

SECOND CHANCES



The newsletter of Second Chance Employment Services

BUILDING STRONGER GENERATIONS FOR AT-RISK WOMEN

From Poverty to Providing for Her Family - One Second Chance Client Shares Her Story

by Pamela Johnson

When I first married, my life was wonderful. My husband and I were blissfully happy, and I had a great career as an accountant. We wanted children, but we wanted to wait until the right time. Both my husband and I wanted a stay-at-home parent while the kids were young, which meant I would take a break in my career to raise our family.

Things changed when our first child arrived. When I was no longer contributing a paycheck, my husband mysteriously began holding this against me. He started calling me a “leech” and a “liability.” Despite these signs of abuse, we had another child, and I continued to stay home. I knew I wasn’t doing anything wrong, I knew I was a good mother, and I hoped he would change. So I focused on the love of my children.

Ignoring the abuse didn’t make it stop. After our second child, I was living with a man who controlled my every move. He controlled our money, and I had to beg to buy groceries or clothes for the children. I no longer asked for anything for myself.

By the time our third child arrived, I knew I was living with domestic abuse—emotional, financial, and physical. I had lost all independence, and my livelihood—and that of my children—was in the hands of a man who acted like he despised me. I wanted to leave, but with no job or savings—and with everything in my husband’s name—I couldn’t see a way



Pamela Johnson

out that didn’t mean poverty. I remained a prisoner.

Then one day my son fell ill. He was running a fever and needed medical attention. I went to my husband and asked for the money to go to a doctor. He refused. I begged him. He still refused. I took my son to the doctor anyway, only to discover I didn’t even have the \$10 co-pay for the visit.

Sitting in that doctor’s waiting room, I knew it was time to leave. Before Second Chance, I was living in poverty with three children to support. Today, I’m an accountant again! Of all that Second Chance did to help me rebuild my life, for me, the most important was that they provided the money to pay a deposit for day- **continued on Page 3**

Second Chances in The Big Apple

by Regina Varolli

After five years serving communities in the Washington-Metro area, Second Chance now has the opportunity to serve the communities of Manhattan and the outer New York City boroughs. This was made possible thanks to the generosity of Georgette Mosbacher and her company, Borghese Inc.

Georgette and Borghese have long

been involved in the struggle to end domestic violence and poverty. One of the few companies to have a policy on domestic violence, Borghese remains out in front, on the leading edge of corporate responsibility, conscience, and giving. Her latest contribution to this fight, and to Second Chance specifically, was the incredible donation of office space within the headquarters of Borghese.

For those of you who attended The Last Kiss 2006, you’ll remember Georgette for her moving speech (and her contribution of Borghese cosmetics in the gift bags). Now we hope you will remember her as an enormous benefactor of Second Chance, making it possible for us to bring our work to a new state, and to thousands of women we previously couldn’t serve. With our long-term goal of **continued on Page 2**

Second Chance Employment Services is excited to be a part of the **Combined Federal Campaign** for the **fifth** consecutive year. By **designating Second Chance** as your CFC charity, you’ll be making an important contribution towards **eradicating domestic violence**. **CFC Designation # 7557**

“No one has ever become p

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Vivacious Volunteerism by Allison Mulhearn

On my first day volunteering for Second Chance Employment Services, I was nervous and didn't know what to expect. As a student volunteer I had no idea that I would be able to directly affect the women being helped by Second Chance, but when I arrived on my very first day, I met my first client. She was a woman in her mid-fifties who came from My Sister's Place shelter, and she was the mother of two girls. A victim of domestic violence who had abused drugs and alcohol, her outlook on life was utterly hopeless. She believed her future was bleak, and that success — at her age and under her circumstances — was simply impossible.

During our first meeting we reviewed her résumé together and were able to accent her skills and work experience. I was able to connect her with partner organizations in order to fulfill her needs and boost her self-confidence. She visited Suited for Change in preparation for the dress code demands of an office setting, and Cristophe Salon donated services to complete her new professional appearance. We worked together to sign her up for various work-

shops such as computer training with our partner Computer Consulting Corporation. Then we sent out her résumé to a few Second Chance job partners to begin the résumé revision and job search processes.

Just a few weeks later, my first client began receiving phone calls about job opportunities that were a match for her. I saw her light up as her confidence grew and she gained some hope and optimism about her future. What Second Chance provides for so many women like my first client is more than just job placement, it's a starting point for these women to build a new life safe from domestic violence, financial insecurity, and fear.

In my experience I have seen Second Chance provide hope, opportunity, and possibilities for many women of all ages and circumstances. Seeing my client smile and express hope for the first time in a long time solidified the mission of Second Chance for me. I knew then that being a Second Chance volunteer did allow me to directly affect clients, and not only that, it allowed me to share in their joy and triumphs. ■

“An independent source of income is the single most significant indicator that a woman will be able to permanently leave an abuser.”

- Voices of Survival: The Economic Impacts of Domestic Violence, a Blueprint for Action, by Janet Fender, Laurie Holmes, and Sarah Levy in conjunction with The Economic Stability Working Group of the Transition Subcommittee of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2002.

Varolli cover story continued...

taking Second Chance to the national level, Georgette's contribution of office space in midtown Manhattan is the first big step towards this goal.

