

Leveraging Investments Increase Access to Opportunities for Philadelphia Residents

William Penn Foundation awards Philadelphia Works and the City of Philadelphia's Adult Education Division \$2.5M to build an integrated adult workforce/education system

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 15, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- The [William Penn Foundation](#) has awarded [Philadelphia's Adult Education Division](#) and [Philadelphia Works](#) (PhilaWorks) a \$2.5M grant that will support building a coordinated, collaborative, and integrated workforce adult education system. The integrated system will ensure Philadelphia residents have the right supports to help them reach their education and career goals.

Over the next three years, the two agencies, along with selected partner organizations will leverage local, state, federal, and philanthropic funding to offer a variety of learning, training, and wraparound supports to populations who will benefit most from expanded education and workforce training opportunities.

"There is a universal shift towards better integrated systems at the local level," said Patricia Blumenauer, VP of operations and data at PhilaWorks. "We recognize that historic silos, intentional or not, impede access to the services and resources that are meant to properly serve city residents as they navigate their career paths."

A key activity in building the integrated system will be to streamline participant access to services and supports through centralized points of entry.

In June, the collective launched "[Next Level Learning](#)," a campaign promoting a hotline (**1-833-750-5627**) where adult learners can enroll in a wide range of programs and classes including, but not limited to, reading, writing and math, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), GED and HiSET prep, and basic computer skills.

"This grant will help to grow educational opportunities and pathways for Philadelphia residents," said Christine Piven, Ph.D., Executive Director of Adult Education/Chief of Prevention. "In building an integrated system, the city and its partners can work collaboratively to better ensure adult learners have access to the tools and support needed to fulfill their goals."

Philadelphia's leaders are leaning into a model that leverages multiple funding streams to drive positive and shared outcomes from local investments. **With lead support provided by the William Penn Foundation**, this system development opportunity will

also use SNAP 50/50 reimbursements to strengthen outcome objectives.

With foundational funding, of participants that complete the program, 90% will attach to employment within three months of the last day of programming. By September 2025, the integrated system will have supported 240 participants in reaching their stated career/education goals. As a result of leveraging SNAP 50/50 reimbursements, an additional 160 participants will be supported.

SNAP 50/50 programs offer short-term trainings culminating in an industry-recognized credential and/or paid work experience opportunities for populations with barriers to employment.

"We think about SNAP recipients, and we forget that population often includes those who are justice involved and/or underemployed," said H. Patrick Clancy, President and CEO at PhilaWorks. "For a workforce to thrive, economic opportunity must be greater than life's obstacles, this investment will tip the balance in favor of opportunity."

About William Penn Foundation

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that increase educational opportunities for children from low-income families, ensure a sustainable environment, provide inclusive and equitable public spaces and arts and culture experiences, and advance philanthropy in the Philadelphia region.

About Philadelphia Works

Philadelphia Works invests in solutions and services to grow Philadelphia's economy by connecting employers to workforce talent and career seekers to jobs. We influence the public policies that support economic growth and optimize funding and resources to invest in regional solutions to build a skilled and thriving workforce. For more information about our dedicated board members and staff, workforce research, labor market data, services, and initiatives, and to view success stories, please visit philaworks.org.

About Philadelphia's Adult Education Division

The City of Philadelphia works with community-based organizations to provide Next Level Learning for residents who are 16 and older. These vital services help residents build the skills they need to realize their personal, professional, and civic goals. Learn more at www.phila.gov/next-level.

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