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Von Hagbrandt:

My name is Von Hagbrandt, and I am a welder fabricator for Titan Engineered Solutions. I have about 20 years experience in the welding industry as a fabricator. The last year before I got out of prison, I really started thinking, "What do I want to do when I get out of here?" And then, through the Second Chance Center, I found out about Titan.

Speaker 2:

Titan Engineered Solutions is a company that builds and manufactures custom items for mining copper.

Von Hagbrandt:

I met Dwayne, and he gave his presentation. Everything he was saying was just clicking in my head, "I do that. I do that. I've done that." During that presentation, I knew that I wanted to work for Titan.

Speaker 2:

And Titan was looking to hire people like Von.

Dwayne Gibson:

Von is one of our second chance employees.

Yeah, go ahead.

I was tasked with trying to change the way we hire people to where we get more long-term employees. So I first contacted DES, and the person said, "Hey, are you open to background-challenged individuals?" We're like, "Yes." From there, we've been in the Second Chance Program for two years.

Speaker 2:

The Second Chance Program is a joint initiative between the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry, and the Department of Economic Security to help reduce recidivism and prepare inmates for work.

Don Verrett:

Basically, my job is to get our clients, which is our inmates, ready to reenter the community by providing pro-social programming, so that is substance abuse, anger management, effective communication, de-escalation skills, money management. Along with the Department of Economic Security, they work with them regarding employment, how to write a resume, and how to advocate for themselves, how to tell the employer about their experience and move on and be a good employee for that company.

Dwayne Gibson:

How we get involved with all the employees, we go actually into the prisons and recruit. We also go to the parole offices that have job fairs. And then we also participate in the RED Program, which is a virtual way to present ourselves to the potential employees that are currently incarcerated. Von is an incredible worker. He's always challenging himself to do better and try to produce the best quality product he can produce.

Von Hagbrandt:

I think Dwayne's a good boss because he doesn't look at the people coming out of prison as criminals. He looks at them as guys that need another chance.

Dwayne Gibson:

We've got over 25% of our workforce from the Second Chance community, and we strongly believe in and continue to recruit and will continue to recruit.

Don Verrett:

Our goal is to keep your loved ones out, keep them from coming back to us. Arizona's recidivism rate is 32%. For all the Second Chance programs, we had under 10%, so we have a lot of successes with Second Chance.

Von Hagbrandt:

Everything has just been falling into place because of that preparation and planning. And meeting people like Dwayne and my sponsor and the people that I know in recovery, because everything's going so well, I don't want to lose that. I love what I do, and it makes me happy.

Speaker 2:

Hiring individuals who complete Arizona's Reentry Program can help you fill vacant positions with dependable workers. Visit bit.ly/AZReentryServices or email DESRReEntry@azdes.gov to get started.