Going national isn't all easy going. While the rent is free thanks to Georgette, the services we offer are not. Financial contributions earmarked for the NYC office, willing volunteers, and ever more job partners are needed to ensure this new location can and will

serve the women who need it. Please help us to make our NYC office as big of a success in helping victims of domestic abuse as our D.C.

office has been. Georgette and Borghese Inc. have given us our start! Will you help us to the finish? ■



Georgette Mosbacher

Honoring Those Who Bring Honor to Victims

Second Chance Receives Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services by Regina Varolli

Each year during National Crime Victims' Rights Week, the U.S. Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) recognizes individuals and organizations that “demonstrate outstanding service in supporting victims and victim services” across America. Among the several categories of awards are the: Volunteer for Victims Award, Crime Victims Fund Award, Special Courage Award, and the Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services.



Dr. Ludy Green receives the OVC Award on behalf of everyone at Second Chance.

original,” and on services that are “new or nontraditional.”

With so many qualified nominees, the OVC has a wealth of organizations and individuals from which to choose, which is why it is such an honor for Second Chance to be tapped for an award—specifically for the Award for Professional

Innovation in Victim Services. We at Second Chance have known since the beginning that our mission was innovative and unique, and we’re still the only organization that provides free job placement services to victims of domestic violence.

We are deeply honored by the recognition the OVC has given our work, and we appreciate the fact that, without the support of our donors, job partners and volunteers, we wouldn’t have made it so far in helping so many victims. ■

We are proud to announce that in 2007, Second Chance received the Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services. Instituted in 2001, this award “recognizes a program, organization, or individual who has helped to expand the reach of victims’ rights and services.” The award focuses on programs that are “unique and

Our Clients Need Your Support

As a 501(c)(3) organization, all donations made to Second Chance are 100% tax deductible. As an all volunteer organization, **100% of your donation goes straight into programs and services** that rebuild the shattered lives of women and children who have suffered domestic violence.

Please consider making a contribution to Second Chance today!

Johnson cover story continued...

care. They got me a job, but with no daycare, and no money to pay the deposit, I couldn’t work. It was a Catch-22, but Second Chance paid the deposit, making it possible for me to support my kids.

My ability to provide for my three children means everything to me. I can give to my family, save for the future,

and never worry about being a victim. I want all of you to know that I truly could not have accomplished this without Second Chance. I ask from my heart, and from the hearts of my children, please continue your support for their work. Financial independence is the key to never going back to abuse, and Second Chance gives all their clients that key! ■

THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The combination of **poverty** and **violence** creates particular difficulties for women’s well-being and ability to achieve **self-sufficiency**.

The evidence of **abusive partner interference** with women’s efforts to obtain **education**, training, or **employment**, and to sustain these efforts over time... has been disturbingly high.

Women consistently cite transportation, **child care**, and **job skills** as their **major obstacles (to work)**.

- From “Welfare and Domestic Violence Against Women: Lessons from Research,” Eleanor Lyon. National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, VAWnet.

Research studies clearly document that **children are affected by domestic violence** and that, not infrequently, child maltreatment and spouse abuse occur in the same families.

Children in violent homes face three risks: the **risk of observing traumatic events**, the **risk of being abused** themselves, and the **risk of being neglected**.

- From the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, www.childwelfare.gov

“Thank You Second Chance!” by Keisha

A client expresses her gratitude to the Supporters of Second Chance

I appreciate having this opportunity to thank all of you who support Second Chance, and to say that your help saved me and my children from a life of abuse and poverty.

Like most Second Chance clients, I was a victim of domestic violence. After years of abuse, I suffered a nervous breakdown. When I was released from the hospital, I was determined not to go back, so I lived in a shelter with my two children. I was on welfare, fighting for my mental and physical health, praying to keep my kids, and wondering if I'd ever be able to find a job. I felt completely hopeless.

Then I was referred to Second Chance. Without judging me, the people at Second Chance were there for me in ways no one else was. They helped me every step of the way, with childcare, transportation, training, and most especially with their continuous moral support. Through their job partners they opened a door for me to opportunities I wouldn't have had otherwise.

If it weren't for Second Chance, I would still be on welfare, living in a shelter. Instead, I'm back in the workforce as a medical technician for George Washington University Hospital. I am able to provide for my family with a job that strengthens my skills and makes me a role model for my children.

My children and I want to thank all of you for giving us a second chance at life by giving generously to Second Chance. Please continue your support so they can continue their support for women like me. ■

Visit our **UPDATED** website.
www.scesnet.org

Contact us by phone.
202-331-7451
1-888-331-7451

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Your **tax-deductible contributions** are greatly appreciated! Now you can **donate online** at our website and through **The Catalogue for Philanthropy**.
- Second Chance accepts **donations of stocks and bonds** through Smith Barney; please contact Paula Heichel at 202-861-5018 for more information.
- As an **all-volunteer organization**, we value people who give their time! Currently, we have a special need for: **Human Resource professionals** to help with training and job placement; volunteers to **provide transportation** to and from job interviews; and women to **mentor** our clients. Please contact us to inquire about important ways you can **help with your time**.
- Companies can help by providing all-important **employment opportunities** to our pre-screened and trained clients. Please contact us for details on becoming a life-saving **Second Chance Job Partner**.
- Designate Second Chance as your **CFC** charity! **CFC# 7557**

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