



The Corrections Innovation Leader

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### **GTL Continues Support of BEST Entrepreneurship Program**

*Underscores commitment to promote and enhance programs that put inmates on a path towards personal achievement*

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Reston, Virginia – August 15, 2017 –** [GTL](#), an innovation leader in correctional technology, education solutions that assist in rehabilitating inmates, and payment services solutions for government, today announced it will continue the commitment to entrepreneurship which began with IDS’ and the Nashe family’s involvement in the Building Entrepreneurs for Success in Tennessee ([BEST](#)), a program of the Nashville Entrepreneur Center ([EC](#)). Since its inception in 2014, the BEST program has had continued accolades after graduating three cohorts of student inmates and setting them on a path towards personal achievement as they work to successfully reenter society.

The program has been effective in reducing recidivism rates for several reasons. The BEST program incorporates a wide variety of volunteers, professors, community leaders, business people, and professional speakers who regularly engage the program participants by sharing their entrepreneurial stories. When an inmate enters the BEST program, the first three months are spent on character development. Subsequently, inmates develop their own personal business plan. Through a partnership with a local university, a class of students visits the prison once a week to help the BEST students develop and fine tune these plans. Program participants also learn how to use software such as Microsoft® Word®, PowerPoint®, and Excel®, as well as participate in classes around financial literacy and business education principles.

“BEST emphasizes the need for every student to become a confident and competent public speaker,” said Karen Vander Molen, Program Director at BEST. “An important part of the curriculum is teaching students how to create and deliver a speech—by the end of the program, every student must deliver 10 speeches. This is an opportunity for students to practice effective public speaking and, concurrently, learn how to listen and understand other people, which is key when searching for and maintaining a job upon reentry.”

“Since 2014, IDS has supported and provided tablets to the BEST program,” said Dr. Turner Nashe, GTL Senior Vice President of Education Services. “As an entrepreneur, I know that the path to personal success begins by learning the free enterprise system and the ways to succeed in it.”

In February of this year, Dr. Nashe and his wife, Phylanice Nashe, J.D., [personally donated](#) \$100,000 to the BEST program which was recognized at a celebration event in March. “Former inmates have a difficult time finding employment,” continued Dr. Nashe. “Teaching entrepreneurial skills can help make inmates self-sufficient, alleviating the stress of job applications and employment rejection. We are paving an [inmate’s path to success](#) by providing support to organizations such as BEST.”

The BEST program is comprised of four phases:

- **Phase One** – BEST seeks to empower individuals with self-knowledge, presentation, conflict management, negotiation, cooperation, planning, technology, goal-setting, and decision making skills. Inmates also participate in a recognized public speaking program that equips them with speaking, listening, and critical evaluation skills.
- **Phase Two** – Business, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial skills are taught. Mentors from a recognized business program and students of entrepreneurship from a local university assist the participants as they each develop their own business plan.
- **Phase Three** – During post-graduation and pre-release, BEST continues through book studies, newsletters to members of the BEST community, and meetings when possible.
- **Phase Four** – Upon release, former inmates can tap into the network of BEST partners as they return to the community, ready to be contributing members of society as employees or business owners.

“Now that IDS is part of the GTL family, we look for new ways to promote and help enhance the BEST program and other programs that put inmates on a path of personal achievement,” concluded Nashe.

GTL’s entire solution suite will be showcased from August 20–22 in booth 301 at the [American Correctional Association](#)’s [147<sup>th</sup> Congress of Correction](#) in St. Louis, Missouri. GTL will also have its [Technology in Motion](#) tour vehicle on display inside the exposition hall at the ACA conference. The Technology in Motion vehicle includes the latest hardware, software, and connectivity to enable comprehensive hands-on demonstrations of the full range of offerings for the corrections, education, and government sectors.

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### **About GTL**

GTL leads the fields of correctional technology, education, and government payment services with visionary solutions and customized products that integrate seamlessly to deliver security, financial value, and operational efficiencies while aiding inmate rehabilitation and reducing recidivism rates. With the recent acquisition of Telmate, GTL has strengthened its suite of solutions for the corrections industry and expanded its community corrections portfolio with Telmate Guardian, a smartphone-based GPS monitoring solution. As a trusted industry leader, GTL provides services to over 2 million inmates in more than 2,500 correctional facilities in the United States and Canada, including 33 U.S. departments of corrections, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and many large city/county/provincial facilities. GTL is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, with an employee presence throughout North America. To learn more about GTL, please visit [www.gtl.net](http://www.gtl.net) or social media sites on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).

### **About BEST**

Cohort 1, the pilot class of the BEST program, started on October 21, 2014 with 22 men. All classes were held at the Charles Bass Correctional Complex, just west of downtown Nashville, Monday through Friday, six hours per day. Eighteen men graduated on April 24, 2015, each with his own business plan. Eighty-three volunteers donated 1,929 hours during the six-month program. Cohort 2, included 19 women from three Tennessee prisons who meet at the Tennessee Prison for Women in Nashville. We used the electronic tablets provided by partner [Innertainment Delivery Systems](#) to deliver curriculum, including the [Nashville Entrepreneur Center PreFlight](#) materials. Eighty-nine volunteers shared their expertise and

passion to change lives. Seventeen women completed the program. Cohort 3 began October 17, 2016 at the Tennessee Prison for Women with 20 women. Seventeen women graduated April 28, 2017, each having completed her business plan. This cohort's plans range from "All Things Honey" to "DiNardo Scrubs" custom cleaning service. They have completed their 10 speeches attaining the Toastmasters International "Competent Communicator" certification. Their Toastmasters skills were on display at Graduation. To learn more about BEST, please visit <http://www.ec.co/best>.