

A photograph of a young Black man with short hair, wearing large black over-ear headphones. He is looking down and to the right with a focused expression. He is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a library or study area.

Opportunity Works

Four Ways to Help Young Adults Find Pathways to Success

AT A GLANCE

Luis, Javan, and Justin turned their lives around with help from Opportunity Works. Learn how the national effort paved pathways to postsecondary and career success for 2,000+ youth who had been out of school and out of work.

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When Luis was in high school, he wanted more than anything to become a police officer, so people in his

Latino community would have someone trusted to call when they needed help. But his parents needed help right then, taking care of his two younger siblings while they worked. Luis often missed school to stay home and watch them. And year after year, he struggled to graduate.

Luis wondered, how would he ever go to college and achieve his career dream if he couldn't even finish high school? His parents were concerned about income. "Just get a job," his father said. "College is too expensive."

A more encouraging answer came when he was able to move in with his older brother. At a school designed for disconnected young people in Santa Clara County, California, Luis, then 20, tapped into an intricate regional network of individualized education, career training, and support services led by Kids in Common. The nonprofit serves as the local anchor organization for the regional network, known as Opportunity Works. He graduated high school at age 21 and received step-by-step assistance to fill out financial aid forms and enroll in college without telling his parents.

Year after year, Luis struggled to graduate high school. Now, at age 22, he's getting ready to earn a college degree and join a police academy.

The intensive guidance secured a scholarship for two free years of community college, including books and academic advising. He's been attending full time and now, at age 22, is finishing his second year—getting ready to graduate and find a police academy.

And his parents? When Luis completed his first semester and showed them his grades, they were proud of his hard work and are excited to help him achieve his goals.

The Big Wins

The story of Luis is the story of Opportunity Works, a national initiative to dramatically improve the life trajectories of low-income young people ages 16 to 24 who are not in school or working.

This population, often called “opportunity youth,” comprises a significant segment of America’s potential workforce. Yet they are also the young men and women who face the greatest barriers to entering and advancing in the labor market. This is especially true for African American, Latinx, and Native American populations.

Launched in 2015, Opportunity Works has demonstrated how to make a difference in the lives of young people who find themselves without a clear path forward. In seven urban areas from Seattle to Philadelphia, anchoring community-based organizations (CBOs) worked with a large group of local partners to put in place specialized programming that would reconnect opportunity youth to education and employment success.

Opportunity Works served more than 2,000 teens and young adults (see “By the Numbers,” next page). Their successes include:¹

- More than 800 individuals earned a high school credential.
- Nearly 1,000 participants enrolled in postsecondary education or training.
- Almost half of all participants were young men of color.

OPPORTUNITY WORKS

Two Populations of Opportunity Youth Targeted



ENRICHED PREPARATION

for Those *Without* a High School Credential



POSTSECONDARY/CAREER BRIDGING

for Those *With* a High School Credential

These initial results are particularly powerful for a population that has had limited access to effective programs in the past. And the work continues at all seven locations. Although the national initiative has officially ended, staff at each site met their goal to find ways to sustain and scale the interventions on their own.

In this report, we highlight lessons learned from the initiative, which was based on JFF’s “Back on Track” model to reconnect opportunity youth and guided by JFF coaching to local anchor organizations and service providers. We also describe the complex nature of what it takes to reach these positive results and the many interlocking pieces that are part of the solution.

OPPORTUNITY WORKS

By the Numbers

2,172 Young Adults Served

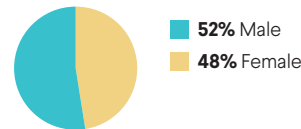
- 817** earned secondary credential
- 974** enrolled in postsecondary education and training
- 800+** completed postsecondary bridging
- 525** participated in internships or other forms of work-based learning
- 92%** of total were people of color
- 45%** of total were young men of color

977 Young Men of Color

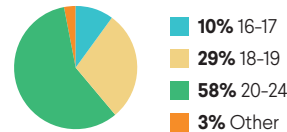
- 76%** average persistence rate from year to year
- 313** earned secondary credential
- 416** enrolled in postsecondary education and training

