

# MDC North launches Education Program at Everglades Correctional

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Everglades Correctional Institution

Miami Dade College (MDC) North Campus has officially launched the U.S. Department of Education Second Chance Pell Experimental program at

Everglades Correctional Institution.

This is the second year in a row that MDC is selected to receive the grant that will provide need-based tuition assistance to individuals incarcerated in federal and state prisons and help them earn a postsecondary credential and gain job skills.

MDC is one of 67 colleges and universities selected nationwide and the second state college in Florida offering credit-bearing courses to incarcerated

individuals.

“As democracy’s college, MDC is committed to offering high-quality instruction to diverse populations and engaging underserved individuals everywhere,” said North Campus Interim President Fermin Vazquez. “The Pell Experiment Chance designation allows the college to truly change lives.”

The first 20 students at Everglades Correctional Institution began their college education this spring. Students are currently enrolled in composition, math, and student skills courses and are working towards earning an Associate in Arts degree. All courses in the associate program are transferrable within the Florida college system and completion guarantees admission into a bachelor’s program at MDC or a Florida state university.

MDC faculty teaching the above-mentioned courses include Dr. Minca Davis-Brantley, Social Sciences Department; Marta Brito-Villani,

Mathematics Department; and Katrina Smith, English and Communications. The program would not be possible without the dedicated work of Professors Davis-Brantley and Samantha Carlo, as well as the Second Chance Pell team.

The faculty established essential working relationships with key partners and have been at the vanguard of securing grants to help supplement the

administrative costs associated with running the program. Most recently, North Campus was awarded a two-year \$120,000 grant from The Laughing Full Foundation.

Both professors are passionate advocates for higher education in prisons. They are active members of the National Alliance for Higher Education in Prisons (NCHPEP) and founding members of the Florida Coalition of Higher Education in Prison (FCHPEP).

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