

Prison can make a person change for the better

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First I would like to introduce myself. I am currently incarcerated at SCI - Mahanoy. However, I would like to tell you a little about myself and how I spend my time in this place. Fortunately, I have strived diligently to apply myself on the road to education, advancing and endeavoring to deepen my faith by using my time wisely, searching the scriptures to keep my spirits up and give me an in-depth understanding of the human element in this system of things. I spend my time actively teaching HIV/AIDS and Laubach literacy to the rest of the inmate population. I really enjoy what I do. As for me, I submerge myself into reading, writing and the English language.

Thus, I am a Lancasterian native Born and raised. My parents were at one time the proud self-employed owners of a grocery store called "Happy Corners" at 122 S. Queen St. in Lancaster Pennsylvania. I recall as I was growing up, the weekly publications of "El Hispano" were distributed to my parents store and put on display for the daily customers and the local residents of the community, for free.

As I researched the history of when this company was founded, I was surprised to know that it was in 1976 that El Hispano was given birth. I was only six years old at the time and now I find myself inquiring about the popular publication. Even though I was reading the publications when I was a young buck, I must honestly say that I did not really appreciate the significance of journalism news as I do now. Since then, I have seen an enormous increase of the current publication flourishing into other parts of the communities in PA, reaching the multi-cultural and bilingual communities (Hurray)!

The other day I happened to be skimming through the television channels and I unexpectedly caught a live broadcast on PCN regarding the "El Hispano" publications. I was elated to hear the testimony of several committee members in concert endorsing ideas to reach the larger population in greater ways. Also involving themselves to help the younger generations by providing them with scholarship programs to involve themselves in reading, writing and journalism.

These were a few issues that were brought out and expounded upon. I was strengthened to see that there are people coming together to provide a creative outlet in order to shape the youth of today, or tomorrow, this is another hand in our corner. Of course this support is available but, optional. Nonetheless, the programs need to be made known in the community so that it's available to be taken advantage of by those less fortunate and indigent. Otherwise, this privilege would not be employed through any other avenue.

It saddens me to see so many Hispanics with educational talents, attributes having a lack of interest being able to at least contribute their bilingual skills helping but others in their communities any way they can. Especially the overwhelming majority and high rate of illiteracy that exist right in our neighborhoods.

At this point, I would like to commend the publication's representatives, committee, and staff members including the sponsors from many different colleges, contributing scholarships for a higher learning available to the young Latin youths. It's definitely an opportunity for

those students that possess a potential in their educational and scholastic aptitudes.

I viewed Richard Kearns (Political Journalist) speech. He pointed out that in order to be effective one must be involved in the community in touch with the people in the neighborhoods. Also he elaborated that he couldn't do his job if he did not involve himself with the persons who wish to expose certain stories that would most likely be considered politically incorrect and probably no one else would touch because of fear of reprisal, and or intimidation. I really liked him for the certain attributes he publicly displays with the people, personable and unique is his attitude that is a distinguishing mark as a reporter for the community at large. Pedro Rodriguez (Associate Editor) enlarged on the community focus and spoke about programs that will involve and be available for the youths in the areas of the neighborhoods. One such creative program that was mentioned was called: "Youths United for Change" which I think was a very bright idea and believe that this will encourage and sup-

port education. Given that, the youth's have an ample opportunity to study the English grammar and utilize the bilingual skills and become the journalist of tomorrow. Who knows what exactly will derive from this wonderful program? We can benefit by having a few good Hispanic journalists of tomorrow. Who knows what exactly will derive from this wonderful program? We can benefit by having a few good Hispanic journalists, bilingual that is! By all means you guys did a great job, I would like to see more involvement with our communities, I mean that.

However, I am kind of perturbed that many inmates, at SCI-Mahanoy are not involved with issues involving their own communities. This goes without saying I count myself as fortunate to have viewed an informative program on June 24, 2000 at 11 p.m.

Overall, I believe that Richard Kearns summarized very well, on how to reach the very audience that buys and subscribes to the larger part of the communities.

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