CORNELEAUS Carter talks to one of the DeHoCo students in the building maintenance course. Students learn how to make objects from wood by making drawers for their own use. Carter will help place the men who complete the course in jobs as soon as they are paroled. (Observer photo)

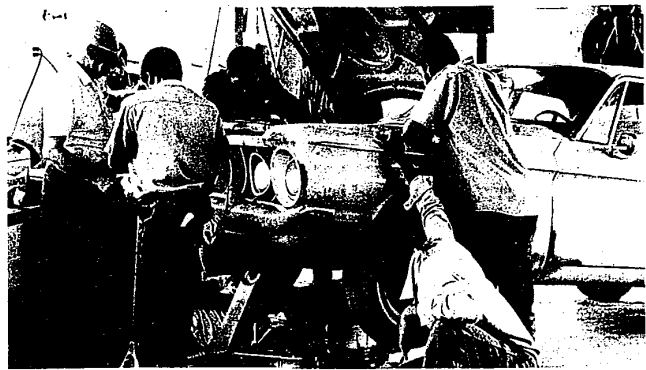
building used for their classes.

**TO KEEP** them interested in even the more routine tasks, Oldenberg uses methods such as having them measure blueprints to learn how to use rulers.

All classes are livened with guest lectures and demonstrations. Oldenberg even has scheduled speakers from the building trades to advise men on apprenticeships.

While the automotive class runs 30 weeks, the other two classes will be run in 15 week segments to involve more inmates.

Prison officials as well as men involved directly in the program are optimistic about its success and already hope it will be renewed in the winter.



WHEN A CAR comes in for service at the DeHoCo auto maintenance shop, it gets full attention from the mechanics students and teacher William Schultz (left). (Observer photo)

## Why Mescaline Supply Is Short

Questions should be sent to the Community Commission on Drug Abuse, P.O. Box 200, Livonia, Mich. 48150.

Q. I keep hearing that mescaline is almost impossible to get and that most of what is being passed is animal tranquilizers or some such thing. Doesn't mescaline grow naturally like marijuana? Why should there be this alleged problem in supply? There certainly seems to be none with marijuana.



plantings of marijuana plants will mature by August or September and may reach a height of 20 feet. By contrast, a peyote plant takes from 10 to 15 years to mature.

The peyote cactus is in some danger of becoming an endangered species. The Indians who collected the tops of the plants (buttons) for centuries were careful not to disturb the roots. These roots are capable of generating new buttons. In fact, one root can produce a cluster of buttons about as big around as a bushel basket.

Today, however, many of those who harvest peyote lack this knowledge of the plant; they just rip out the whole plant, roots and all. As a result, a number of formerly productive areas have been virtually wiped out.

We've spoken in past articles of the scarcity of mescaline. People seem unwilling to believe this fact, probably because of the large

number of dealers who offer "mescaline" for sale routinely either through avarice or ignorance. Perhaps the above information will lend some credibility to our earlier statements.

As a matter of fact, drug analysis programs even in the southwest rarely turn up mescaline. In this part of the country, mescaline is largely a matter of academic interest.

Q. Is there any way to stop our young people from abusing marijuana? Nothing seems to be halting the spread of its use. Isn't there something that will scare them off?

Mrs. S.K., Westland

A. It seems about time to stop trying to "scare" people about marijuana. In the past, they have been told that the drug was an addicting narcotic, which it is not. They have been threatened with heavy fines, long imprisonment, alleged permanent damage to mind and body and even with birth defects to their offspring. As you suggest, this hasn't worked.

One of our more thoughtful residents did come up with a rather diabolical suggestion: Start a rumour that marijuana causes teenage acne - at any age. She figures that this should dry up the marijuana sub-culture in about two weeks.

Positive action seems to really be the most appropriate thing today. A parent can stress the value of accepting reality, the good and the bad, without resorting to chemical crutches. Such values need to be imparted not merely by words but by example.

Is the home your children are being brought up in one in which all sorts of drugs, from aspirin to alcohol to tranquilizers, are being used unthinkingly? Or is it a home in which drugs are treated with respect and used only when needed, and then moderately? Parents have an opportunity to influence their children in positive ways far greater than do the schools or even the mass media.

The key to the problem if there is such a key, may well be more a matter of respect rather than of fear.



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