

# Welcome Home: Building Evidence- Based Services for the Reentry Population

Houston · November 8, 2018

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# Agenda

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|--------------|---|
| Presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mary McDougall, Executive Director<br/>Operation ABLE, Detroit</li><li>• Pauline Sylvain-Lewis, Director of Economic<br/>Advancement &amp; Financial Opportunity<br/>North Lawndale Employment Network, Chicago</li></ul> |
| Activity     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small table activity</li><li>• Large group share-out</li></ul>  |
| Close        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key takeaways and next steps</li></ul>  |



**Wynne Lum, Bank of America**

**Bank of America**





# Operation ABLE of Michigan

## Culinary Arts Program

Part 1 – Inside the correctional facility

Part 2 – Option to continue after release



# Participants Served

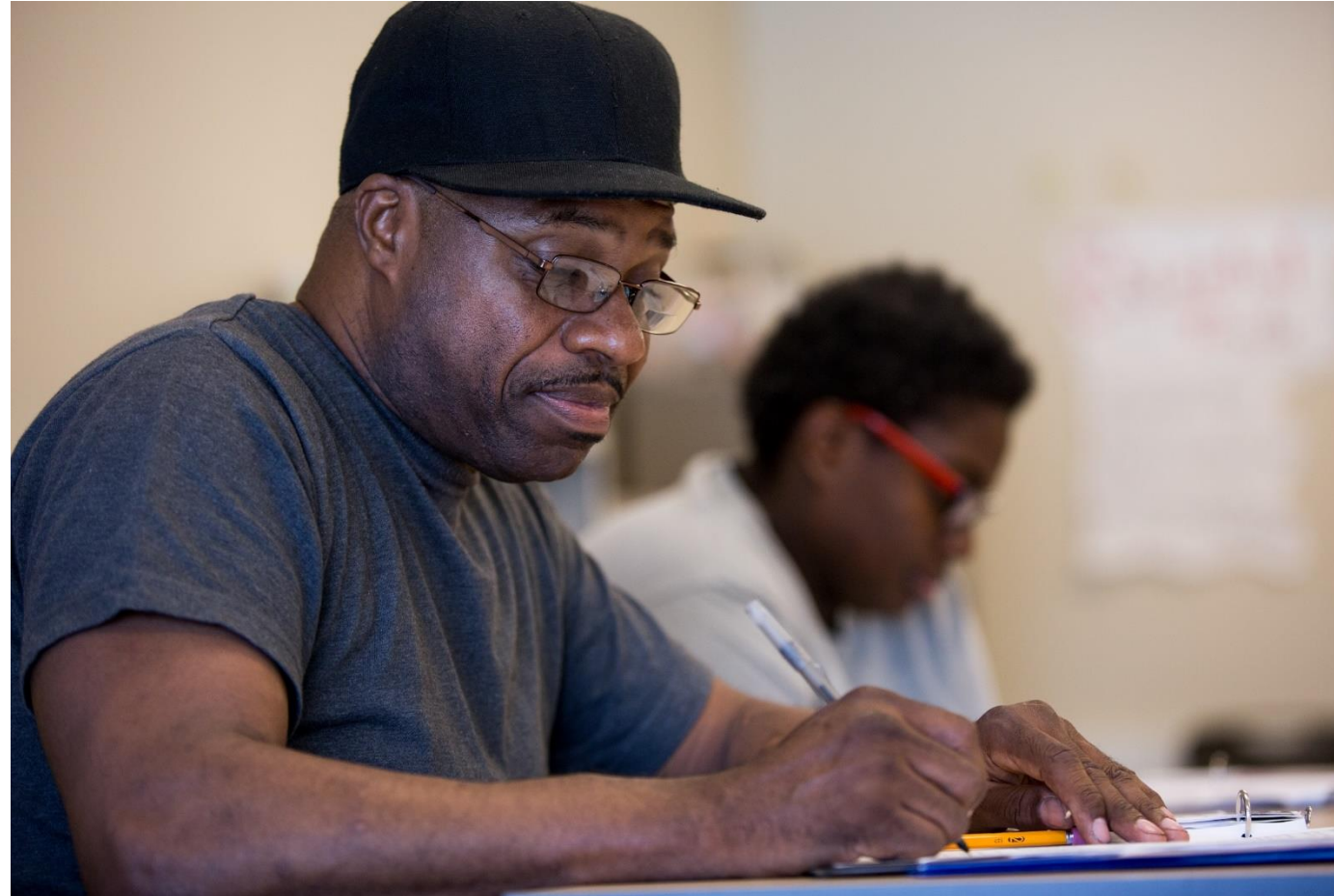
- All men, ranging in age from early twenties to mid sixties
- Some were on parole but most on probation
- All types of offenses
- Length of incarceration ranged from a few months to 40 years





