

US Department of Labor (DOL) awards \$4.5M to STRIVE to narrow opportunity gap for justice-involved youth

STRIVE and its partners will connect justice-involved youth with jobs in six cities across the country.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 1, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [STRIVE](#), a leading national nonprofit workforce development organization, was announced as one of six recipients of a grant from the [DOL](#), funding a program to connect justice-involved young adults to careers with a pathway for advancement. Securing this \$4.5 million support will allow STRIVE to offer our [Future Leaders program](#) in four cities: New York, Philadelphia, New



The STRIVE Future Leaders program connects justice-involved youth (aged 18-24) to career opportunities.

Orleans, and San Diego. The STRIVE Future Leaders program connects justice-involved youth (aged 18-24) to career opportunities and provides training and support services, all driving toward STRIVE's work to achieve equity through economic opportunity. STRIVE's programs help underserved communities with resources and training for more than a good job, but a career for upward mobility.



The STRIVE Future Leaders grant will allow us to continue our focus on breaking barriers utilizing training and program models that are responsive to labor trends."

Sunae Villavaso, Director of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development

"This grant offers more than career opportunities to justice-involved youth. It also provides a second chance for young adults to achieve economic mobility to provide for themselves and their families. We are glad to provide them with resources and support their growth," said Lakythia Ferby, Executive Director at STRIVE New York.

All four of the partner sites where the STRIVE Future Leaders program will be implemented with this grant are deeply underserved, with few comprehensive programs

meeting the needs of youth with histories of involvement in the criminal justice system. Often, youth struggle to find a good job, which leads to their re-arrest. The highest recidivism rate in these areas is 54%. The Future Leaders program will address the needs of these young citizens upon their release, supporting them on their journey to reintegration and self-sufficiency.

STRIVE's Future Leaders will serve 555 youth over three years, as operated through STRIVE's flagship in New York and three affiliate partner organizations: Cafe Reconcile (New Orleans), JEVS Human Services (Philadelphia), and Second Chance (San Diego).

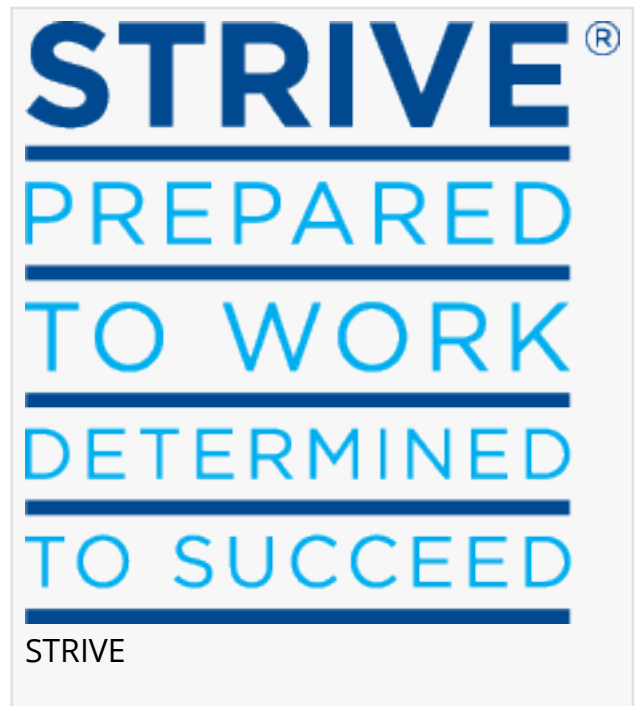
"The City of New Orleans Office of Workforce Development is committed to changing the narrative to ensure positive outcomes for our justice involved youth," said Sunae Villavaso, Director of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development. "The STRIVE Future Leaders grant will allow us to continue our focus on breaking barriers utilizing training and program models that are responsive to labor trends. It will also ensure that our Cafe Reconcile cohorts continue to be provided with the knowledge and skills to help them become more upwardly mobile."

STRIVE and their affiliates will work in partnership with community colleges, employers, and the justice system to provide the professional and occupational skills needed to enter the workforces. Accompanying the training, STRIVE Future Leaders will incorporate case management, services, and supports as part of a proprietary, evidence-based model that STRIVE has successfully used for the program. Students will engage in pro-social activities, including employment and education, while receiving the support they need to maintain long-term financially sustaining employment, keep a stable residence, and successfully address substance abuse issues and mental health needs.

"It takes collaboration and meaningful partnerships to help young people pursue their dreams," said Gerald Duhon, executive director of Café Reconcile. "With capacity-building support from STRIVE, Café Reconcile can expand and enhance wrap around services and occupational training to partner with our young people on their path to employment and bright futures."

"JEVS believes that by empowering young people we strengthen communities. Partnering with STRIVE has added to our ability to reach some of Philadelphia's most vulnerable citizens, equip them with new skills and help them realize their amazing potential," said Jeffrey Booth, Senior Vice President at JEVS Human Services.

"Second Chance is proud to partner with STRIVE, and to connect justice-involved youth to



opportunities in higher education. This grant will help break the cycles of poverty and incarceration by committing much-needed resources to transitional age youth in our community. We look forward to tapping into our network of local colleges to help prepare our young people for success in secondary education and beyond” said Philip Stutzman, Director of Development Strategy at Second Chance.

STRIVE has a successful track record partnering with the DOL. As of 2012, STRIVE has successfully administered eight federal grants serving 3,000 justice-involved adults and youth across 10 U.S. cities. This marks its 9th federal grant and will allow STRIVE Future Leaders to operate in a total of 6 cities in 2021.

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