

*For Immediate Release*

## IDOC Providing Coal Mining Job Training for Offenders

Indianapolis, Indiana (December 21, 2009) – Offenders released from prison have significant hurdles to cross, and employment is perhaps the biggest hurdle. Because of this, the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) seeks to meet its mission of successful offender re-entry, in part by training offenders with employable skills. Now, Vincennes University, the designated trainer for coal miners in Indiana, has agreed to deliver coal mining classes at Branchville Correctional Facility.

Vincennes University will offer two classes as part of its coal mining training: New Miner Underground and New Miner Surface. All classes will be delivered in 8-hour modules at the facility for classes of three to fifteen students. Moreover, only qualified and eligible offenders can participate, and to determine eligibility, IDOC staff review offender records and assess their career interest surveys.

A federal grant provides all of the funds for the training with no funds required from the State of Indiana.

“The coal mining training program is a unique undertaking for a correctional system, and we are excited to offer this training to offenders, especially given the significant history of coal mining in Indiana and the current economic climate,” commented IDOC Commissioner Edwin G. Buss. “We are grateful to the Indiana Coal Council and its membership for their support of this endeavor.”

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