

Towards **Employment** 

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT





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 401 PEOPLE FIND GOOD JOBS

#### **401 PEOPLE**

Placed into employment (240 with a criminal record)

#### **75% RETENTION**

75% average job retention at 90 days

\* New employees within their first 90 days on the job are most susceptible to job loss

#### **257 PEOPLE**

Accessed credentialed training or paid on-the-job training

#### \$14.48/HR

Average starting wage for TE participants - over \$5.18 above OH minimum wage

#### **137 PEOPLE**

Advanced on the job with an average wage increase of over \$2.50/hour.

#### **341 EMPLOYERS**

Hired TE Graduates over the course of the last year with a criminal record

#### 779 SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

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

#### **935 LEGAL CASES**

Opened for 643 people to remove barriers to employment/job retention: credit/debt issues, bankruptcy, foreclosure, or criminal issues. criminal record)

# FROM BOARD PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### **EVERYONE NEEDS A CHANCE TO ADVANCE.**

It has been yet another year of firsts. This year we celebrate our first hybrid benefit after being totally virtual in 2020. This progression is also reflected in the TE classroom. Classes were virtual, then hybrid, and now, we are committed to using technology and in-person touches to be where we are needed most for TE candidates and graduates. The activities of the career pathway model recruitment, orientation, career readiness workshops, career training and coaching - can be virtual, hybrid or in person.

No matter how we deliver services, we will always deliver results. In 2021, despite the ongoing effects of the pandemic, over 1700 people received support and coaching to enter, maintain and/or progress along their career pathway. Over 250 people increased their skills with an internship or technical training; 400 people started their fi rst job; and 137 people advanced on the job with an average increase of over \$2 an hour. Towards Employment provided over 1714 supportive services to overcome employment barriers like lack of transportation, work appropriate clothing, childcare, internet and/or computer access; and legal services to help to clear warrants, prevent evictions and foreclosures, address child support arrears and clear debt.

Recognizing the magnitude of the digital divide in our community - which results in a kind of "digital mismatch" that puts even remote work out of reach for residents digital access, equipment and on-line learning skills are now assessed and supports are built into individual career plans. Career coaches and case managers have become adept in building relationships and career pathways using an everexpanding portfolio of digital and in person options. In December, we released a new report highlighting the long-term impacts of our career pathway model – WorkAdvance. The report outlines how WorkAdvance has had a measurably positive return to individuals, employers, and society. Advanced coaching, wraparound support and long-term (more than a year) engagement with graduates drove outcomes that reflect better placements (in terms of shifts, hours, and sector), higher wages, and higher technical training completion rates. These effects were significant for people who engaged with WorkAdvance following long-term unemployment or sporadic, part-time employment, boding well for interventions for workers left behind and displaced by Covid. Barriers remain in connecting workers to in-demand career pathways, and



the report outlines three key steps in reducing those barriers: build more on-ramps, focus further on equity, and improve coordination across the workforce system.

advancingneo.towardsemployment.org

With this report, we learned our career pathway model is flexible; and can be adapted to build in additional onramps, time to address unexpected turns, and additional support. In the weeks to come, despite ongoing uncertainty, we will continue to provide the right employment services at the right time. Whether it be online, in person, short-term with basic resources to face job or wage loss, or longerterm striving towards a credential and a career, Towards Employment staff will give Clevelanders a chance to advance – even during a pandemic.

Brent

Brent Carson Board President

Jill Rizika Executive Director

"I TELL EVERYONE I USED TO HAVE NIGHTMARES ABOUT MY FUTURE - NOW I HAVE TOO MANY GOOD DREAMS TO COUNT!"

5699

# WALKER

### WALTER'S STORY

"WALTER IS SUCH A MOTIVATING PERSON. HE WAS DETERMINED TO USE THE SKILLS THAT LIFE HAD HANDED HIM SO FAR AND MAKE THEM PAY OFF IN HIS CAREER. WHEN I THINK OF SOMEONE WHO NEEDED A CHANCE TO EXCEL – I THINK THAT'S 'WALTER!"

-DAN GARVIN, CAREER COACH

When Walter Walker was completing his sentence in Elkton Federal Correctional Institution in the last months of 2020, he was not sure he would make it home. When a close friend, on the verge of going home, died of COVID-19, Walter made a vow to find a chance to go a different way. A fellow inmate had told him that Towards Employment was a chance for people returning to from prison to find work and a future and as soon as he got situated in a halfway home in February 2021, he called TE. He still remembers that when the first person he talked to asked him, "what do you really want from life? and he replied, "I almost cried." He wanted a career, a future, and a chance to be part of his children's lives.

After career readiness workshop, he identified construction as a career – specifically driving large equipment. With scholarship help from Towards Employment, he obtained a commercial driver's license during a 5 week course at Great Lakes

### WALTER'S STORY

Trucking. As of July, he began working with a transportation and logistics company and drives trucks currently ferrying asphalt for roadwork. He is making a family sustaining wage and is keeping his vow: his whole family are all so proud to see him working and providing a role model for the community. He says – "call my kids, ask them about me now and they say, 'he goes to work, he is here when we call, he is present and we rely on him.'"

Walter is reaching out to others now and says: "Towards Employment is a tool, you put the work in and you get good results. My results? I don't have nightmares any more – I have a dream coming true." Walter is not done. He worked with the legal team at TE to clear up his credit score and is saving to start his own business. He wants to buy a dump truck and build a commercial cleaning business.



SCAN THE QR TO WATCH WALTER'S STORY ON YOUTUBE





"I THINK OF MYSELF AS A PERSON WHO NEVER GIVES UP. THAT "NEVER GIVE UP" THINKING WILL ALWAYS BE PART OF MY STORY."

