

Dear Friends: I am writing this commentary in hopes that you will see the importance of giving a real chance to those like me that never had a real chance. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this very important topic.

Stop Neglecting Ex-Inmates

In 2010, 24,692 parolees returned to prison for committing new felonies. Cuts in probation and parole programs led to ex-felons resorting back to the same crime and violence that sent them to prison in the first place.

Carl Wicklund, executive director of the American Probation and Parole Association says, "We're setting these people up for failure." Mainly because of cuts to programs that give former inmates an alternative to crime.

As a federal inmate currently housed at a maximum security penitentiary, I have firsthand knowledge of the impact these budget cuts are having on ex-inmates. Every day I meet repeat offenders who are direct casualties of the current economic crisis. They all say the same thing - "I couldn't get a job." In response to this crisis, I've developed 5 classes that serve the purpose of helping my fellow inmates create jobs. In my How To Write And Publish A Book Class, I teach these men how to write their life stories and publish them through digital and print on demand publishers that believe in giving a chance to those who never had a chance. I teach a Music Industry class that allows inmates to learn everything they need to know to get into the entertainment field.

Today, several other inmate teachers along with myself sponsored a seminar titled: The Importance of Education. Inmate instructors of the Character Building, Community Building, Basic Business, Basic Computer Knowledge, Interpersonal Communication, Inside/Outside Dad, Conflict Resolution and Home Inspection Classes encouraged other inmate to follow our lead and better prepare themselves for society by obtaining a meaningful education. The theme of the program was: Each One Teach One.

If we can teach each other in here surely you can give us a job out there.