

CITY OF YOUNGSTOWN

MAYOR JAMAE L TITO BROWN



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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PDC MEDIA RELEASE

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Licensed for Success Initiative

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Mayor Jamael Tito Brown secures \$10,000 DollarWise Innovation Grant to help city residents overcome barriers affecting job access

Mayor Jamael Tito Brown obtained a \$10,000 DollarWise Innovation Grant to implement the *Licensed for Success* initiative. This project identifies and addresses transportation barriers affecting Job Access that have a disproportionate negative impact on the city's low-income community and lead to decreased employment opportunities. This multifaceted initiative will focus on issues often overlooked in economic development initiatives, namely, transportation access barriers to employment.

Licensed for Success will aid a cohort of individuals with support services and a stipend to pay accumulated fees and fines that directly prohibit their ability to obtain a license to drive. The cohort will be enlisted through the city's partner organization, Flying HIGH Inc. Professional Development Center. Members of the cohort will be actively training for or seeking employment and have impediments to obtaining a driver license. Once barriers to licensure are eliminated, their progress towards employment will be closely followed and recorded to identify additional unforeseen obstacles, paying close attention to any that pertain to transportation.

Additionally, a small portion of the DollarWise grant will be used to analyze data collected from participants to produce a concise and compelling case study. This report will become an action plan for the partners in the initiative. The data will show where to strategize and formalize near-to long-term actions to root out policies that unfairly and unjustly burden segments of the population most likely to become engulfed in a vicious cycle of fines, fees, and court appearances.

The Professional Development Center's Welcome Center enables residents to walk in and have access to immediate job opportunities. The Welcome Center is open Monday – Friday from 9:00am – 4:00pm and located on the 7th floor of the Chase Bank building in downtown Youngstown. Ph. 330-797-3995.

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