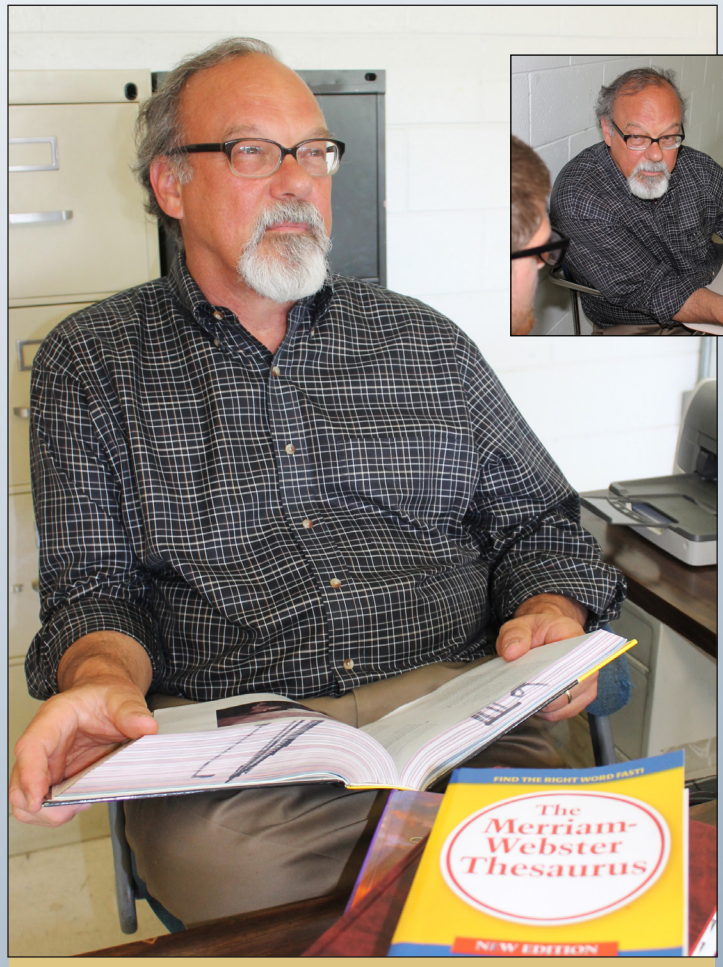
WHAT'S WORKING

A Message From DJJ Director Andy Block *July 14, 2014*

'He Has Really Impacted My Life'



"It's so easy to get caught up in the duties, deadlines, and frustrations of running classes day-to-day. When something like this happens, it makes me pause and remember what's really important—the big picture."

– Ben Cleary, English Instructor Beaumont JCC

Resident's Essay Offers Unsolicited Praise For Beaumont's Ben Cleary

A recent assignment in Ben Cleary's English class at Beaumont JCC was to write an essay on any topic the residents wished. One of the essays Cleary received turned into a career moment, and helped to remind him – and all of us – why we do what we do. The essay follows in its entirety. Congratulations, Mr. Cleary ... thanks to you and all DJJ teachers for inspiring our students.

The person I'm going to write about is a teacher I really admire. This person's name is Mr. Cleary, and he is an English teacher. The reason I'm going to write about him is because he has helped me with my time upstate.

The first thing I'm going to say is that he is an excellent teacher and mentor. He is in my opinion, one of the smartest people I know. He helps people that nobody thought could be changed, but he helps them change.

The second reason I picked him is because he has really impacted my life. He has changed my whole mindset about school and life. I remember when I first met Cleary he was telling the class a story about how he used to work at the jail. He said he helped an inmate get out through education.

The third reason is because he has helped me with my vocabulary and reading skills. When I first got here I did not like to read. He inspired me to look into books and read more. He said they are great ways people express their imagination.

The last reason is because he's just so funny. Anything he says, he can turn it into something funny. When he gets mad that, too, is also funny. With all jokes on the side, he is a great teacher and mentor.