

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY- CSUSM REPORT

United States leaders are struggling with the challenge of prisoner reentry and reintegration into community life. The State of California is putting greater and greater emphasis on prisoner reentry and rehabilitation programs and has publicly called for an investment in prisoner re-entry strategies. Across California, which has the country's largest incarcerated population, 70% of released prisoners recidivate and are returned to prison. The Second Chance Prisoner Reentry Employment Program—"PREP"—synthesizes the key ingredients necessary for successful prisoner reintegration into the community. Designed to assist the inmate from the "moment of release" in order to minimize outside temptations and challenges that can result in negative behaviors. The combined program elements of PREP maximize the probability of successful reentry into the community. Because many of the agency's homeless clients had spent time in incarceration and had wound up on the street after years of struggling to become self-sufficient, and often after several return stints in jail or prison we created PREP and documented results. These results, if applied and replicated on a large scale, could dramatically reduce the size of California's prison population and impact the challenge of prisoner reentry across the country. PREP transforms persons who would otherwise be a drain on society into productive citizens who pay taxes, are part of the labor force and give back to their community. PREP began in the summer of 2003 and since that time the program has generated extraordinary results.

- A recently-released evaluation study by California State University San Marcos found that 70% of PREP graduates do not recidivate and successfully remain out of prison. As noted above, typically about 70% of released prisoners in California violate their parole and are re-incarcerated.
- From June 2003 to June 2006 Second Chance has graduated 315 former prisoners from the Prisoner Reentry Employment Program.
- About 82% of PREP program graduates find jobs after completing the program.
- The average starting wage of PREP graduates has been \$10.41 per hour, more than \$3.00/hour higher than California's minimum wage.
- Based on the historical success rates of our STRIVE job readiness program, at least 80% of PREP graduates that attain employment will retain their job, or be working in another job, after two years.
- The CSU San Marcos study also found that the percentage of participants who felt that "they were very or extremely prepared to find a job" more than doubled over the course of the program. Moreover the percentage of PREP clients with clinical levels of depression was reduced by over 50%.
- Second Chance estimates that the PREP initiative saves California taxpayers more than \$5 million per year, by preventing recidivism and re-incarceration among former prisoners served by the program.