

# Words from Within

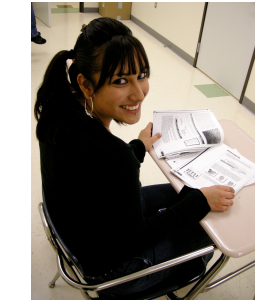
## The Gordon Bernell Charter School Newsletter

*Gordon Bernell transformed countless lives through his benevolent and inspiring presence at the Bernalillo County Detention Center. He was loved and admired by inmates and employees alike. Among his many accomplishments were the nation's first jail-based computerized literacy lab, the Youth Outreach Program, the BCDC Inmate and Child Christmas Program, and a 15,000 book library at the jail. The Gordon Bernell Charter School, with campuses at the Metropolitan Detention Center and in Downtown Albuquerque, proudly honors the legacy of Mr. Bernell, his family and his 18 years of service to the community.*

The Gordon Bernell Charter School is now in its 9th month. Over 700 students have enrolled and more than 400 have earned credits towards their high school diploma. Turn the page to see who our current top credit earners and most recent graduates are!



Marcelina Flores, GBCS high school graduate!



**GORDON  
BERNELL**  
CHARTER SCHOOL

Center photo: Gordon Bernell at the CNM GED graduation in the 1990s. Stephanie Lucero of GBCS

Spring Newsletter

Volume 1 Number 2

### MRT: The Gordon Bernell Charter School Uses an Innovative Therapy Technique for Student Success

The Gordon Bernell Charter School is ground-breaking simply due to the fact it is one of the first charter schools in existence for an incarcerated population. Yet there are many factors that make it an innovative program. Director Greta Roskom believes the MRT classes are an essential aspect of educating students. Moral Reconciliation Therapy is a counseling program developed in prisons in the mid 80s to combat addictive behaviors. MRT is based on Jungian psychotherapy and the concept that everyone has an inner self that encompasses a core of

goodness and therefore can lead a moral life.

Dr. Ron Gallegos, GBCS's resident psychologist, brought MRT on board at the school's inception. So far, dozens of students have taken part in this aspect of the program, both at MDC and at GBCS's Downtown campus. "If a person is a light bulb," explains Dr. Gallegos, "trauma and bad habits cover that light."



Daniel Boone and Dr. Ron Gallegos.

MRT heals a person's inner self by a series of steps that help the participant reflect on his or her past behaviors. GBCS Downtown student Daniel Boone describes that process: "I realized a lot of things that were getting me in trouble, then a more caring person came out of me. I created new habits and now do fun stuff with my family, and enjoy taking care of my nephew." Boone also notes the "high level of honesty" in the program. "It helped me with my sobriety. I never think of going back to that life anymore."

Albert Aragon has been an MRT student at MDC for the past 8 months. "Alcohol was my demon," he says, "but now I've thrown away the dead skin of my life."

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**GBCS Graduates: Fall**

**2008- May 2009:**

- Mr. Kevin Lehman
- Ms. Marcelina Flores
- Mr. Alfredo Stevens
- Mr. Jake Martinez
- Mr. Jaime Escamilla
- Mr. Jonathan H. Baca
- Mr. Phillip D. Kosorukov



These are our current students who have earned 3 credits or above:

**Praise Song of the Day by Marcelina Flores**

*Downtown Campus*

Jonathan Baca	4.0
Darren Boone	5.0
Nicole Cabellero	4.5
Laurie Chavez	4.5
Claudia Flores	3.0
Sebrena Gonzales	3.5
Nathan Henry	3.0
Valerie Lovato	3.5?
Stephanie Lucero	4.0
Daniel Luna	3.0
Isaiah Romero	6.0
George Sandoval	5.5

**I never anticipated the separation that lay ahead  
 Waiting to tear me away  
 Locked behind these jail doors  
 Makes me learn to appreciate  
 Appreciate my children, family and friends  
 Appreciate my freedom for further education  
 Appreciate my freedom to be a mother  
 I felt distance and depressed from separation  
 Yet I appreciate this separation  
 It's opened my eyes to how lucky I am  
 To have two children, a fiance and a loving mother  
 I thank God for expanding my mind  
 For allowing me to bring myself here  
 Before it was too late to save my relationships  
 Before it was too late for me  
 To further my education at a young age**

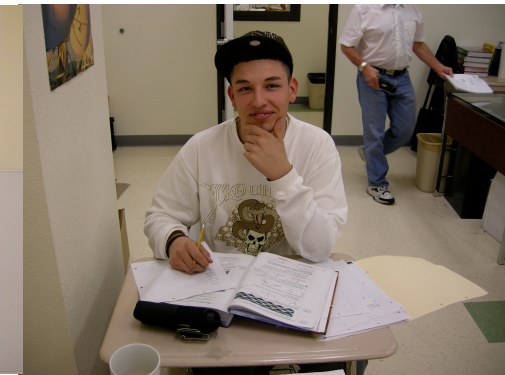
*MDC Campus*

Marie Andrade-Crocket	8.0
Richard Baca	5.0
Cheri Beyer	4.0
Jonathan Chavez	6.0
Catrina Devitt	3.5
Adrian Finley	6.25
Anthony Lopez	4.5
Dominic Lucero	4.0
Max Lujan	5.5
Martin Maldonado	5.0
Joe Monroy	3.0
Kandy Padilla	3.5
Malachi Rangel	4.0

