



PRESS RELEASE

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LIFE UNIVERSITY'S CENTER FOR COMPASSION, INTEGRITY AND SECULAR ETHICS (CCISE) PRESENTS AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON

Marietta, Georgia, November 21, 2018 – The Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics (CCISE) at Life University (LIFE) sent eight people to the National Conference for Higher Education in Prison (NCHEP) that was held November 8-11, 2018 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The conference was hosted by the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison, whose mission is to support the expansion of quality higher education in prison, empower students in prison and after release, and shape public discussion about education and incarceration.

Members of the CCISE contingent from LIFE delivered both a panel presentation and an individual paper presentation at the conference. The panel presentation, titled "Compassionate Integrity Training and Higher Education in Prison: The Value of Practices of Resilience and Compassion for Teachers, Student, and Administrators in the Field," was presented by CCISE's Drs. Michael Karlin and Thomas Fabisiak, as well as LIFE student Jesca Cates and Compassionate Atlanta's Pam Glustrom. Participants in the Chillon Project and CCISE also discussed their experiences learning and teaching these practices as participants in Compassionate Integrity Training (CIT) at two Georgia State Prisons, and provided a first-hand experience of CIT for audience members.

The individual paper presentation, titled "Evaluating the Effects of an Associate Degree Program in a Prison in Georgia: Initial Findings," was presented by Dr. Fabisiak, LIFE professors Drs. Peggy Samples and Tom Flores, as well as Emory University Ph.D. student Tatenda Mangurenje. They presented their study design and initial findings of the Chillon Project's mixed methods study on the effects of higher education in prison on incarcerated people's emotional, physical, psychological and social well-being, as well as on the prison environment. They also discussed how this kind of approach contributes to providing an evidence-based picture of the effects of higher education in prison that moves beyond measures of recidivism.

Student presenter Jesca Cates, a current student of LIFE's A.A. in Positive Human Development and Social Change, shared the following regarding the conference and her positive experience going through the CIT program during her incarceration at Lee Arrendale State Prison:

"The NCHEP conference was so encouraging for me. I met some amazing people with a real heart for those that were incarcerated, as well as some wonderful

formerly incarcerated individuals that continue to inspire me through their success.

With CIT, I learned how to recognize and accept the feelings and emotions that sometimes raged within my body. However, CIT didn't just stop there, the program taught me about other people, and how we all go through life seeking to avoid suffering and striving to create happiness ... even though we all may go about that in different ways. I was able to look at the individuals that were in authority over me while I was incarcerated, and I was able to have empathy for them for the first time. CIT enabled me to finally rise above the position of being a victim of the prison industrial complex. CIT empowered me with a healthy understanding of others and of systems, as well as cultivated within me an ability to be empathetic toward others while still keeping a piece of myself safe.

It has been profoundly helpful with my reintegration into society as well. After sixteen years and four months in prison, entering society again with no job experience, no license and very limited resources was terrifying. However, I was able to use CIT and confront the way that my body reacted to those situations in a way that enabled me to remain calm in stressful circumstances so that I was able to make healthy decisions instead of just blindly reacting."

For more information, please visit:

- CCISE: Compassion.LIFE.edu.
- Chillon Project: Compassion.LIFE.edu/Chillon-Project
- CIT: Compassion.LIFE.edu/Compassionate-Integrity-Training
- Life University: LIFE.edu

About Life University

Founded in Marietta, Georgia in 1974, Life University is a health sciences institution most known for its chiropractic program, the largest single campus chiropractic program in the world. Life University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master's and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees, and also has programmatic accreditation through the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The mission of Life University is to empower students with the education, skills and values necessary for career success and life fulfillment, based on a vitalistic philosophy.

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