







To empower individuals to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through employment.



Towards Employment is a proven leader in workforce development that connects people to careers, which changes people's lives, advances businesses, and strengthens community in Northeast Ohio.

We helped 562 people find good jobs.



562 PEOPLE found good jobs; 335 of those had criminal backgrounds



JOB RETENTION WAS 94% at 30 days; 76% at 90 days; and 68% at 180 days



265 PEOPLE increased skills via internships or technical training



\$10,46 AN HOUR was the average starting wage



134 PEOPLE advanced on the job with an average wage increase of over \$2/hour



300 EMPLOYERS hired TE graduates



helped overcome employment barriers like transportation, tools, uniforms, background checks and pre-employment screening



1,245 LEGAL SERVICES were offered for credit, housing and other issues



LETTER FROM BOARD PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Towards Employment has always focused on connecting people who need good jobs with companies who need good workers.

We do this using a Career Pathways model with comprehensive support services to help people move out of poverty. In 2017, we enhanced this model based on what we learned in a rigorously evaluated national pilot, WorkAdvance.

This year, we, along with our partners, disseminated a report with the results of WorkAdvance and began to focus on implementing our learnings to grow and scale our model. During the five-year implementation, WorkAdvance proved that by providing the right service at the right time and with the support of a career coach and wraparound services, participants had higher earnings and were more likely to advance in their careers than a control group. Through WorkAdvance we have developed unique capabilities to help those "left behind" to obtain the skills, experience and confidence to respond to our local employer needs. We now have strong evidence that this model works. In response to community awareness of the need to create better on ramps to in-demand jobs, WorkAdvance offers a proven, scaleable model.

2017 was a successful year of expanding our reach deeper and more broadly in the community. Our partnerships with employers such as University Hospitals and the Downtown Hilton grew, hiring graduates like Loretta whose story you will read about in this report. And we strengthened our community partnerships to be able to provide more supports like parenting skills and stronger financial coaching as part of a better aligned and easily navigated career pathway for people.

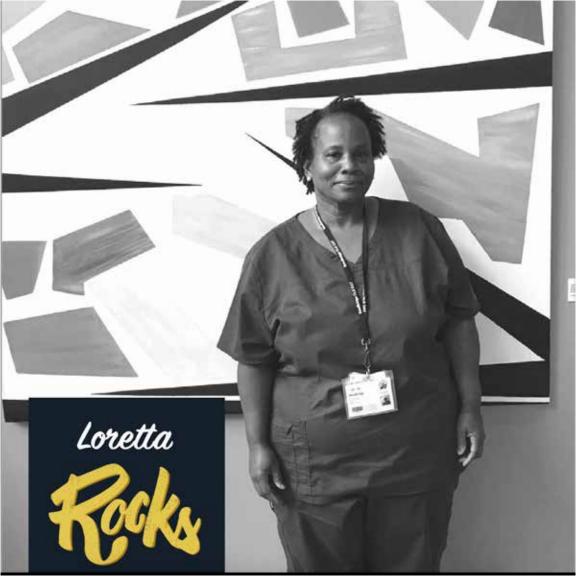
Bloom Bakery, a Towards Employment social enterprise, completed its first full year of operations in 2017, and expanded its catering and wholesale business while continuing to provide breakfast and lunch service at two downtown locations. We bake to provide jobs and training for our graduates. Since opening in 2016, Bloom has employed over 50 TE graduates and has proven to be a successful first step on a hospitality career pathway. At Bloom we "walk the walk" and hire our own graduates, providing a supportive but real-world experience, as they learn and earn on the job.

With the support of our generous community, funders, employer partners, and volunteers we continue to help adults and young adults returning from incarceration, or cycling in and out of low wage jobs, to gain the behaviors, skills, and experience needed to move forward into family sustaining jobs. Simply put, we cannot do it without your support.

JACK GOLDWOOD

Board President

JILL RIZIKA
Executive Director



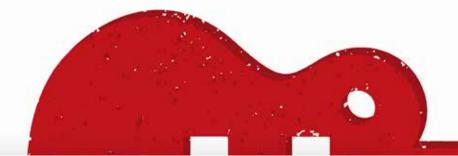
LORETTA'S STORY

Meet Loretta: within 2 years of coming to TE, she started a new job, advanced to a better job and has a long term goal to become a nurse.

Loretta, a single mother of three with 9 grandchildren, worked as a State Tested Nursing Assistant for 15 years before taking a position as an office manager for a construction company. After five years, the company downsized and she faced the challenge of finding a job while raising her grandson on her own. She attended Step Up to UH (see insert) and was hired at University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center as an Environmental Service Worker. In less than a year, Loretta met her goal of returning to direct patient care with an advancement to Patient Care Nursing Assistant after participating in training facilitated by Towards Employment. Loretta now trains new Patient Care Nursing Assistants on her floor and her manager says, "Loretta exceeds expectations - mentioned by both staff and patients as providing exceptional care," Loretta already has another goal: "I plan to begin the Nursing program at Tri-C this fall semester."

ABOUT STEP UP TO UH

In 2013, Towards Employment and University Hospitals formalized a partnership for the program Step Up to UH to assist University Circle residents prepare for and obtain entry level positions at University Hospitals. Initially funded through The Cleveland Foundation, Step Up to University Hospitals is in year six of serving as a neighborhood pipeline into entry level jobs at University Hospitals. Towards Employment also partners with Neighborhood Connections to help recruit neighborhood residents interested in careers in University Hospitals. Towards Employment then screens and trains those selected using a customized job readiness curriculum, followed by 6 months of job coaching to help with transition to new job. Step Up has lowered the interview to hire ratio and graduates' retention at one year is better than the departmental average.



