

# Recidivism & Education

55%

Return offenders with a  
**High-School Diploma**

13%

Return offenders with an  
**Associates Degree**

0%

Return offenders with a  
**Masters Degree**

## Prison Education Reduces Recidivism

**Higher education** significantly reduces the likelihood of formerly incarcerated individuals returning to prison. Many community colleges participate in **Second Chance Pell**, which provides financial aid to those seeking a **fresh start through education**. Since 2016, over **45,000 students have enrolled** in this program and **earned over 18,000 credentials**.



Of the 6,000 students who took part in **Second Chance Pell** in 2023, **67% earned industry certificates**, empowering them with specialized skills. Meanwhile, **27% achieved associate degrees**, and an inspiring **5% graduated with bachelor's degrees**, showcasing the program's **diverse impact on educational advancement**. James Elliott is a prime example of Second Chance Pell in action. After graduating with an Associate's Degree from Delaware Technical Community College, James graduated with honors from Columbia University.

**Second Chance Pell** is a dynamic collaboration, currently involving **163 colleges** and over **200 prisons, spanning 49 states**. This nationwide initiative is **bridging the gap** between education and opportunity for thousands of individuals. Since graduating from Columbia University, James Elliott interned for U.S. Senator Chris Coons and is currently applying for law school.

Source: Vera Institute  
[https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/The-First-Year-of-Pell-Restoration\\_Report.pdf](https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/The-First-Year-of-Pell-Restoration_Report.pdf)