# Inside Correctional Facility

- Trained 123 men over a 20-month period
- 5 nights a week for 3-4 hours (4 weeks per cohort) – lots of kitchen time
- Earned ServSafe Food Handlers Certificate
- Students prepared a meal on final day with guests from the prison, the Mayor's office and guests from local restaurants



# Invited to Finish Course on Outside

- Some came to complete course
- Some came as part of a work experience program
- Some came to get help in general
- Some came for encouragement



# What We Learned: Serving Returning Citizens

- **Understand the stress of “supervision”:** The challenge of probation and parole – often harder than prison!
- **Design for Specific Needs:** Re-entry clients are just like our other clients, yet there are specific differences that require program tailoring
- **Mental Health and Wraparound Supports:** Counseling and supportive resources are vital
- **Both Housing and a Job:** A job and a place to live offer hope and stability
- **Retention matters:** It is not so much about getting a job, but keeping a job



# What We Learned: Staff Cultural Competency

Participants deserve from staff:

- **Respect**
- **Honest feedback**
- **Structure and continuity**
- **Hope** for a better future
- **Connections** to resources – housing, recovery, legal, etc
- **Support group / Ongoing counseling**
- **Someone trustworthy** to talk to
- **Soft skill training**



# What We Learned – Agency Infrastructure

- Agency-wide **commitment** to the population and to learning how to be effective
- Select training in an industry **friendly** to those with a record
- **Resources**, including funds for training curriculum, exams, and needs-related assistance (transportation, incentives, stipends/wages)
- Recognition that success can be **intermittent and individualized**
- Community **linkages** to training partners, service providers, and employers: for participants and staff support!



# North Lawndale Employment Network

Paid Work  
Experience and TDL  
Training

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# Participants served

- Recently released individuals (within 6 months) or currently on parole or probation
- All types of offenses except sexual offenses
- Length of incarceration ranged from a few months to decades



# Deep & Wide Referral Partnerships

- Partner with correctional facilities
- Build relationships with Parole and Probation
- Engage residential reentry centers/halfway houses
- Partner with other agencies serving returning citizens





# Reentry-Specific Program Design

- Risk Needs Assessment and then Career Action Plan
- Individualized next steps: social enterprise and/or TDL training
- Incentives for goal attainment
- Tailored financial coaching: child support, debt, fees, legal, etc
- Long term job retention support, 1+ year

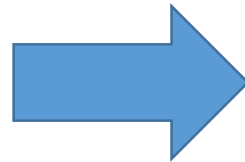




# Tailored Approach: Social Enterprise and/or TDL Training

## On-the-Job Training

- Half day contextualized literacy
- Half day paid work experience at NLEN's social enterprise, Sweet Beginnings
- Tailored financial coaching



## Occupational Training

- In-house TDL training
- Graduation celebrations, lunches, other communal activities
- Employer Engagement and targeted, 1+ year long retention services

# What We Learned: Serving Returning Citizens

- **Risk Needs Assessment and Career Planning:** Understanding “risk needs responsivity” can better inform career and education planning
- **Cash helps, but not only cash:** Incentivize with stipends/wages but also supplement with other non-monetary incentives to motivate towards goal attainment
- **On-The-Job Training:** Some reentry participants need to practice skills and earning income in work setting (and make mistakes in supportive environment)
- **Long term job retention supports:** Engage with graduate at workplace milestones and in between, at least 1+ year post-placement

# What We Learned: Agency Infrastructure

- **Relentless referral partnerships:** Partnering with justice networks means strong pipeline of candidates, and building relationships with Parole and Probation helps participants feel supported
- **Contextualized literacy and strong occupational training:** Building in contextualized education improves skills and career opportunities
- **Tailored financial and job retention coaching:** Address specific acute and long-term financial *and* employment needs of returning citizens
- **Social Enterprise:** Requires significant investment but returns are high



# Small Group Activity



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# Designing for Returning Citizens

- What do you currently offer?
- How can you remove barrier for participants accessing your program and services?
- What tweaks could you make to your program, services, or infrastructure to make it a better fit for the reentry population?





Thank  
you!

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