

ONLINE COLLEGE EDUCATION NOW AVAILABLE AT JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER

In response to a complaint, the 2011-12 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury (Jury) inquired into the availability of community college-level courses via the internet for wards at the Susan J. Gionfriddo Juvenile Justice Center (Center). The Jury agrees with the complainant that a young person who wants to improve him/herself should be provided this opportunity.

During its annually mandated visits to all juvenile probation facilities, juvenile wards and staff were asked if the wards had access to internet college classes. The staff responded that the connection to local colleges was indeed active and being used by the wards at the LPBC and the Center.

Because it was determined that access to the internet classes was not yet available at the Center, the Jury initiated an inquiry and learned that the computers would be purchased and the necessary internet access acquired for the wards housed at the Center. Subsequently, it was ascertained that two computers had been acquired and online accredited courses are now available. The Jury then confirmed that, as of the beginning of the current semester, one ward had availed himself of this opportunity and is enrolled in a Business Office Technology course at Allan Hancock College. The Jury was told that plans are in development for promoting future enrollment in online courses at Allan Hancock College and Santa Barbara City College.

The 2011-12 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury commends the County Probation Department's staff for making available college courses to wards via the internet.

FINDING

Finding 1

The Jury was informed on September 13, 2011 by an official, that online college courses were available at the Susan J. Gionfriddo Juvenile Justice Center. In fact, they were not.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSE

In accordance with *California Penal Code Section 933.05*, each agency and government body affected by or named in this report is requested to respond in writing to the findings and recommendations in a timely manner. The following are the affected agencies for this report, with the mandated response period for each:

Santa Barbara County Probation Department -90 Days

Finding 1