### RAYSHAWNDA MACLIN

TT. 8. 6332313

### RAYSHAWNDA'S STORY

"EVERYTHING THAT RAYSHAWNDA NEEDED WAS ALREADY IN HER BEFORE WALKING THROUGH OUR DOOR. SHE JUST NEEDED PEOPLE LIKE THE STAFF AT TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT TO STAND BY HER SIDE AND SHOW HER THE WAY. RAYSHAWNDA HAS REMINDED ME OF 2 IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF LIFE: 1. A LITTLE PROGRESS EACH DAY ADDS UP TO HUGE RESULTS, AND 2. YOU CAN'T BEAT THE PERSON WHO NEVER GIVES UP!"

-KARLA SEESE, CAREER COACH

When Rayshawnda Maclin came to TE in February, she wanted more than a fast food entry level job, but was starting to think that due to her 2016 involvement with the criminal justice system that was all that was out there for her. She wanted to so much more for herself and for her son. A career pathway is rarely a straight line especially with the pandemic. But Rayshawnda is resilient and found her way. As a young mother with no prior work experience, she took this chance to advance seriously. Her first challenge was navigating child care drop off and the training start time. She negotiated an earlier opening time at her son's daycare center so

### RAYSHAWNDA'S STORY

that she could drop off her son, get on the bus, and make it to TE on time for Career Readiness Training. And she made it to class on time, every time.

As she put together her career plan, she identified customer service as an interest, and in March began to build her resume with a paid internship at a local company - she absolutely loved it, and the company loved her. But before she could be offered a full-time permanent position, the company cut back on hiring because of COVID-19. She took on work on a factory assembly line to keep moving forward. She kept in touch regularly with her career coach and as soon as businesses started opening up in the Spring, she was ready to move on. She accepted another paid internship as a receptionist, taking a \$2.00/hour cut in pay, in the hopes that she would prove herself once again as a good fit for permanent hire. Throughout this time, she struggled with transportation and Towards Employment provided bus passes, gas cards and support with car payments as she got back onto her career pathway.

Her persistence paid off. At the end of her internship, she was offered a permanent position with a \$4.50/hour increase in pay. She is looking forward to becoming a team lead and a supervisor, and continues to work with her career coach to build leadership skills. "My children will not face the obstacles I did – they will see that there are so many options in life – a more scenic route than I had!"







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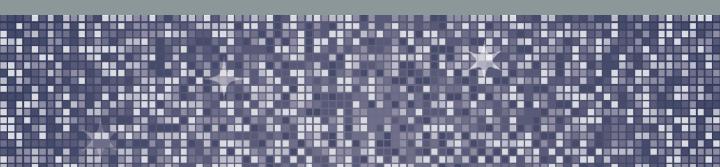
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#### \$50,000 TO \$99,999

St. Luke's Foundation TCF Bank The George Gund Foundation The Reinberger Foundation A.T. Widiger Trust

#### \$20,000 TO \$49,999

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#### \$100,000 TO \$249,000

Annie E. Casey Foundation Bank of America JPMorgan Chase Truist Foundation Verizon William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation

#### \$10,000 TO \$19,000

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#### \$5,000 TO \$9,999

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#### \$2,500 TO \$4,999

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#### **\$1,000 TO \$2,499** continued

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#### \$500 TO \$999

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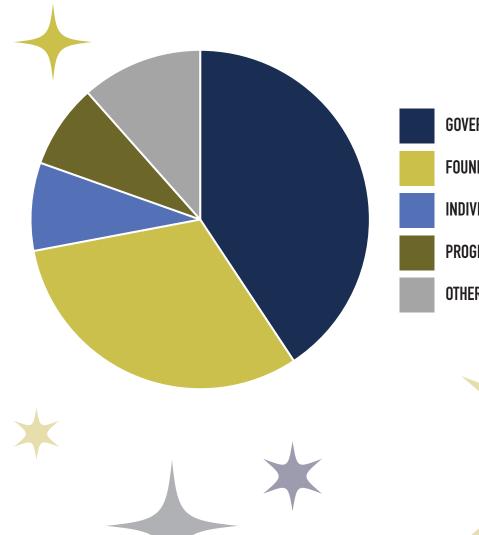
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# TECAN'T DOIT WOU.



### FINANCIALS 2021



GOVERNMENT GRANTS & CONTRACTS FOUNDATION GRANTS INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS & EVENTS PROGRAM SERVICE REVENUE

**OTHER REVENUE** 

### FINANCIALS 2021

SOURCES OF REVENUE	2021	2020	2019
Government grants & contracts	\$2,999,713	\$2,786,007	\$2,632,083
Foundation grants	\$2,309,924	\$2,029,050	\$1,680,545
Individual contributions & events	\$619,399	\$342,541	\$405,985
Program service revenue	\$591,900	\$229,555	\$331,538
Other revenue	\$851,035	\$470,321	\$38,604
TOTAL	\$ 7,371,971	\$5,857,474	\$5,088,755
EXPENSE			
Program Services			
Career pathways	\$3,984,187	\$3,548,669	\$3,481,738
Policy & strategic initiatives	\$393,861	\$536,534	\$510,328
Supporting Services			
Administrative & fundraising	\$1,004,697	\$817,112	\$846,275
TOTAL	\$5,382,745	\$4,902,315	\$4,838,341
Net annual result	\$1,989,226	\$955,159	\$250,414
Beginning net assets	\$2,525,373	\$1,570,213	\$1,474,856
ENDING NET ASSETS	\$4,514,599	\$2,525,372	\$1,570,213



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