



'Second Chance' Program Awarded Additional Funding

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SAN DIEGO -- A national spotlight shines on a local man who saved taxpayers millions of dollars. Scott Silverman's Second Chance program is making waves in the nation's capital. A nearly \$700,000 gift from Washington, D.C. is given to the Second Chance program in San Diego. "(The money is) to help build another classroom and hire more people," said Silverman.

It is money for a program that takes people who need help out of bad situations, enabling them to become more productive members of society. "We have all come from backgrounds of drug addiction and incarceration," said Campbell. Chase Campbell has been employed for a year-and-a-half since graduating from Second Chance. His three-week course, paid for by private donations and grants, saves taxpayers' money.

"It's gone up to \$44,000 a year (to house an inmate) as of 2006," said Silverman. Scott Silverman, founder of Second Chance, said 70 percent of his graduates don't go back to prison, which he said is better than the state's rehab numbers. "The state is still at 80 percent going back to prison," said Silverman.

It's Silverman's hope that 70 percent of this class, the largest ever with 85 graduates, will save taxpayers over \$2.5 million annually.

Graduate John VanDinter said the program has given him a fresh start. "I was in for commercial burglary, so it feels good to find a new way of living," VanDinter.

Expansion is in the works locally for Second Chance. Silverman said if he could expand to other prison systems, the state would be in a lot better shape. "We think we could wipe out the deficit in 10 years," said Silverman. It is another big goal from a man whose dreams have proven results.

San Diego officials just dedicated February 19 as "Scott Silverman Day" for his contributions to the community.

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