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For Immediate Release

Second Chance STRIVE Graduates Earn Financial Freedom Certificate

Program made possible by United Way of San Diego County grant and Wells Fargo Bank Curriculum

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San Diego, CA -- Unemployment rates are rising, personal budgets are shrinking and individuals and families throughout San Diego, America and the world have become vitally aware of the need for financial self-sufficiency and stability. For graduates of the Second Chance Support and Training Results in Valuable Employees (STRIVE) program, understanding and incorporating these skills into their daily lives can make the difference with the most basic needs; buying food, budgeting expenses and keeping their homes.

On Tuesday, November 25, 2008, Second Chance will hold its first Financial Freedom graduation ceremony from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Second Chance headquarters, 6145 Imperial Ave., San Diego, CA 92114. The program, made possible through a grant from the United Way of San Diego County and incorporating Wells Fargo Bank's *Hands on Banking* curriculum, helped STRIVE graduates with concepts such as developing and managing a household budget, creating a routine for paying monthly bills, and filing taxes. The program also presented information on understanding credit scores, improving credit history and understanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In total, the program delivered 16 hours of instruction.

Scott H. Silverman, President and CEO of Second Chance, explained that the STRIVE program is based on the premise that better attitudes and preparation result in people that employers want to hire and who will be successful in their jobs. "The Financial Freedom program," he said, "has offered our STRIVE graduates invaluable insight and specific training on developing the financial skills and stability necessary to support their employment, their families and themselves."

Wendell French, Vice President of Community Development for Wells Fargo Bank in San Diego noted that when Wells Fargo was invited to participate in a Financial Literacy Education Program with Second Chance, the organization literally jumped at the opportunity.

“We at Wells Fargo Bank are well aware of the Second-Chance mission to provide assistance to at-risk men, women, and youth and their impressive results. I have literally been overwhelmed at the level of participation and engagement with every single financial education class I’ve taught. The biggest payback for me was when while out shopping one day, I ran across one of my students and he couldn’t wait to share with me how, as a result of the training he’d received, he had opened a savings account and how much money he had saved.”

Doug Sawyer, President and CEO of United Way of San Diego County, whose organization paved the way for the program with an \$83,174 grant, noted that the Financial Freedom program is exactly the kind of community service United Way of San Diego believes in and supports. “It reaches out to people in true need of assistance,” he said, “and offers them concrete guidance that can make a lasting change in their lives. We are extremely pleased with the outcome of the first Second Chance Financial Freedom program.”

Silverman emphasized, “We can’t overstate our appreciation of the resources and support that United Way of San Diego County and Wells Fargo Bank have given to Second Chance and our STRIVE graduates. This is the kind of community responsibility that does make a difference in our lives.”

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Founded in 1993, Second Chance creates opportunities for self-sufficiency by providing job readiness training, employment placement, and affordable housing and life skills for homeless and unemployed men, women and youth. Visit Second Chance at secondchanceprogram.org.

United Way of San Diego County is a nonprofit organization that improves lives and creates lasting change by raising money and mobilizing the community to solve education, income and health issues. To learn more about the United Way or to donate, visit www.uwsd.org.

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