Demographics

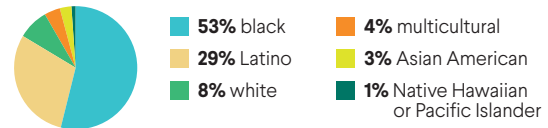
Gender



Age



Race/Ethnicity



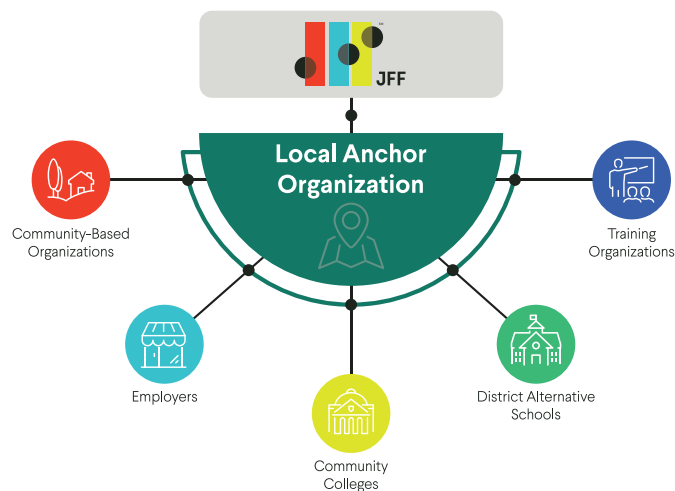
HOW OPPORTUNITY WORKS OPERATED

While employers in many industries are concerned about how to find the talent to power their companies, communities across the United States are striving to provide education, training, and employment for the nation's 4.6 million opportunity youth.²

In 2014, JFF and the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions won a federal innovation grant to partner with communities and build the evidence base of what works to improve credential attainment and employment prospects for opportunity youth. The grant, a Social Innovation Award from the Corporation for National and Community Service, required matching funds at both the national and local levels. A total of 45 donors contributed.³

Through a competitive process, we selected seven large urban areas to participate under the banner of "Opportunity Works": Boston, Hartford, New Orleans, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Santa Clara County in California (where San Jose is the largest city), and South King County in Washington state (where Seattle is the largest city).⁴ The need for these services was paramount. In every location, participants were from communities experiencing significant economic hardship and instability, with most sites serving predominantly people of color.

The Structure of Opportunity Works



HOW OPPORTUNITY WORKS OPERATED

The sites focused on different types of opportunity youth along a continuum of need: those who were out of school and hadn't earned a high school credential as well as those with a high school credential who had no postsecondary education, training, or prospects for full-time work with adequate pay.

The organizational structure of the initiative reflected the complexity involved in developing effective pathways for young people with multiple barriers to success (see *"The Structure of Opportunity Works"*). In each geographic area, JFF contracted with a local anchor organization to spearhead the work, and assisted them with assembling partnerships with other CBOs, high schools, community colleges, employers, and training organizations to carry out the work. Each anchor organization had deep experience serving opportunity youth.

Each community implemented JFF's Back on Track model as its framework for serving young adults.⁵ They drew on their relationships with young people and their knowledge of the local context to adapt the model to the needs of the specific community.

Two sites implemented pathways to increase opportunities to earn a high school credential, while four sites put in place and expanded services for successful transitions to postsecondary education and training. The seventh site provided both (See *"Back on Track: Core Features of Model."*).



BACK ON TRACK

CORE FEATURES OF MODEL

Enriched Preparation helps young adults earn a high school credential. Postsecondary/Career Bridging prepares young people for a strong start to college.

