

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW BRUNSWICK -- The Lifers, a group of inmates at Rahway State Prison serving life or better-than-25-year sentences, will be the subject of a special broadcast on Thursday, June 16, at 8 p.m. on WRSU-FM, 88.7, the Rutgers University student radio station.

For the past eight months the Lifers, through their "Juvenile Awareness -- Project Help Program," have confronted groups of youths, identified by local police or school systems as potential trouble makers, with a taste of prison life.

As a part of the hour-long program, WRSU-FM will broadcast portions of a visit by a group of youngsters as the Lifers escort them on a tour of the prison and discuss prison life with them.

The Lifers say the program is a success, and point to statistics that only 14 subsequent arrests among the 1,300 students who have visited the prison.

Frank Bindhammer, vice-president of the group, says, "we are able to relate to their problems because we've lived them ourselves." More than half of the Lifers, Bindhammer said, were originally involved in Juvenile criminal offenses.

The WRSU-FM broadcast will also include interviews with Middlesex County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Judge George Nicola

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and Woodbridge Police Chief Anthony O'Brien, who discussed the success of the Juvenile awareness project.

Michael A. Blishak (168 Bergen Avenue, KEARNY), producer of the broadcast, said the experiences and interviews that WRSU-FM News has gathered are "real and at times frightening." The language is often strong and frank, he added.

But according to inmate Bindhammer, the experience that the youngsters go through is well thought out on the part of the Lifers.

"We would rather that they learn in a cold, harsh, emphatic way what we have been through as criminals than for them to follow in our footsteps and find out that our warnings are true," he added.

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