

In a nutshell

Second Chance is an initiative that helps international students around the world access top higher education institutions with a full scholarship, at the end of the enrollment cycle.

Our mission is to support students of exceptional talent in leading lives of incredible impact, through the pathway of higher education.

What we do

Second Chance works with exceptionally talented, low income international students who apply to the US, who find themselves without a viable admissions and financial aid offer by April 1. (The date by which many US universities have released decisions to applicants).

Many international students apply only to US universities and colleges that they have heard of. They have never been guided towards other opportunities in and beyond the US. Second Chance introduces these students to new higher education institutions, and supports them through a new set of applications. We have successfully supported talented students to apply to universities in the US, Canada, Germany, Italy, Hong Kong, Qatar, and South Korea.

From 2018-2024, SC successfully supported, mentored, and placed 168 international students at new universities with a full or near-full scholarship, *after* April 1st.

When SC students get a chance to go to a new institution, they see this as a once-in-a-lifetime, destiny-bending opportunity. Because that institution becomes the lifeline that saves their future.

Why Universities Partner with Second Chance

- **Outstanding students:** Second Chance works with a global pool of outstanding, internationally competitive students.
- **Diversify your campus:** Establish pipelines to hard-to-reach markets, such as S America, MENA, and Africa.
- **Manage enrollment towards the end of the cycle,** when finalizing the class (thus adding nationalities important to the global nature of your class).
- **Extreme Vetting:** Second Chance works with NGOs and orgs who vet students, and we select SC students from these partners, and we double-vet these students before they apply to your institution.
- **Application support:** We introduce students to your institution. We mentor, guide, and support them. We offer pre-application and post-application support.
- **Mitigate risk:** Second Chance students have been issued visas with no problems.
- **Save time:** Instead of spending 9 months finding and recruiting students and worrying about yield, just yield incredible students in 9 days instead.
- **Yield:** Students must take the first offer that is financially viable for them. Second Chance partner institutions therefore have an extremely high chance of yielding them.
- **Marketing:** Students often share their experiences with their local communities. For example, see Michael Obeng's testimonial, "Scholarships in Hong Kong, Up Close with NMSQ's Finalist Michael Obeng," has 21,000 views. Michael is from Ghana and is one of the first Ghanaian students studying at a top university in Hong Kong.

Why We Do It

Second Chance is an access program for first gen, high achieving international students seeking access to tertiary education; economic opportunity; and social and global mobility.

We don't like leaving talent on the table. We think great minds should be at great schools.

This program is free for students. (There is a membership fee for institutional partners.)

The Founder



Joan Liu has been a counselor for the past 24 years, serving in college counseling roles at six schools in the US, UK, Turkey, and Singapore. She has been building Second Chance over the past six years.

Most recently, she was a university advisor at United World College of SE Asia in Singapore. She served as International ACAC's first Inclusion and Access Chair, founding the Scholar Program, which has trained over 70 counselors from the Global South.

Joan is known for her work in 2018, when she mobilized a team of colleagues to support 60 Nepali students who had lost their scholarships from a university in Texas, USA. She and her team re-seated all of the students at universities in the US, Canada, Middle East, and East Asia, with 10+ million in financial aid and scholarships, and raised 180K in gap funding - after the US cycle had finished that year. That experience led to Joan deciding to launch Second Chance to support talented students needing support in accessing higher education.

In 2017, Joan was awarded the Distinguished Service Award at the International Association for College Admission Counseling. In 2018, Joan was awarded the Peggy Templeton Award from the Council of International Schools. In 2021, she and the Nepal Justice League team were awarded the Joyce E Smith Award from the National Association for College Admission Counseling, an award given to those who "have improved the field of education and the way students are served". She serves on the advisory boards of multiple education technology firms: Duolingo, Concourse Match, and METO. In 2022, Joan served on the President's Alliance for Higher Education and Immigration Pathways for Refugees Task Force.

Contact

For a discussion about partnering with Second Chance, email joan@secondchance.global



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