Enriched Preparation

Integrates high-quality college/career-ready instruction with strong academic and social supports

- College- and career-ready culture
- College- and career-ready curriculum and instruction
- Personalized guidance and support

Postsecondary/Career Bridging

Builds college/career-ready skills and provides informed transition counseling

- A focus on college knowledge and success strategies, and employment readiness
- Personalized guidance on connection to "best bet" programs of study

Four Strategies for Success

Amidst continued concerns about the fate of low-income young adults in today's rapidly changing economy, Opportunity Works demonstrated four key strategies for national initiatives that aim to improve their education and employment outcomes. The sections that follow describe the strategies, which were based on JFF's experiences leading the initiative and findings of a 2017 Urban Institute study of the initiative:



1. Place CBOs at the center and provide coaching to enhance their expertise.



2. Find the sweet spot of a guiding model that's not too loose, not too tight.



3. Deliver quality programming through skilled, caring staff and strong partnerships with education providers and training providers that prioritize young adults.



4. Plan from day one to sustain and scale the work.

Javan, 19, from New Orleans, was unsure of his

future. He graduated high school on time but couldn't afford college. He knew he needed a good job to support himself but he didn't know where to start. Then he found Opportunity Works.

Through the NOLA Opportunity Works collaborative, he became a paid Earn and Learn apprentice in an IT career pathway at Tulane University. He earned certification in CompTIA and also passed exams for Apple Certified technician staff.

Using the cover letter, resume, business cards, and soft skills that he developed through Earn and Learn, he networked with a suburban Apple store manager and HR representatives. He has been working there for \$16 an hour and finally feels secure.

Javan couldn't afford college, so he needed a good job right after high school. But he had no idea where to start until he found Opportunity Works.

OPPORTUNITY WORKS

What Percentage of Young People in the US are Disconnected From School & Work?

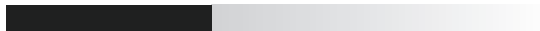
Source: <http://www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive/>

By Racial or Ethnic Group

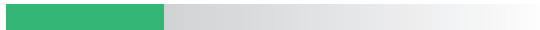
25.8% of Native Americans



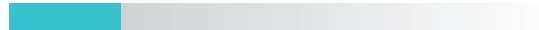
17.8% of African Americans



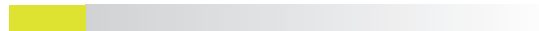
13.7% of Latinxs




9.7% of Whites



6.6% of Asians





1. Place Community-Based Organizations at the Center and Provide Coaching to Enhance their Expertise

Strong CBOs at the Core

CBOs are critical to national, multisite initiatives like Opportunity Works. CBOs know the young adults in their area better than outside partners and are in the best position to anchor the work in each location.

Success rests on establishing a relationship of trust between CBO staff who do the day-to-day work with young people, and staff of the national lead organization who provide strategic guidance.

“Community-based organizations absolutely must be at the center of work with opportunity youth,” says JFF’s Lili Allen, associate vice president, reconnection designs. “CBOs are the ones that know where to find these young people, know how to get them in the door, know how to support them, know how to educate them, and know how to help them as they transition into college and career pathways.”

As national lead of Opportunity Works, JFF worked closely in each urban area with an anchor CBO and other local partners participating in a cross-sector collaborative led by the anchor CBO. The first task was to achieve a high degree of clarity about respective roles and responsibilities.

JFF and Aspen looked for anchor organizations capable of leading and managing the initiative at the local level. Each needed to assemble the right set of community partners, including other youth-serving CBOs, as well as employers, community colleges, district alternative schools, and training organizations.

All worked together to create seamless high-quality programming to move youth along the continuum toward credentials and labor

market success. The cross-sector collaboratives also identified how to scale Back on Track pathways within the community and the broader region.

To support sites in meeting these expectations, JFF provided a pass-through grant from the Social Innovation Fund and matching philanthropic funding to each anchor organization. JFF also provided hands-on help in federal grants management and in guiding the work of community partners to ensure they were effectively implementing the Back on Track model.

National Support through Expert Coaching

JFF assigned a seasoned coach to each community. Coaches came with deep expertise in the Back on Track model and effective practices in CBOs, community colleges, alternative schools, and GED programs. They also had a strong grasp of system and policy issues that emerge in cross-sector partnerships and a firm grounding in youth development and leadership practices.

