



Dear STRIVE Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to our new STRIVE National Newsletter, highlighting news from our exceptional [national network](#) of STRIVE Affiliate partners -- all committed to transforming lives through employment.

As STRIVE launches into 2016, we are fully focused on **STRIVE Vision 2020**, an ambitious plan to double our impact in current and new cities, with the goal of serving 5,000 individuals annually by 2020. We will achieve this goal through 1) expansion within existing cities, 2) new program innovation, and 3) selectively launching in new cities.

I invite you to read on and learn more about STRIVE's achievements and plans. With your partnership and support, we look forward to continued growth and impact in 2016!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Weinberg".

Phil Weinberg
President and CEO, STRIVE International

STRIVE Launches New National Initiative for Justice-Involved Youth

Program leaders from six STRIVE Affiliates gathered in New York City in January to kick off *STRIVE Forward*, a new national youth justice initiative, funded with a \$5 million investment from the U.S. Department of Labor. The program serves youth involved in the justice system living in high-poverty, high-crime neighborhoods. Participating *STRIVE Forward* cities include Boston, Chicago, New Haven, Philadelphia, San Diego and Yonkers.

Affiliates implementing *STRIVE Forward* will make use of a new youth Program Manual developed by STRIVE in collaboration with the [Youth Development Institute](#) and [MDRC](#), with funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. To learn more about the STRIVE youth program, view [the presentation](#) delivered by STRIVE International and San Diego Affiliate [Second Chance](#) at the California Workforce Association 2016 Youth Conference.



San Diego Participants in
STRIVE's National Youth Justice Initiative

STRIVE New Orleans Celebrates 1st Anniversary

It has been a year of exceptional results for the newest STRIVE Affiliate, [STRIVE New](#)

Orleans, which opened its doors early in 2015. STRIVE New Orleans was developed as part of the city's [Network for Economic Opportunity](#), created by Mayor Mitch Landrieu to help improve access to job training for the city's most vulnerable jobseekers.

STRIVE New Orleans held five training classes in its inaugural year, graduating more than 100 New Orleanians. Of the many job placements to date, the city's Sewerage and Water Board has already hired 13 STRIVE graduates, with full benefits and pensions. Plans for 2016 include adding a sixth cycle of training.



Mayor Landrieu speaks at STRIVE NOLA's December 2015 graduation.

In a recent [video message](#), Mayor Landrieu said, "At STRIVE NOLA we see men and women of our great city graduating and ready to enter the workplace with new skills and a new sense of pride and determination."

New Career Advancement Initiative Launched in New York City and Philadelphia

A grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) will help increase STRIVE's focus on career advancement at STRIVE New York and [STRIVE Philadelphia](#), a program of Public Health Management Corporation. They are among seven grantees nationwide under WKKF's MOVE UP initiative.

The grant will support STRIVE New York and STRIVE Philadelphia in providing workers with the supports and training needed to move up from entry-level to middle-skilled positions at employer partners such as Mount Sinai Health System.

MOVE UP and a second program, STEPS, are part of WKKF's \$11.6 million national effort with 14 community-based workforce organizations around the country that are focused on increasing employment, workforce mobility and family economic security through a two-generation approach. The goal of the program is to "provide greater access to safe, quality jobs and the skills and training to help parents earn a family-sustaining income and increase the opportunities for their children to succeed in school and in life," according to La June Montgomery Tabron, president and CEO of WKKF. Learn more about MOVE UP in [the Foundation's press release](#).

Closing the Skills Gap: Spotlight on STRIVE Chicago

STRIVE's employment programs are deeply rooted in strong relationships with employers.

In Chicago, STRIVE Affiliate [A Safe Haven Foundation \(ASHF\)](#) quickly reacted when the manufacturing industry in Illinois pinpointed welding as an in-demand career path that pays trainees a living wage.

In response to employer demand from companies like Folding Guard and Freedman Seating, ASHF transformed a warehouse to replicate a manufacturing plant floor. Repurposed and rejuvenated, this building is now home to the organization's Welding and Landscaping vocational skills and paid apprenticeship job



Credit: A Safe Haven Foundation

training programs. The warehouse is equipped with welding booths, along with equipment and safety gear. As part of their STRIVE programming, participants, who are homeless and unemployed, earn their OSHA 10 Certification and train to achieve industry-recognized welding certifications from the American Welding Society.

