



## Holy Cross Selected by Second Chance Pell Grant Program

Holy Cross College has been a proud recipient of Second Chance Pell funding since 2016. The Second Chance Pell Program, a competitive grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education to only 67 colleges and universities across the country, enables incarcerated students to be eligible for federal student aid while enrolled in a college degree program.

Holy Cross College hosts the Moreau College Initiative for men at Westville Correctional Facility in Westville, Indiana. The classes offered at Westville are taught by professors from Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame, and the degrees are conferred by Holy Cross College.

Holy Cross has been offering the Associate of Arts degree at Westville since 2014, and conferred its first six Bachelor of Arts degrees in 2018. Second Chance Pell has enabled the Moreau College Initiative to increase enrollment and expand its resources over the past three years, and more growth is expected. Admissions during the summer of 2019 will occur at four correctional facilities, and Holy Cross hopes to enroll almost 100 students at Westville by 2020.

"It takes about \$10,000 to run one course, which includes providing supplies and books for students, travel to the prison, and salaries for our faculty and staff," says Alesha Seroczynski, Ph.D., MCI Director of College Operations. "These grants allow us to reach more students who deserve a second chance at a college education."

Modeled after Bard College's Prison Initiative (BPI), the Holy Cross program hopes to experience similar success. BPI has been educating incarcerated men and women across upstate New York for almost 20 years, and just 3% of BPI graduates recidivate or return to prison. "Even more critical," says Seroczynski, "BPI alumni are thriving citizens in their communities. Many of their graduates have pursued advanced studies in fields such as public health and urban planning; one alumnus recently completed his master's degree at Yale Divinity School. By any standard those are spectacular results—and something we hope to emulate."

Nationwide, the colleges and universities that were selected for this program have partnered with 141 federal and state penal institutions to enroll over 10,000 incarcerated students in educational and training programs. These institutions provide federal Pell Grants to qualified students who are incarcerated and are likely to be released within five years of enrolling in coursework.

The Second Chance Pell Program was initiated by the Obama administration in response to research which demonstrates that educating incarcerated men and women significantly reduces an individual's likelihood of recidivism.

To learn more about the Westville Education Initiative, visit [www.hcc-nd.edu/westville-education-initiative](http://www.hcc-nd.edu/westville-education-initiative)