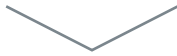
Coaches framed every activity they undertook within the context of helping sites accomplish the goals they had set for themselves and implement the annual strategic plans they had developed. Coaches served as thought partners, working proactively to help the sites build partnerships with key stakeholders, improve programmatic and instructional practices among partner organizations, and consider how the work could be scaled and sustained over time.

In doing this work, coaches maintained regular and frequent communication with the sites. They conducted visits at least four times each year to meet with local program staff and leads from the anchor organizations, see program operations in action, and help serve as liaisons with the national evaluators. Between visits, they held monthly check-in calls with site leads, documenting all issues discussed and agreements made during the calls, which were then shared with the whole coaching team.

The coaches also met monthly as a team—facilitated by a technical assistance director from JFF—to share promising practices, consider progress toward each site’s goals, discuss challenges across sites, and consider how to leverage appropriate technical assistance resources to address these challenges.

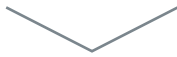


- Manage the initiative
- Provide subgrants
- Provide coaching on quality implementation, scaling, and sustainability
- Support local anchor organizations in federal grants management
- Secure and oversee evaluator
- Design and implement twice-a-year convenings



LOCAL ANCHOR ORGANIZATIONS

- Assemble partners for delivery of Back on Track
- Guide partnership development
- Ensure quality implementation of Back on Track
- Manage subgrants and subcontract with partners



COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- Recruit opportunity youth
- Deliver Back on Track through seamless partnerships



2. Find the Sweet Spot of a Guiding Model That's Not Too Loose, Not Too Tight

In a national, multisite initiative committed to building evidence of what works for the broader field, it is essential for all sites to use a common guiding framework. For Opportunity Works, JFF's evidence-based Back on Track: Postsecondary Success model provided that guidance.

Although JFF had used the model for years in individual communities, Opportunity Works was the first chance to use it to amass evidence across multiple sites.

JFF developed Back on Track to be specific enough to guide practice and flexible enough to be used in multiple ways, allowing for adaptation to local needs.

For example, the seven Opportunity Works sites each determined, based on the populations they were serving, which of two Back on Track interventions they would implement: Enriched Preparation, which results in a high school credential, or Postsecondary/Career Bridging, which ends with postsecondary enrollment. All needed more detail regarding specific practices (*See "Back on Track: Core Features of Model," page 7*).

To that end, JFF provided a codification of the model's core features, with sample approaches for each, an online tool sites could use to evaluate their work and identify areas in need of strengthening, and a facilitated community of practice for staff to share best practices and learn from their challenges. "We had an amazing learning community in Opportunity Works," said Jeff Corey, program director of Seattle Education Access, the education provider for South King County, Washington. "We took tools and ideas from the six other communities and brought them back to our partners."

Justin was in middle school when his father died.

After a few years, he could no longer live at home and moved in with his grandmother. But she struggled to support him financially. Wrestling with depression and other mental health issues, Justin was unable to complete high school.

Eventually, at 18, he decided to follow in his older brother's footsteps and try for a GED at an E3 Center, a neighborhood-based drop-in center coordinated by the Philadelphia Youth Network, the local anchor organization for Opportunity Works. He was immediately intrigued by the center's college success program, a postsecondary bridging experience that provides college readiness courses and individualized support to disconnected youth.

First, he improved his study habits, then he joined the second college success cohort. It was worth the wait. Despite continuing personal difficulties, Justin barely missed a class, came in weekly for extra support, and emerged as a peer leader, encouraging other students to attend regularly and keep up with their homework. He also thrived in the second part of the bridging program—taking a credit-bearing course at Community College of Philadelphia, with ongoing guidance from center staff, while finishing his GED.

Now 21, Justin is enrolled part time at the community college while working part time at Starbucks. He expects to earn an associate's degree by the end of 2019.

Justin floundered for years after his father died. Now, he has a GED and he's on track to earn an associate's degree in 2019.

Key Barriers Faced by Opportunity Youth



Housing



Food Insecurity



Child Care



Transportation



Criminal Safety



Mental Health



3.

