Houston Civil Rights Advocate Joseph Baker Launches National Recidivism, Recovery Voting Rights Initiative

Formerly incarcerated leader and four-time Purdue University Global graduate expands his message of education, recovery, accountability, and second chances.

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Civil rights advocate, educator, and four-time Purdue University Global graduate Joseph Baker today announced a national recidivism and recovery initiative designed to help formerly incarcerated individuals rebuild their lives through education, personal accountability, addiction recovery, and community-based support.

> My own journey proves that when returning citizens regain their voice, they rebuild their lives and strengthen their communities."
>
> *Joseph Baker, Chancellor, NCRRRI*

Baker's message comes from lived experience. More than 33 years ago, he faced the possibility of 45 years in an Arkansas prison while battling a severe crack cocaine addiction. Over time, he turned to education, discipline, and personal renewal, transforming destructive patterns into a practical roadmap for long-term change.

In 2006, at age 35, Baker completed a 105-day prison boot camp program in Arkansas and earned his GED. Baker's commitment to education began with a single courageous decision.

"It was in September 2014, said Baker - when I decided to take a bold step and contact a college for admission with a felony record, because I was told by others it was not possible. That phone call changed my life as I found warm voices on the other side ready to grant me access to education. That was Kaplan University—now Purdue University Global. That was 12 years ago."

This moment became the turning point that transformed his future and now fuels his national advocacy. By 2026, at age 55, he had earned four degrees from Purdue University Global. He also founded Texas Tenants Benefits Services, a paralegal firm where he serves as an authorized agent for tenants facing eviction. Through that work, Baker has assisted tenants in more than 9,000 eviction-related matters and guided more than 40,000 individuals throughout Texas.

Initiative Focus

This initiative directly aligns with national reentry priorities. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, “82% of persons released from state prisons in 2008 were arrested at least once during the 10 years following release” and “about 6 in 10 had returned to prison within 10 years” . Baker’s expansion of vocational and educational programming supports the federal Second Chance Act, the U.S. Department of Justice’s $216 million investment in reentry, crisis response, and behavioral health treatment, and the national Reentry 2030 movement focused on improving housing, health care, and employment outcomes for returning citizens.



Joseph Baker, Founder NCRRRI

“Recidivism reform begins with mindset,” said Baker. “Education, discipline, and personal accountability changed my life. I want others to know that their past does not have to determine their future.”

As a speaker and advocate, Baker addresses the challenges of criminal justice involvement, addiction recovery, mental health, educational access, housing instability, civic engagement, and the struggle to be understood after incarceration, along with political and economic disenfranchisement. His work emphasizes practical decision-making, resilience, and the belief that people can rebuild their lives when given the right tools and support.

Availability

Baker is available for:

- Keynote speeches
- School engagements
- Reentry and recovery programs
- Faith-based events
- Civic and legal literacy workshops
- Media interviews and documentary features

Booking & Media Contact

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