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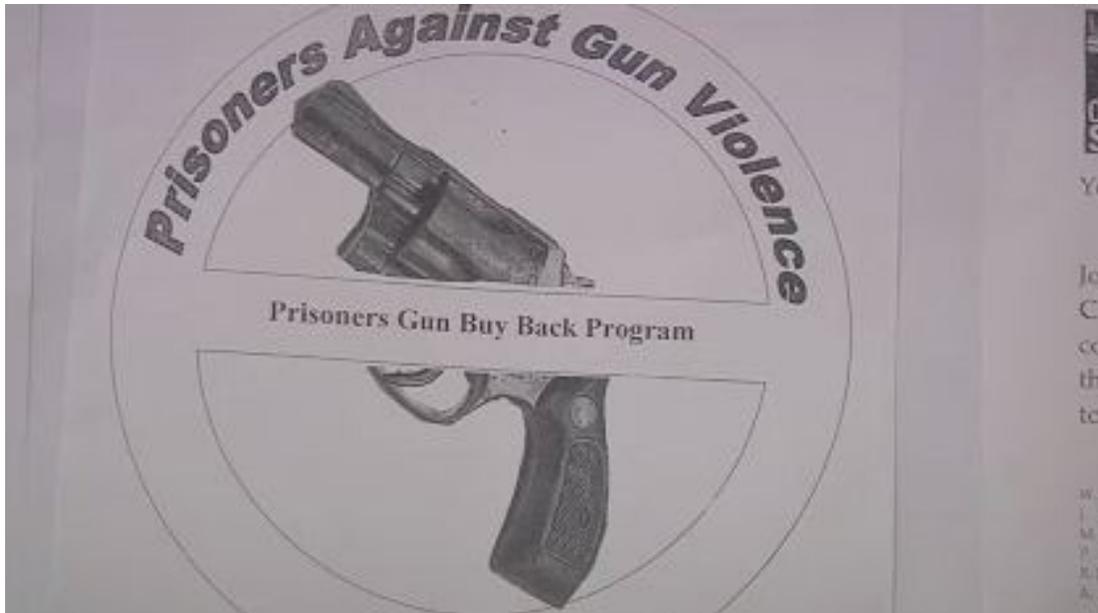
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# Inmates raise money for gun buyback program

By: Venise Toussaint

*Inmates at the Otisville Correctional Facility in Orange County raised money to get guns off the streets. As YNN's Venise Toussaint tells us, it's part of an inmate organized Prisoners Gun Buyback program helping to prevent gun violence in our communities.*



ORANGE COUNTY, N.Y. -- "It hurts," said Jackie Row-Adams of Harlem Mothers SAVE. "It hurts."

The headlines paint a grim, devastating picture of gun violence in America. Violence that leaves mothers like Jackie Row-Adams, whose two sons were gunned down, searching for ways to keep other children from sharing the same fate.

Row-Adams said, "Take back our community, take back our kids and say put those guns down."

Row-Adams is one of several guest speakers at the inmate organized prisoners against gun violence seminar at the Otisville Correctional Facility.

"They've done it. They've been there. They have remorse for their crimes and they want to help," said Iesha Sekaur of Street Corner Resources.

The seminar is an educational forum for inmates to hear from community activists and an opportunity for them to present a \$1,000 check to Pastor Charlie Muller of the Victory Christian Church in Albany for his gun buyback program.

"I realize that what I have done has had a major affect on my life, my kids and the community that I came from," said Winston black, Prisoners Gun Buyback organizer.

"So I've decided within myself to make that change and do something that's meaningful for the community, for myself, for my family," said Marc Johnson, Prisoners Guy Buyback organizer.

The inmates have been raising money, while behind bars, to get guns off the streets. Their Prisoners Gun Buyback Program was launched after reading about Muller's program, which has taken more than 400 guns out of communities across the state.

Muller said, "It's just really an awesome thing. All the praise goes to these prisoners because they're getting together and they're bringing forth a message let's do all, that we cannot only to get guns off the streets, but to have other educational programs to help other kids."

Gun violence has continued to be an epidemic in communities throughout the nation, killing thousands each year. Inmates here say their program is about self reflection, learning from their past mistakes in order to prevent others from going down the same path.

Johnson said, "We were the ones that helped put our communities in disarray. We were there. We know what needs to be done, so it's up to us to make that conscious choice to go back and do that."

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