Deliver Quality Programming through Skilled, Caring Staff and Strong Partnerships with Education and Training Providers

How does one convince disconnected youth to keep coming back to class and eventually learn enough to earn a credential?

Hiring highly skilled staff—who can relate to program participants, show they care, and hold them to high expectations—is essential.

Yet establishing strong relationships between students and staff, while essential, is not sufficient for delivering the quality programming that can improve education and employment outcomes for young people. The Back on Track: Postsecondary Success model calls on sites to implement practices that will help young people develop the growth mindset, the social-emotional intelligence, and the necessary academic, professional, and technical skills to succeed in further education and training.

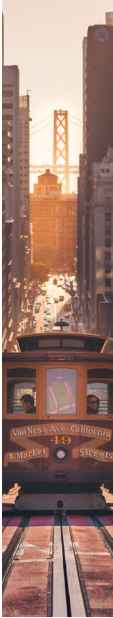
This is a tall order, especially for chronically underresourced community organizations. While staff at most sites knew how to develop trusting relationships with students, address their social-emotional needs, and build professional skills, they had less capacity to deliver academic skills.

To prepare young people to earn a credential with value in the labor market, whether through postsecondary education or training programs, these organizations realized they would need to enhance their academic offerings.

“Academic scaffolding is something we started looking at much more intensely,” said Aundrea Gregg, manager of Opportunity Works in New Orleans. “Everyone was starting at a different academic stage. It tied right in to addressing youth persistence in our system.”

In implementing Enriched Preparation, several CBOs established powerful partnerships with publicly funded education systems.

These include:



Bay Area Community Resources

San Francisco, California

Bay Area Community Resources works with Five Keys Charter Schools, which has both community-based and in-custody schools for gang-involved youth, to provide the educational component of its program; BACR offers intensive supports to ensure youth persist. In each Five Keys site, a team of a teacher, case manager, and career coach provide each student a coordinated program of academics, support services, career exploration, and postsecondary/career planning. Students engage in community projects that enable them to earn credits while deeply exploring social issues, careers of interest, and/or leadership development opportunities.



Kids in Common

Santa Clara, California

Kids in Common worked with the County Office of Education to secure charter status for the recovery high schools serving opportunity youth, which allowed state per-pupil funding to flow to the schools. They worked with leaders at the recovery schools and the San Jose Conservation Corps to build a college-going culture and strengthen program design. They contracted with other CBOs to provide navigators to support system-involved youth so they would persist. They also have worked with the City of San Jose to identify opportunities to place case management staff on site at other recovery high schools.



The Youth Empowerment Project

New Orleans, Louisiana

The Youth Empowerment Project partners with Bard Early College to implement a college-readiness curriculum as a component of YEP's high school equivalency program. JFF coaches helped YEP adopt college-ready instructional strategies in high school equivalency classes.

In implementing Postsecondary/Career Bridging, sites worked to enhance academic programming by partnering with community colleges and building pathways to college from alternative schools or high school equivalency programs. These include:

Boston, MA

Bunker Hill Community College offers a Summer Transition Program, which enables entering students with an assessed need for developmental English or math coursework to receive intensive instruction and review, in order to progress through developmental coursework before entering college in the fall. The program consists of a free, intensive three-week skill review in math and reading/writing to help students prepare to retake the placement test, with the possibility of starting in higher-level courses, and free 8- or 12-week accelerated courses in developmental reading/writing and math as well as English as a Second Language.

Philadelphia, PA

Neighborhood-based drop-in centers serving youth ages 16 to 21 who are disconnected from school and work offer GED programming. Through Opportunity Works, these E3 Power Centers integrated new curriculum and instructional approaches to ensure youth would be ready for college when they earned their high school equivalency. They also supported a credit-bearing transitional class at Community College of Philadelphia.

South King County, WA

Seattle Education Access is embedded in a number of the county's reengagement centers that are focused on helping youth attain a high school credential. SEA staff provide youth with college access and navigation services, facilitated career exploration, preparation for postsecondary placement tests, and support as they transition to and through college. In addition, South King County is drawing on the Back on Track: Postsecondary Success model to improve academic instruction that prepares students for college.

