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Inmates graduate jail program in St. Lucie County

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Thursday, June 5, 2008

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ST. LUCIE COUNTY — Wednesday was a day of personal achievement for a group of co-inmates who marked their last day of school.

It was graduation day for 47 inmates who voluntarily joined the 90-day Inmate Programs at county jail.

Beginning in 2003 as a post-incarceration program to help find jobs and housing, the program expanded 18 months ago to provide diplomas and provide substance abuse and culinary training to inmates who want to improve their lives. Some completed more than one program.

Maj. Pat Tighe opened the ceremony with the pledge and a prayer. He then introduced the speaker, 19th Judicial Circuit Public Defender Diamond Litty, who had called Tighe in 2007 bringing the re-entry program into St. Lucie County.

"You have accomplished greatness," Litty said. "You have managed to turn something negative into a positive."

Tighe then called the names of each person to come forward, receive their award and pose for a photograph, individually followed by applause.

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