



PRESS RELEASE

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LIFE UNIVERSITY TO LAUNCH THE CHILLON PROJECT, A DEGREE-GRANTING PROGRAM IN GEORGIA'S PRISON SYSTEM —Dalai Lama Pens Letter Commending Life University's Efforts to Impact Positive Social Change

Marietta, Georgia, February 8, 2016 – Life University (LIFE) is proud to announce The Chillon Project, a degree-granting program for incarcerated students and correctional staff in the Georgia prison system – the only program of its kind offered by a college or university based in the state of Georgia since 1994.

"We are ecstatic about seeing the partnership between the Georgia Department of Corrections and Life University move to the next level," says Dr. L.C. "Buster" Evans, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services at the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC). "The administration and faculty from Life University have been proactive leaders in helping to advance educational opportunities for both officers as well as inmates who recognize that their future success is tied to educational accomplishment."

The Chillon Project is an undertaking of LIFE's Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics (CCISE) together with the Georgia Department of Corrections to introduce degree programs in Georgia's correctional facilities. It will be one of a handful of such programs in the entire Southeast. An innovative feature of The Chillon Project is the inclusion of scholarships for correctional officers employed by the GDC, as well as their family members, to also have increased access to higher education at Life University.

"Education in prisons transforms lives and communities by showing that incarcerated persons are first and foremost human beings with the same potential as anyone else to help themselves and others if only given the opportunity," says Brendan Ozawa-de Silva, PhD, program director of The Chillon Project and associate professor of psychology at LIFE. "Higher education is the only effective way to drastically reduce recidivism, and incarcerated persons who earn a Bachelor's degree while in prison have recidivism rates of less than 3 percent, compared to rates of up to 70 percent for the general population."

Guy F. Riekeman, D.C., President of Life University, and Dr. Ozawa-de Silva have shared LIFE's unique curriculum plans and initiatives such as The Chillon Project with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. At the end of December 2015, they received a **letter from the Dalai Lama commending LIFE's commitment to positive social change**. "As someone who believes strongly in the possibility and potential of



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individuals to change, I feel that the focus of a society's justice system should always be on rehabilitation rather than punishment," writes the Dalai Lama. "I therefore support initiatives that provide prisoners with opportunities to pursue education and personal development and in doing so benefit society as well. I am delighted to hear that Life University and its Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics, through a program they call 'The Chillon Project,' has now developed a degree program for people imprisoned in the state of Georgia."

Pending approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), The Chillon Project will offer an Associate of Arts degree in Positive Human Development and Social Change, with the plan to expand this after three years to also offer a Bachelor of Arts degree in Positive Human Development and Social Change. The Bachelor's will be debuted for LIFE students on the University's Marietta campus as well.

The curriculum, based on the concept of secular ethics, is a rigorous interdisciplinary degree focused on providing the skills and knowledge necessary for creating positive and sustainable social change. It includes coursework in positive psychology, business and social entrepreneurship, peace studies and other disciplines. It also includes lab components for the cultivation of inner values, emotional and social intelligence, and contemplative practice.

Named for Lord Byron's poem "The Prisoner of Chillon" – a poem often cited by Life University's founder, Dr. Sid E. Williams – The Chillon Project will enroll 15 incarcerated students at the Lee Arrendale State Prison in Alto, Georgia during its initial year, and, additionally, Life University will provide scholarships to 15 Lee Arrendale State Prison correctional staff or their family members. Enrollment will increase in subsequent years, and the program will be opened to incarcerated women throughout the state. Life University, which operates on a quarter system, anticipates launching the program officially in the spring or summer quarter of 2016.

With the tagline "the not-so-little University that is changing the world," Life University aims to impact social change with innovative initiatives such as The Chillon Project. "We are convinced that there is a better way to handle incarceration, and are grateful to the GDC and to Governor Deal for this opportunity," says Dr. Riekeman, President of Life University. "Our hope is that what we are doing in Georgia and at Life University will become a model for other states and universities to follow."



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LIFE's Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics (CCISE) is dedicated to developing and promoting empirically-based programs that foster the human values most conducive to individual, social and environmental flourishing through research, dialogue, education and community empowerment. To learn more about the CCISE and initiatives like The Chillon Project, visit <http://www.LIFE.edu/CCISE>.

About Life University

Founded in Marietta, Georgia in 1974, Life University is a health sciences institution most known for its chiropractic program, the largest in the world. Life University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees, and also has programmatic accreditation through the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The mission of Life University is to empower students with the education, skills and values necessary for career success and life fulfillment, based on a vitalistic philosophy.