New Orleans, LA

The Youth Empowerment Project is partnering with Delgado Community College to provide supports for youth in Delgado's Accelerated Career Education program, which teaches foundational academic skills in the context of occupational skills to show students the on-the-job applications of what they're learning.

Hartford, CT

Our Piece of the Pie embeds academic skills in its programming to prepare youth to enter a manufacturing program, and Blue Hills Civic Association does the same for youth entering health careers pathways. JFF coaches have helped these sites improve their college-ready instruction.

The strategy of enhancing their own academic offerings and/or finding partners that could supplement existing capacity has begun to pay off. Young people in all of the sites are benefiting from academic programming that is expected to strengthen outcomes, helping them maintain momentum on their pathways.

4. Plan from Day One to Sustain and Scale the Work

Sustaining Pathways

Opportunity Works placed an emphasis from the beginning on helping local sites plan to both sustain the work beyond the Social Innovation Fund award, and to spread the evidence-based practices beyond the pilot sites to reach the much larger number of young people searching for pathways to the future.

One of the most difficult challenges for many initiatives is sustaining, and even growing, the interventions beyond the relatively short time frame of the initiative itself. In Opportunity Works, this issue was a central topic of conversation among the seven anchor organizations, their partners, and JFF, from the first to the last convening.

While funding is an ongoing struggle for these organizations, it proved helpful to identify sustainability strategies early on. They have already taken strong steps to support the pathways for opportunity youth in the years ahead.

Strategies that sites are using to ensure longevity of the Back on Track interventions include:

- Build strong connections to the local workforce system and to federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, including by using the Back on Track model in requests for proposals
- Build capacity in GED and alternative school programs to sustain college-ready instruction and programming
- Secure county support and tax levy funding for partnerships initially funded under Opportunity Works (see “*Creative Funding Solutions in South King County*,” page 20)
- Work with county or city offices to invest in education and career pathways for youth transitioning out of foster care
- Leverage postsecondary support resources targeting first-generation college students

Spreading the Change

From the outset, Opportunity Works communities were responsible for not only developing detailed implementation plans for their pathways, with clear roles for each partner and numerical targets for youth enrollment, progress, and credential attainment, but also with identifying strategies to reach a growing number of students.

The local anchor organizations each lead a cross-sector collaborative that plays an instrumental role in scaling the Back on Track interventions beyond the original pilot sites. These collaboratives include influential leaders and staff from youth systems such as K-12 education, postsecondary education, social services, and probation; governmental institutions; businesses and business organizations; youth service providers; and young people themselves.

As a result of these collaborative efforts, local sites have been successful in expanding access to Back on Track pathways by serving additional youth in the original pilot sites, expanding the number of sites implementing Back on Track with the original partners and/or by adding new partners, and expanding to additional communities in the region.

Across these expansion approaches, the strategies that sites are using include:

Engage system leaders to adapt the Back on Track model for more widespread implementation

The Philadelphia Youth Network launched its Opportunity Works programming in the city's E3 Power Centers, neighborhood-based drop-in centers serving youth ages 16 to 21 who are disconnected from school and work, including those transitioning from the juvenile justice system. Project U-Turn, the collaborative overseeing the work, has engaged with the school district to incorporate Back on Track into its requests for proposals (RFPs) for all new alternative schools. They have also developed an implementation guide that captures the complexity of roles and strategies in a Back on Track partnership model.

Align workforce funding around a common model, drawing lessons from pilot sites

Hartford's Opportunity Works initiative is managed by Capital Workforce Partners, the regional workforce intermediary for federal workforce dollars. CWP launched its Opportunity Works partnerships in two CBOs that partner with area community colleges. To branch out to additional communities with large opportunity youth populations—East Hartford and Manchester—CWP has met with mayors and community forums to better understand the local context for implementing Back on Track. And they have begun developing a new manufacturing program at an additional community college serving these new communities.

