



Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County

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New partnership makes tutoring program possible in Juvenile Detention *ASU student tutors to visit Detention on a weekly basis*

PHOENIX (October 26, 2022) – A new tutoring program is being offered in Juvenile Detention to provide youth with additional support as they work to accomplish their GED and earn high school credits.

The Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department, part of the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County, partnered with Arizona State University's Youth Education Program and the Maricopa County Regional School District to offer high-quality, volunteer tutoring. The partnership started this spring and this semester, four ASU student tutors started visiting various classrooms and living units within Juvenile Detention to help youth with topics such as math, science, social studies and language arts.

"I'm proud of the education we provide to our students at ASU. We have great instructors who have experience as officers or detention staff. We have great textbooks and multimedia opportunities, but nothing is the same as being inside a juvenile detention facility and working one-on-one with youth," said Adam Fine, an assistant professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. "It's providing students with this opportunity to get to know some of the youth who are experiencing detention, to feel what it feels like to walk into a juvenile detention facility, to understand a bit more deeply the challenges that kids face and to help work with them and support them in their educational journeys."

The tutors follow a block schedule, two students cover the morning block and two more will aid in the afternoon block. Youth who will be testing soon for the GED become a priority for tutors.

"Tutors will come twice a week to the detention facility and be paired up with a Maricopa County Regional School District Reach Associate during their blocks to provide tutoring support either in the classroom or on the living unit in detention," said Judicial Branch Volunteer Coordinator Courtni Tran. "ASU students work closely with our teachers from Maricopa County Regional School District to help provide one-on-one tutoring support for our justice-involved youths for GED prep, credit recovery and overall subject mentorship. Math support is a huge need; therefore, our ASU students will be providing extra support to those youths experiencing challenges with math, specifically with the GED."

Maricopa County Regional School District's Multi-Classroom Leader Kevin Malakowsky says the tutoring program is a huge benefit not only for youth but for their teachers.

"Knowing the population of our students and their educational backgrounds, the more direct and individual support that we can give them the better," Malakowsky said. "We only have so many people as a teaching team and if a student needs additional help in one subject, a lot of times we can't keep up with that demand. Having someone who can sit with that one kid for an extended period and give them the support they need as an extension of ourselves is a great way to be able to reach more students and give them better support overall."

Before visiting Juvenile Detention, tutors undergo special training to help prepare them for their upcoming tutoring sessions. ASU students receive training in trauma-informed care, the mechanics of a tutoring session, reading intervention, communicating with youth, safety and risk and more.

"It's a new program and we are learning about how to better support our tutors, developing and redeveloping trainings, making things clearer," said Fine. "We currently have four tutors, and we are thrilled to have them. My hope for the future of this program is that we can expand it to 10 tutors per semester and be able to provide the youth with more support."

The tutoring program has already achieved great results in the short time it has been offered in Juvenile Detention.

"Last semester when we tracked their tutoring minutes, there were three students who ended up getting their GED who we were able to track a significant number of minutes back to the tutors," said Malakowsky. "Knowing that they were a part of that is very much worthwhile to continue this partnership and I'm hoping that some of the things we are doing, we are building the foundation so we can continue the program in the long term."

This semester, the Juvenile Probation Department expanded the internship program by partnering with Benedictine University in Mesa and allowing more students to receive tutoring in detention.

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The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,100 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public's trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.