

Franchise Owner Case Study!

Name: Jerry Bland
Number of Units Owned: 1
Year of First Opening: 2017

Franchise Locations:
- Raleigh, North Carolina

Jerry Bland is an award-winning AtWork franchisee who has turned his dream of business ownership into a passion for helping others and giving back to his community. Jerry had a successful sales career and leveraged his ability to help businesses into a thriving AtWork staffing office serving the Raleigh area.

Jerry has been a leader in the AtWork system and has many consecutive years as a Silver sales award winner. He quickly found that there was so much more to staffing than simply helping companies fill key roles.

Jerry found a true passion for partnering with area organizations and providing second chances to many in the community who otherwise would not have success in finding meaningful work. "We regularly work with second chance candidates on connecting them with work opportunities allowing them the ability to transform their lives. These needed opportunities allow the employees to free themselves from a life of crime and hardship, to find purpose and to become productive members of our community," says Bland. Jerry and his team have helped hundreds of second chance candidates with criminal backgrounds to turn their lives around.

Jerry and his team have worked with Interact of Wake County for the past five and a half years as their employment partner. The AtWork team helps to find work for domestic violence victims to support them on their journey towards independence and a life free of violence.

The team also works with Sober Living of America and have put more than 120 people to work over the last three years who are going through alcohol and substance treatment. "We are passionate about helping provide a supportive environment and meaningful work as they work to turn their lives around," says Bland.

One person impacted by Jerry's passion for changing lives is Tracy Thompson. At 17, Thompson found himself caught in a cycle of addiction, leading to a life of crime that resulted in three prison sentences. Determined to turn his life around, Thompson walked into AtWork Raleigh, seeking employment and a chance to redefine his identity. "Tracy was authentic and honest with me about his situation. His commitment to changing his life was evident," said Bland. "I knew he was someone I could take a chance on, and I am so proud of what he's done since."

Bland found Thompson a job in the manufacturing industry that was the perfect fit. He quickly adapted to his new role, demonstrating a remarkable initiative that did not go unnoticed. From learning new skills to voluntarily taking on additional responsibilities, Thompson's journey from a halfway house to a full-time position with the company, complete with a 15% pay raise, full benefits, and profit sharing, is a powerful example of resilience and redemption.

"Seeing someone like Tracy transform his life with a little guidance and opportunity is exactly why I chose to open AtWork Raleigh. It's about more than filling job positions; it's about changing lives and rebuilding communities," said Bland.

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