Identify postsecondary and career bridging programs with the potential to effectively serve opportunity youth, and work with them to enhance their practices

The Boston collaborative initially selected four high-performing partner programs to provide postsecondary and career bridging, along with navigation supports, following the Back on Track model. Youth are referred from the city's Connection Center, a "one-stop shop" for disconnected young adults to get started on their education and career pathways. Since the launch of the Center, Boston has added new career-track training programs to its portfolio of options for opportunity youth, working with JFF to ensure that the programs meet the Back on Track criteria and are designed to effectively serve young adults. Over time, Boston partners have pledged to continue to expand by working with potential bridging sites to adapt their practices to effectively serve young adults.

Overall, the level of scaling and the depth of the sustainability strategies the sites have put into place is significant. While each site undertook a unique approach based on local context, all were able to use their cross-sector collaborative of system leaders to gain support for growing the number of Back on Track pathways in their community and identifying funding to sustain the important work launched under Opportunity Works.

Creative Funding Solutions in South King County

As a result of the strong partnerships and advocacy sparked by the Opportunity Works collaborative in South King County, King County Employment and Education Resources is awarding \$1 million annually, through the Best Starts for Kids tax levy fund, to support postsecondary transition for opportunity youth ages 16 to 24. Seattle Education Access was awarded a portion of this funding to support the postsecondary bridging initially funded under the Opportunity Works grant, and to expand its bridging to additional sites. Contracts are renewable for up to three years of work. Best Start for Kids is a six-year, \$65 million-per-year funding stream that could then be renewed by voters.



A Path Forward

In communities across the United States (and in many other countries around the globe), interest continues to grow in the large number of young adults who are experiencing difficulties securing a foothold in the labor market. The Opportunity Works initiative offers a possible path forward for these communities.

Evidence emerging from this initiative suggests that CBOs, working with a larger group of partners coordinated by a cross-sector collaborative, can make a meaningful difference in the lives of disconnected young people. They can adapt JFF's flexible Back on Track model to the local context and put in place powerful pathways to education, credentials, and employment for currently marginalized young adults.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Cheryl Almeida

Cheryl Almeida directs JFF’s research on improving options and outcomes for struggling students and out-of-school youth. She has 25 years of experience in strategic planning, research, program development, and policy analysis. She has led strategy for provision of technical assistance to community-based organizations, postsecondary institutions, and school districts on the development of pathways for young adults in low-income communities and served as the evaluation lead for all initiatives. Her current focus is on a network of young adult talent developers to help prepare youth residing in communities with limited resources for a rapidly changing economy.

Endnotes

1. The data include an unknown number of individuals who earned a high school credential and entered postsecondary education or training. These people are counted in both categories. A formal impact evaluation from Urban Institute due soon will provide information on education and labor market outcomes.
2. Sarah Burd-Sharps and Kristen Lewis, *More than a Million Reasons for Hope: Youth Disconnection in America Today* (Brooklyn, NY: Measure of America, Social Science Research Council, 2018), <http://www.measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2018/>.
3. The Social Innovation Fund grant required that JFF and the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions match the award 1:1 with funding from philanthropy, and that subgrantee communities match their subgrant 1:1 with philanthropic dollars. JFF received generous match funding from Andrus Family Fund, Ballmer Philanthropy Group, Bank of America, Ford Foundation, James Irvine Foundation, Marguerite Casey Foundation, and Prudential Foundation. Another 38 donors contributed to the local subgrantees.
4. All Opportunity Works communities participate in the Aspen Institute's Opportunity Youth Forum, a network of 24 communities seeking to scale multiple reconnection pathways that achieve better outcomes in education and employment for opportunity youth.
5. Opportunity Works focused on only the first two phases of the Back on Track: Postsecondary Success model: 1) Enriched Preparation, which helps young adults earn a high school credential, and 2) Postsecondary Bridging, which prepares young people for a strong start to college. The third phase, First-Year Supports, focuses on successful completion of their first postsecondary year.



JFF is a national nonprofit that drives transformation in the American workforce and education systems. For 35 years, JFF has led the way in designing innovative and scalable solutions that create access to economic advancement for all. Join us as we build a future that works.

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