



June 8, 2026

Inmates at East Mississippi state prison complete GED, horticulture programs

MERIDIAN – (WTOK) The East Mississippi Correctional Facility held a graduation ceremony for 14 inmates in its education programs. Eight inmates graduated through the facility's GED program, and another six inmates graduated through the Horticulture program on June 5.

Several community leaders, including Mayor Percy Bland and James Carter of the Carter Foundation were present at the celebration, congratulating them on their accomplishments. Deputy Warden Rivera with the East Mississippi Correctional Facility said it's a big step for these men, which will provide opportunities for them both on the inside and out in the real world.

"So, eight with the GED program, six with the Horticulture. We just want to recognize them today, show there's positive things going on here at the East Mississippi Correctional Facility. These offenders have all kinds of opportunities when it comes to education as far as fulfilling needs and whatever will help them when they get out. More opportunities, that's our plan, that's our goal. Rehabilitation for the nation, that's what we do here," said Rivera.

James Carter with the Carter Foundation said it's important to celebrate the milestone these men have made, continuing to grow and develop even while incarcerated.

"Just knowing that 14 people got their GED shows that even though their body is locked up, their mind isn't. It all starts with your mind, so just knowing that they're in here, being productive, that's going to help them when they get out, and sometimes even if they don't ever get out, it's still something they can feel like they accomplished for themselves," said Carter.

