



# OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE  
ROOM 456, CITY HALL  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102



**Ross Mirkarimi**  
SHERIFF

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Kenya Briggs  
Office: 415-554-7247  
Cell: 415-850-8046  
Email: [kenya.briggs@sfgov.org](mailto:kenya.briggs@sfgov.org)

## **SHERIFF VICKI HENNESSY ANNOUNCES LARGEST EVER FIVE KEYS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL IN-JAIL GRADUATION**

San Francisco Sheriff Vicki Hennessy today announced the largest in-custody graduating class of the San Francisco Sheriff's Department (SFSD)'s award-winning Five Keys Charter High School. Thirty-nine incarcerated women and men at San Francisco County Jail received their high school diploma or GED certificate to "Pomp and Circumstance" and to the cheers of family and friends.

Five Keys Charter High School was launched in the San Francisco County Jail in 2003, the first charter high school in the nation to operate inside a county jail system. It soon expanded to serve adult learners and at-risk youth at 18 community learning centers located in San Francisco and the Bay Area.

Unique in its charter to provide high school education to adults, the school's "five keys" represent the five elements required for individuals to contribute productively to the community: education, recovery, family, community and employment. Nearly 1400 individuals have successfully completed high school at Five Keys.

"Today, we celebrate the 39 men and women who worked so hard to achieve this milestone," said Sheriff Hennessy. "We also salute the teachers, counselors and other dedicated Five Keys staff who have made today possible."

"We know that the lack of a basic education is a barrier to employment and a contributing factor to incarceration," said Five Keys Executive Director Steve Good. "Today's graduation is a significant step towards helping individuals to overcome this barrier and thereby reduce the likelihood of re-offending."

Eighty-four students from the school's community campuses, Five Keys' largest local graduating class ever, obtained their high school diplomas at a separate ceremony on Wednesday, January 20, 2016.

The Sheriff's Department's Five Keys Charter High School was the recipient of the Harvard Kennedy School's 2015 Innovations in American Government Award.

For more information on Five Keys and other Sheriff's Department's programs, please visit <http://sfsheriff.com>.

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PHONE: 415-554-7225 FAX: 415-554-7050

WEBSITE: [WWW.SFSHERIFF.COM](http://WWW.SFSHERIFF.COM)

EMAIL: [SHERIFF@SFGOV.ORG](mailto:SHERIFF@SFGOV.ORG)