

TULSA PROGRAM TO HELP INMATES FIND EMPLOYMENT AFTER PRISON



A Tulsa program, The Center for Employment Opportunities, has only been operating for several months but is making changes to a number of different people who are looking to turn their lives around, seeking employment after getting out of prison. A 39 year old man, Antonio Littlejohn, got out of prison during the fall and was hoping to find employment so that he could live life legally, helping to support his family and pay the bills that need to be paid. Littlejohn filled out tons of applications, in which he had to check the box that stated he was a felon, due to being incarcerated for drug convictions in two separate counties. He had to check the box but was hoping employers could see past this because he truly wanted to make a living and prove himself, showing how he has become a better man. However, with all of the applications he submitted, he never received a call back from any of those employers. Littlejohn found about the office in Tulsa, the organization that helps people find the employment they have been seeking while also providing training and skills to people who have recently come out of prison and are ready to turn their lives around, starting with getting a job. Some of the jobs that the organization is able to help people get who are coming out of prison include landscaping, beautification of neighborhoods, and cleanup of litter in and around different areas. After checking out the organization, they managed to help Littlejohn by giving him forklift operation training, and then helped him with finding a position in which he would work as a forklift operator. He is now working for the Metropolitan Environmental Trust recycling facility. Littlejohn is happy that people were finally there to help him, especially because he wanted to improve his life and do better for himself and his daughter, who is only 3 years old. He says he has never missed a day of work since and that he loves hearing his daughter talk about him being at work. The CEO of the organization, Mindy Tarlow, says that this is a great program to have and that it comes at the right time, especially with many people coming out of prison who are looking to turn their lives around but struggle to find the employment they need to get on their feet and support themselves and their families. Since its opening just a few months ago, the organization has helped 79 individuals find jobs in which they are paid for. It has also helped 38 of those individuals find full-time employment instead of just contractor work or part-time work. The organization is working to provide skills and training to help these individuals so that they can find employment and change for the better.

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