

**STRIVE AND RUSH PHILANTHROPIC ARTS FOUNDATION  
CREATE SCHOLARSHIP FOR PEOPLE IMPRISONED UNDER  
NEW YORK STATE'S ROCKEFELLER DRUG LAWS**

*Simmons Brothers Art Scholarship To Be Awarded Annually  
To A Prisoner Who Wants To Study Art At A CUNY School*

**NEW YORK CITY** – STRIVE, the national non-profit employment, training and job placement organization based in East Harlem, and Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation have joined forces to create a scholarship for anyone who has been incarcerated under New York State's Rockefeller Drug Laws.

The Simmons Brothers Art Scholarship honors the efforts of Danny Simmons (who was convicted under the Rockefeller Drug Laws) to help those who have already been affected by the laws, and the struggle of his brother Russell who is fighting to get the laws repealed.

The Simmons Brothers Art Scholarship is an annual scholarship that will be given to any candidate interested in the arts. The scholarship will provide for a City University of New York (CUNY) education and will be awarded through a competitive process. The scholarship will help those affected by the Rockefeller Drug Laws realize their dreams of attending college and graduating with a baccalaureate degree.

STRIVE's constant challenge of finding jobs for ex-offenders who are mandated by the courts to attend the organization's program and Danny's personal history, prompted the two organizations to come together to give ex-offenders affected by the Rockefeller laws a second chance in life.

"It has been proven that education, or lack thereof, can be the deciding factor in

whether or not an individual succeeds outside of the prison system,” said Rob Carmona, president and CEO of STRIVE. Mr. Carmona is currently fighting to reinstate higher education in the New York State prison systems, which was eliminated in 1995. “This holiday season Danny Simmons and Rush Philanthropic have given the greatest gift of all – education. The Simmons Brothers Art Scholarship will offer this unique set of ex-offenders the opportunity to make their second chance in life a genuine success.”

“Education played a crucial role in helping me defeat the stigma of being an ex-offender – especially one who was convicted under the Rockefeller Drug Laws,” said Danny Simmons, cofounder of Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation. Mr. Simmons earned a Bachelor’s degree from New York University. “This scholarship ensures that at least one person every year will have the opportunity to shed this same stigma that I have had to endure.”

STRIVE is committed to the marketing of the scholarship. Additionally, upon graduation, the East Harlem organization will provide each recipient with job training and placement services. Rush Philanthropic will fund the scholarship and a panel from both organizations will be formed to determine the awarding of the scholarship.

STRIVE is an East Harlem based non-profit job training and placement agency that specializes in assisting the hard-to-employ. The organization has branches in 20 cities across the United States and a branch in London, England.

The core feature of STRIVE’s curriculum is a one-month job readiness program that emphasizes a positive attitude, accountability, responsibility, personal growth and a two year follow-up. STRIVE is committed to transforming anyone who has had difficulty maintaining or obtaining employment into a work-ready individual. Additional

information about the organization can be obtained at [www.strivenational.org](http://www.strivenational.org) or by calling (212) 360-1100.