

EDUCATION IN PRISON

JULY 14, 2015, 7:00am: WATCHING GOOD MORNING AMERICA

BUON GIORNO (GOOD MORNING) EVERYONE. IT'S RAINING OUTSIDE RIGHT NOW SO I'LL PROBABLY BE STUCK INDOORS ALL DAY TODAY SO I MIGHT AS WELL GET SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE DONE. I HAVE A QUESTION FOR ANYONE & EVERYONE READING THIS. I ADVOCATE FOR EDUCATION. I AM A BELIEVER IN IT. I TRULY DO BELIEVE THAT IF YOU TEACH PEOPLE, IF YOU EDUCATE THEM, IF YOU SHOW THEM THE WAY, THEY WILL CHANGE & DO BETTER. THIS IS MY QUESTION:

DOES ANYONE KNOW OF ANY EDUCATIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, THAT ARE FREE, THAT A MAN OR WOMAN CAN USE IN PRISON?

LET ME CLARIFY THAT, MANY YEARS AGO PRISONERS IN MY STATE WERE ABLE TO OBTAIN PELL GRANTS & GO TO COLLEGE FOR FREE. THEY WERE ABLE TO WORK FOR YEARS & GRADUATE & GET VARIOUS DEGREES IN THE FIELDS THEY STUDIED. MY BUDDY JIMMY IS A TEACHERS AIDE IN HERE. THIS MEANS HE IS SUPPOSED TO HELP OTHER INMATES WITH THEIR WORK, ANSWER QUESTIONS, & HELP THE TEACHER GRADE THE PAPERS. YOU KNOW WHAT THE PROBLEM IS? JIMMY CAN'T READ. HOW ON EARTH DID HE GET THIS JOB? WE'RE STILL BAFFLED. WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR JOBS. MEANING, ARE THERE ANY FREE MAIL ORDER COMPANIES THAT OFFER YOU THE CHANCE TO FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION FOR SOMETHING LIKE ROOFING, PLUMBING, ANY TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION. SO MANY PRISONERS LEAVE HERE WITHOUT AN EDUCATION, NO JOB SKILLS, & THEY ARE EXPECTED TO GO OUT INTO SOCIETY & PICK UP WHERE THEY LEFT OFF AT & THAT JUST DOESN'T WORK. I'VE KNOWN SO MANY MEN WHO WENT HOME ONLY TO RETURN BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO JOB SKILLS. I HAVE NO EDUCATION. I HAVE A G.E.D. THAT I EARNED IN 1997. BUT OTHER THEN THAT, NOTHING. IN PA PRISONS, YOU CAN GO TO SCHOOL BUT ONLY TO EARN A G.E.D. AFTER THAT, YOU'RE DONE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE MONEY TO PAY FOR COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSES ON YOUR OWN.

NOW MOVING ON TO JOB SKILLS. IF I WERE LET OUT OF PRISON TODAY, I HAVE NO JOB SKILLS. I HAVE WORKED IN WAREHOUSES DOING HEAVY LIFTING & BOXING STUFF UP. I STARTED TO LEARN HOW TO BE A ROOFER BUT THEN I CAME HERE. IN PA PRISONS WE ARE NOT TAUGHT ANY JOB SKILLS. IF YOU WORK IN THE KITCHEN, AFTER A FEW YEARS, YOU WILL LEARN HOW TO COOK FOOD FOR 1-2,000 PEOPLE. THAT COULD BE USEFUL. THE PLUMBING SYSTEM HERE IS SO ANCIENT, IT'S NOT USED IN THE OUTSIDE. THE ONLY REAL JOB SKILL HERE IS IF YOU ARE ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES CHOSEN TO BECOME A WELDER. THEY EVEN STOPPED THE BARBER SHOP PROGRAM. THATS A SKILL THAT ONE COULD USE FOR A LIFETIME. BUT THEY DECIDED TO STOP LETTING PRISONERS GET A BARBER LICENSE.

I WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE TO BETTER MYSELF. I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE. & SO WOULD SO MANY OTHER PRISONERS. BETWEEN EDUCATION & JOB SKILLS, WE WANT TO LEARN MORE. WE GET PAID 19¢ PENNIES AN HOUR, 4 HOURS PER DAY, TO WORK IN HERE. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO PAY FOR THIS. SO IF ANYONE HAS ANY IDEAS, OR KNOWS OF ANY PLACES I CAN CONTACT, PLEASE SEND ME THE INFORMATION. I THANK YOU ALL FOR READING, TAKE CARE, I HOPE SOMEONE HAS SOME INFO FOR ME. WE WANT TO LEARN & BECOME BETTER PEOPLE, WE JUST NEED SOME HELP. GOD BLESS, CIAO.