



Shannon Madison hopes to get her GED after dropping out of school when she was 13.



Students work hard in math class to earn their GED at the Clackamas County Jail.

Most of the time, students want to be in the classroom because they want to move on, earn their GED and make the right changes in their lives. There is a sense of comradery; when one student passes a test, they all celebrate and then everyone wants to pass because they see what's possible.

Dajen Green is in jail for drug charges and theft but now he is on his way to earning his GED. He enjoys math because of the numbers, he said. "I'm tired of this revolving door; I want to have options in life," said Green. "Lauren has helped me a lot, in the examples she gives, the attitude she has and the motivation she gives me. She believes in me."

He plans to further his education after earning his GED by going to CCC and getting an automotive degree.

Alan Coulter is 40 years old and got arrested for drugs and alcohol but now as a student, he is headed in the right direction. He wanted to set the record for getting his GED the fastest. He's passed everything minus math but that won't stop him. He said that even though he learned math in high school, most of the equations and formulas don't look familiar.

"Hell yeah, I haven't even finished it and I already feel successful," said Coulter. "If I can do it, then these other younger people can do it."

For his future, he plans on taking automotive or welding classes.

Shannon Madison is a student that has started from the bottom and has only grown from there. She said that her father never made her go to school, so she was uneducated. Even with her struggles in math and other subjects, Madison said, "I try not to let fear stand

in my way."

Her self-confidence has gone up, she loves reading and she has been successful with her education, especially with the opportunity to spend one-on-one time with a teacher. She plans to keep going to school and wants to become a mechanic, working with race cars.

"I'm glad they provide this class here," Madison said. "A lot of people wouldn't try to better themselves if it weren't for this class."

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**-Alan Coulter**

So far eight students have earned their GED, but the goal before graduation is ten students.

Students can also take parenting and life skills classes at the jail. Once they are released, they can continue taking classes at the Transition Center to continue.

Jail is a different environment which is why Zavrel said, "You always have to come in ready for everything and anything." Although, even though these students are in jail, they are still a part of CCC.

Victoria Tinker contributed to this report.



Alan Coulter is one of the oldest student in the GED program at the age of 40.