

WorkingNation and WPVI-TV Present Breaking Barriers: Justice and Work, the latest in the Emmy Award winning series

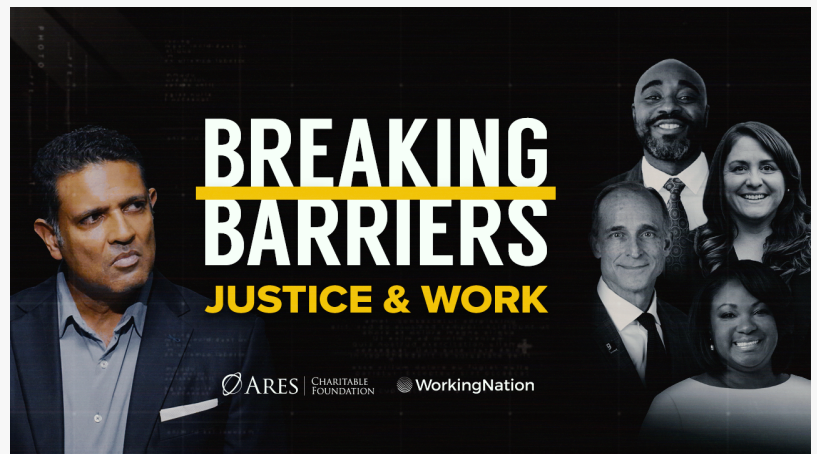
PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, April 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Breaking Barriers: Justice and Work, airing Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 7 PM ET, exposes the obstacles preventing Americans who have been justice-impacted from finding meaningful employment. Outdated systems from static background checks to parole limitations continue to block access to opportunity, but solutions exist.

This one-hour special, produced by [WorkingNation](#) in partnership with [WPVI-TV](#), brings together experts, business leaders, and policymakers to discuss how hiring practices can evolve to unlock an often-overlooked talent pool at a time when America faces massive labor shortages.

Featured Discussion

The program features a roundtable discussion moderated by Hari Sreenivasan, with insights from:

- Steven C. Preston – President and CEO, Goodwill Industries International
- Patricia Blumenauer – Chief Operating Officer, Philadelphia Works
- Jerron “Jay” Jordan – VP of Community Engagement, REFORM Alliance
- Teresa Hodge – President and CEO, Mission: Launch



Second chance hiring isn't charity; it's a smart strategy that strengthens the workforce and the economy. It's not just about inclusion. Untapped talent is our greatest missed opportunity to restore dignity and drive shared success.



Breaking Barriers: Justice and Work

The Workforce Challenge and Opportunity

More than 70 million Americans—one in three adults—have a criminal record, yet many face employment barriers that keep them from reentering the workforce, regardless of their offense. This population includes people who have been arrested but never convicted, individuals on probation or parole, and even those with legal issues stemming from unpaid fines or missed child support payments. Meanwhile, millions of jobs remain unfilled across critical industries.

Businesses struggling to find qualified workers are often overlooking skilled candidates due to outdated hiring restrictions, employer liability concerns, and AI-driven background checks that can flag individuals without context or human review. These automated systems reinforce biases, further limiting opportunities.

More employers are recognizing that inclusive hiring practices not only fill workforce gaps but also drive business growth and innovation. This special explores what more can be done to remove barriers, including adjusting employer liability concerns, utilizing risk-based assessments, and creating clearer pathways to employment.

Shifting Perceptions, Driving Change

Art Bilger, Founder and CEO of WorkingNation, emphasizes:

"Expanding hiring opportunities for this significant population isn't just socially responsible, it's economically essential. We aim to shift perceptions, promote inclusive hiring, and empower individuals with purpose."

Michelle Armstrong, President of [Ares Charitable Foundation](#), adds:

"Through this episode of Breaking Barriers, we aim to showcase the resilience and potential of people who are justice-impacted while advocating for workforce solutions that can help drive economic growth and opportunity."

Where to Watch

- Breaking Barriers: Justice and Work airs Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 7 PM ET on WPVI-TV
- Available for streaming on 6abc.com and WPVI-TV's apps
- Full episode available on WorkingNation.org starting Sunday, April 6

Throughout April, Second Chance Month, WPVI-TV will also feature stories on local workforce initiatives supporting justice-impacted individuals in Philadelphia, while WorkingNation provides podcasts and articles with an extended regional and national reach.

This series is made possible by the generous support of the Ares Charitable Foundation, with editorial independence maintained by WorkingNation.

Previous episodes have explored employment challenges faced by older workers and people

with disabilities. Breaking Barriers: Embracing Disabilities in the Workforce won a Southeast Emmy Award in 2024 for Long Form Interview.

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Organizations featured in this show:

Goodwill Industries International - <https://www.goodwill.org/>
REFORM Alliance - <https://reformalliance.com/>
Philadelphia Works - <https://philaworks.org/>
Mission: Launch - <https://www.mission-launch.org/>
The Last Mile - <https://thelastmile.org/>

About WorkingNation

WorkingNation is a nonprofit media organization dedicated to raising awareness about workforce challenges and solutions. Through high-quality storytelling, documentaries, and digital content, WorkingNation highlights initiatives that connect people to sustainable careers, prepare workers for the jobs of the future, and foster an inclusive workforce.

About Ares Charitable Foundation

The Ares Charitable Foundation supports initiatives that advance economic opportunity and workforce development. By investing in programs that address employment barriers, the Foundation creates pathways to sustainable careers and financial empowerment.

About WPVI-TV

WPVI-TV, known as 6abc, is the leading local news station serving the Philadelphia region. As an ABC-owned station, it delivers top-rated breaking news, weather, and community-driven content across TV, digital, and social platforms.

Joan Lynch

WorkingNation

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