The combination of sector-based training, placement and supportive services leads to significant success. ASHF's job-training programs, including the Welding Program, successfully graduate and place 86% of the trainees enrolled, with a 75% retention rate.

STRIVE Baltimore Celebrates 200th STRIVE Training Class

Alumni, friends, and supporters gathered last month to celebrate the completion of STRIVE Baltimore's 200th training class. STRIVE's Baltimore Affiliate, [The Center for Urban Families \(CFUF\)](#), marked the occasion with its "Celebration of an Era" event.

The celebration commemorated 17 years of providing pre-employment training and job placement to economically aspiring men and women in Baltimore.

On hand to help celebrate were leaders from The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and The Abell Foundation, two steadfast supporters of STRIVE Baltimore, along with STRIVE President & CEO Phil Weinberg.



CFUF President & CEO Joe Jones speaks at the "Celebration of an Era" event.

CFUF's primary focus is on fathers and families, and STRIVE is integrated into its larger mission of increasing family stability and economic success. This work will receive a boost from a new grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under its New Pathways for Fathers and Families program. A STRIVE Affiliate since 1998, CFUF has successfully graduated over 6,000 men and women from its STRIVE program to date.

STRIVE Women's Empowerment Program Lifts Women Out of Poverty

STRIVE's Women's Empowerment Program expands and strengthens the services STRIVE provides to at-risk women with high barriers to employment. Women often struggle with gender-related family and workplace issues as they try to overcome poverty, homelessness, insufficient education, domestic violence, and long-term unemployment.



On May 6, STRIVE will host the 4th annual Women's Empowerment Lunch at the Metropolitan Club of New York City. New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand is the Honorary Chair of the event and [Tonia O'Connor](#), Univision's Chief Commercial Officer & President of Content Distribution, will be honored. Ticket sales begin March 1 -- stay tuned for more information! To learn about corporate sponsorship opportunities, please contact Meredith Dillard, mdillard@striveinternational.org.

STRIVE Program Leaders Come Together for Professional Learning

STRIVE is proud to have the nation's leading network of workforce practitioners -- all engaged in continuous learning, program innovation and sharing of best practices. The

strong support for Affiliate partners provided by STRIVE includes ongoing professional development opportunities, at both the national and local levels. STRIVE convenes the annual **STRIVE Institute**, a professional development workshop for Affiliate board members, program leaders and staff to address topics such as policy trends, program innovation and implementation, and resource development. The most recent STRIVE Institute, held in summer 2015, focused on the new manual for STRIVE's CORE job readiness program, the result of a comprehensive review process by a STRIVE Task Force on Training Excellence and [Workforce Professionals Training Institute](#).

On an ongoing basis, STRIVE provides technical assistance to Affiliates through regular conference calls and webinars on topics such as fund development, data management, employer partnerships, grant management, skills training and national workforce trends. At the local level, STRIVE's Training Task Force recently traveled to New Orleans to support the STRIVE New Orleans team during its first year of programming. All STRIVE Affiliates access *STRIVEconnect*, STRIVE's online community portal. The STRIVE **Affiliate Leadership Council**, comprised of Affiliate leaders from across the country, convenes regularly to discuss best practices, set network priorities and align program objectives across sites.



Attendees at the 2015 STRIVE Institute in Philadelphia.

"30 Years of Impact" Video Tells the Story of STRIVE

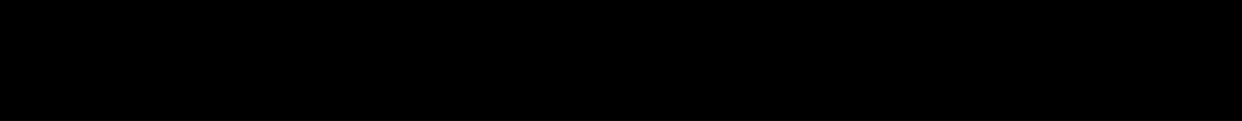
[STRIVE's video](#), created in honor of our 30th anniversary, powerfully illustrates how STRIVE changes lives by equipping participants with the skills and attitudes they need to succeed in work and in life. Watch and learn how STRIVE makes dreams come true!



STRIVE[®]
PREPARED
TO WORK
DETERMINED
TO SUCCEED

STRIVE needs your help to continue providing at-risk individuals with a lifetime of professional and social services. With your generous support, we can continue to transform lives through employment and strengthen families and communities.

[**Donate Now!**](#)



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