**I can never be happier than this day  
 Of me sitting in this jail thinking away  
 Being away from my family will not be forever  
 But changing my ways will always be forever.  
 "She was very soft-spoken when she arrived here,"  
 said Catrina Devitt at Marcelina Flores's graduation  
 "But now she's our spokesperson!"**



Pictured above: Darren Boone, Jonathan Baca & Stephanie Lucero



John Chavez, GBCS student



Students working on math problems

**MRT continued from page 1**

MRT helps me to see things you know about yourself but don't always look at. This time I've grasped who I'm supposed to be, and it's opened my eyes as to how to do it. Aragon has successfully used MRT in terms of dealing with other inmates. "It allowed me to see my personality was not who I was - it was only my reaction to situations. The bottom line is I'm administering my anger. Now when I have a conflict with someone I think about it, I go and talk to the person like a man, there are apologies on both sides; its a done deal." In terms of when Aragon will be released from MDC, he states: "I'm going to stay away from the red flag areas. I don't need these things; they're just a habit." Dr Gallegos concludes: "If people take the program seriously and stay with it, they have a very high chance of staying out of jail."

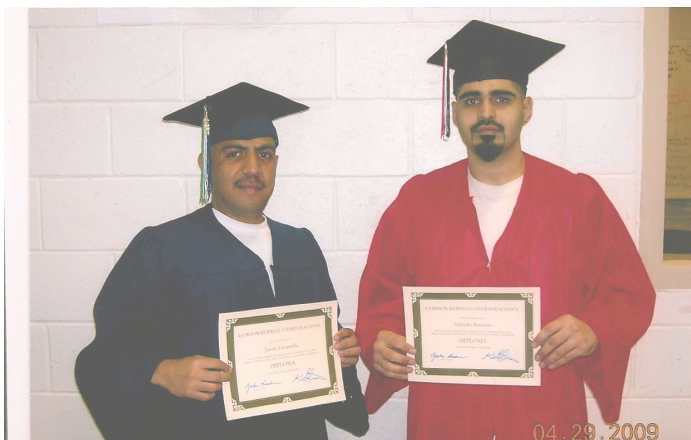
**GBCS Downtown Campus**

The Gordon Bernell Charter School's Downtown campus is a place of free and easy activity. Students come from all walks of life, including but not at all limited to those being released from MDC. The student to teacher ratio is low, and students work on independent study projects as well as in the classroom. Stephanie Lucero speaks about her independent study project experience in her English class. "You write your summary and opinion and present it to the class. I did mine on The Ugly Duckling by Iris Johansen. I like studying here; I also like having my mom here." (Stephanie's mom, Sadie Lucero, is the GBCS Office Manager). Stephanie dreams of becoming an adolescent and adult psychologist, and also would like to work in film direction and production.

Jonathan Baca, who just graduated from GBCS, wants to pursue a career as an electrician, or architecture. He won a "Bridge to Success" Scholarship to CNM where he plans to enroll in the fall.

Darren Boone thinks GBCS is "Better than public school, because you can work at your own pace, rather than always following the teacher's lesson plan. You're not doing work you've done in previous years."

Work/gstudy elective credit is available. The GBCS Downtown campus is located on the 3rd floor at 401 Roma NW, and is tuition-free. For more information and to enroll in the GBCS Downtown campus, call 468-7701.



Above: GBCS Graduates Jaime Escamila & Alfredo Stevens



Stevens addressing men from the E Unit at MDC on his graduation day

## Life "On the Outs"

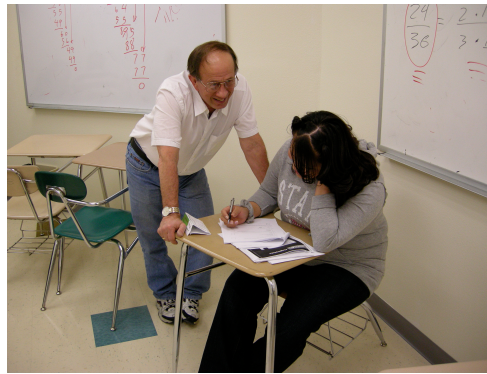
Gordon Bernell was a great believer in the power of education to counteract recidivism, both in jail and "on the outs." His office was in the old BCDC jail, located adjacent to the new GBCS Downtown campus, housed in the former Metro Court building. Once released from MDC, GBCS students can attend the school's Downtown Albuquerque campus. We are working with support services in the metro area to assist recently released students succeed with their endeavors in school and in the community. GBCS students can also make an appointment with CNM instructor Cynthia Wooley on Mondays at the GBCS Downtown campus for assistance entering CNM college classes. Pell grant and scholarship funding is available for GBCS graduates. A part-time nurse and full time career counselor are being hired to help with health issues and to assist GBCS students find jobs and access other support services in the Albuquerque area.

Pictured Below:

GBCS Director Greta Roskom, GBCS instructor Tom Rabatin with a student at GBCS Downtown campus.



**The First Gordon Bernell Charter School group graduation will be held on June 12th at 1:00 p.m. at One Civic Plaza, 10th floor, Conference Room B**



**The GBCS Governance Council:**

**Steve Gallegos, President**

**John Dantis**

**Gail Oliver**

**John Martinez**

**Michael Vigil**

**Kelly Calahan**

**Robert Baade**

