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## Texas State teaches troubled youth power of language

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### SUBMITTED REPORT

The Center for P-16 Initiatives at Texas State University has planted a creative writing program in the Hays County Juvenile Detention Center. Working in close collaboration with the John H. Wood Jr. charter school located within the detention center, the Sowing Education and Empowerment in Daily Speech program (S.E.E.D.S.) will serve the 100-plus boys and girls detained there.



The S.E.E.D.S. program focuses on teaching the youth the power of their language, and that ultimately they will be judged in this society by how they write and how they speak. The metaphor is that each word is a "seed" containing vital information about the speaker and/or writer, and that each word should be chosen carefully. The program uses poetry as a vehicle for this lesson due to the requisite fine discrimination of word selection in creating a poem.

"I believe this program will serve many functions," said the center's Isaac Torres. "Not only will it demonstrate the importance of clear and concise language as a tool for forging one's professional future, but the creative process will be an emotional outlet for these kids."

Many of the detainees at the HCJDC have gang ties, and most have endured abuse. The writing program aims to prepare the kids, aged 13-17, for high-school graduation and post-secondary education by honing their spoken and written abilities.

The S.E.E.D.S. program is part of the higher-education initiative Generation Texas, which determines to create a college-going culture throughout all of Texas. The central Texas regional office of GenTX operates out of the Center for P-16 Initiatives at Texas State.

For additional information, contact Isaac Torres at (512) 245-8192.

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