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THOMAS, EVA. AND THERESE'S STORY

Thomas (age 24), Eva (32) and Theresa (54) all attended Towards Employment Reentry Pathways program in July of 2017.

Pursuing TE's assistance for different reasons, they became friends and found their way on the machining career path and supported each other through CNC training because they were all driven to succeed.

Thomas entered Cleveland Industrial Training Center (CITC) right after TE workshop and graduated in Nov 2017, continuing work to overcome his criminal record. He wanted to learn Swiss Type machining so enrolled in a 2nd course in January 2018. Upon graduation in March, Thomas was hired at Hy-Production making \$17.00/hour operating a Swiss Type Machine and is now at Precision Production with better hours. "I didn't have anyone behind me saying I was halfway decent until I had TE and the teachers at CITC backing me. When I started, I just wanted to survive. TE had an agenda and I am not done yet, not even close."

Eva was working as a line leader at Areway at minimum wage trying desperately to support her family. She wanted more (a better home and school system for her children) but her criminal background was a barrier to finding a better job. After TE workshop, she enrolled in classes at CITC while maintaining current employment. Eva was worried about math skills required in the CNC position, so she received tutoring and support from her TE career coach. Eva was hired at Press Rite and now makes \$17/hr with opportunities for advancement and was recently preapproved to buy a house. "I was ready to change my life when I came to TE, I've accomplished everything I wanted. Now, I need a new dream."

Due to Theresa's criminal background and child support payments, she could no longer work in the medical field. After graduating from TE, she participated in a paid work experience at a partner employer to learn more about manufacturing careers and decided to become a CNC machinist. With support from her career coach, she applied and attended a training program designed to prepare machinists to work at Swagelok. She finished her paid internship at \$13/hr and has a full-time position at Swagelok making 16.50/hr. "TE gets really excited when something happens for you. You need someone who knows how far you have come."



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A special thanks to corporate day of service volunteers from Key Bank, Swagelok, and HandsOn Northeast Ohio.





ELISHA'S STORY

Elisha (23) struggled early. He had a learning disability so school was difficult.

Raised by a single mother, he wanted to be productive and give back to his family and the community. He came to the Youth Resource Center in February 2016 to look for a job. At that point, Elisha had never held a job, and did not have a career plan; but he had relatives working in the culinary industry so he knew he could start there. He completed a 2-week job readiness training and started a 4-month paid work experience at Bloom Bakery (Towards Employment's social enterprise) working in the bakery side of the business.

This helped him build a resume and provided him with a work experience he could share with future employers. In working with his career coach, he chose to pursue an opportunity with Step Up to University Hospitals and was hired at the main campus. He has been at UH now for a years and has received several promotions. He talks to his career coach regularly and is building skills to become a supervisor.



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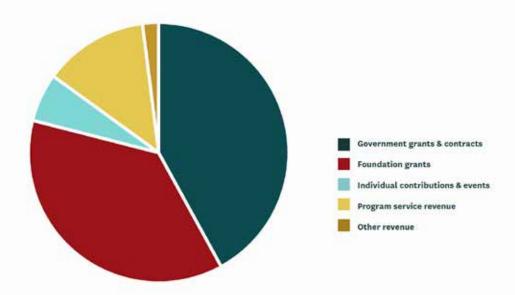
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2017 Financials

2017 Financials



The consolidated financial information presented above includes the operations of Towards Employment, and, and its wholly-owned subsidiary Bloom Artisan Bakery & Café, LLC. Towards Employment faunched Bloom as a social enterprise in 2016, with a mission to provide training and employment opportunities for individuals in the culinary and hospitality fields. The organization incurred starf-up costs and capital expenses related to the social enterprise launch, resulting in annual set losses for 2016 and 2017 which were funded by the organization's internal financial reserves. Beginning in 2018 Bloom's operations are intended to be self-sustaining, supported by a combination of Bakery sales (70% of the budget), and philanthropy & grant revenue (30% of the budget).

SOURCES OF REVENUE	2017	2016	2015
Government grants & contracts	\$2,404,210	\$2,616,024	\$1,740,743
Foundation grants	\$2,154,080	\$2,375,145	\$2,687,717
Individual contributions & events	\$326,611	\$314,160	\$307,247
Program service revenue	\$756,031	8607,112	\$161,003
Other revenue	\$105,481	\$106,035	\$67,056
TOTAL	\$5,746,413	\$6,018,476	\$4,963,766
EXPENSE			
Program Services			
Career pathways	\$3,904,627	\$4,142,960	\$3,299,424
Policy & strategic initiatives	\$1,279,512	\$1,093,665	\$544,240
Cost of Bakery & Café sales	\$476,150	\$590,332	-
Supporting Services		5.55.115.115.11	
Administrative & fundraising	\$631,319	\$869,199	\$347,151
TOTAL	\$6,291,608	\$6,696,156	\$4,190,815
Net annual results	(\$545,195)	(\$677,680)	\$772,951
Beginning net assets	\$1,916,600	\$2,594,280	\$1,821,329
ENDING NET ASSETS	\$1,371,405	\$1,916,600	\$2,594,280

