

P.R.I.D.E. PROGRAM

*P*eople *R*eentering *I*nto *D*oing *E*ntrepreneurship

A course filled with information on how to go into business. It covers all areas such as Banking, Law, Insurance, Accounting, Marketing, Sales, Life Skills, Business Plan, Positive Mental Attitude & more. What makes it unique is that it is 60% business data & 40% Life lessons, taught by lecturers who are experts in their field. Each student is carefully guided into starting a business. Mentors help the students get through each session & also work with them after graduation. This guarantees that everyone who follows through will start a business.

I was inspired to start the course after a comment from DOC Commissioner Semple who said "We need to find more innovative ways to help released inmates get employed". I thought, why not employ themselves?

Students are selected based on their desire & commitment to follow through with this multi-subject course.

One of the most mentioned challenging aspects of the course is the Business Plan. It is a three session lecture & student participation session with completion due at graduation. It is lengthy & thought provoking. The student must deeply think about his/her business idea & prove it will work.

Some of the business ideas from students: Landscaping, Leather repair, Green product cleaning, Catering, Food truck, clothing designer, Painter, Rehab buildings, E-Bay selling, Floor finishing, General Contractor. Most of these businesses have already been started & students are earning a living.

This program which started at one location will now be taught at four sites: Bridgeport, New Haven, Hartford, Enfield(Cybulski Prison Reintegration Unit).

What is coming up? More training sites both in Connecticut & other states are on the drawing board as society looks for a better solution to our Reentry Survivors.

"Let's save the world one person at a time"