

## DOING GOOD WHILE DOING TIME



WRITER  
*Monique Dubos*  
[@moniquedubos](#)

Freelance writer

*July 31, 2013* — Can prisons save money and the environment while changing lives? After a decade of connecting prison inmates to educational programs and conservation projects, Joslyn Trivett, a manager at the Sustainability in Prisons Project, says the answer is “yes.”

A partnership between The Evergreen State College and the Washington State Department of Corrections, [the SPP](#) offers inmates “the chance to get engaged in something positive and learn about science,” says Trivett. In addition to saving tax dollars and resources through programs such as recycling and organic gardening, the project contributes to prisoners’ well-being by giving them something worthwhile to do and a sense of


accomplishment that can’t be measured. “There is a high degree of investment, a level of job satisfaction that is rare to see outside of prison, let alone inside,” she says.

Vocational education generally is known to reduce recidivism, and some data suggest that prisoners who participate in the SPP may be better prepared to transition to life and work on the outside. And SPP participants show more positive attitudes toward the environment, which are associated with better social attitudes and parole success.

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“We have heard from so many inmates how this work is a transformation for them,” Trivett says. “They have found a way to make a meaningful contribution to society. It is a means to do good while doing time.”

Since this video was produced in June 2009, the SPP has expanded to every prison in Washington, and to new states and counties across the United States. The SPP is co-directed by Carri LeRoy and Dan Pacholke; Nalini Nadkarni continues with the project as a senior advisor. 

*This video was photographed, recorded and produced by Benjamin Drummond and Sara Joy Steele. View more of their work at [bdsjs.com](http://bdsjs.com).*

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