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Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation

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Cuyahoga Land Bank, Career Development and Placement Strategies Inc. partner to create a fatherhood initiative workforce development opportunity

The Cuyahoga Land Bank and Career Development and Placement Strategies Inc. (CDPSI) are launching a pilot program that provides home renovation training to formerly incarcerated fathers through hands-on participation in the renovation of three Cuyahoga Land Bank properties during an internship period. Fathers seeking workforce re-entry and to strengthen their families are screened and selected for program participation. The Cleveland Foundation and the Cuyahoga County Office of Re-Entry are funding partners in the project.

"The Cuyahoga Land Bank's program can benefit the community by being strategic on deploying resources to rebuild - our homes and our people - in an approach that will build neighborhoods and teach new skills that translate to today's work force and employment opportunities," said Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald.

If the pilot is successful, every couple of months, two fathers that have completed CDPSI's Rising Above Job Readiness Program will be employed as full-time interns on the renovation of three Cuyahoga Land Bank properties under the supervision of a general contractor. During the course of their internship, these two fathers will earn \$9/hour and receive comprehensive training on the various aspects of home renovation, including: how to estimate project costs; project management; work schedule preparation; proper dress codes; OSHA safety certification; drywall; tool usage; selection and purchase; painting; trim/millwork; framing; door and window installation/removal; and flooring.



In addition to on-the-job training, the interns will also receive entrepreneurship training focused on providing the basics necessary to start and run a renovation business as a sole proprietor. This training will introduce the interns to contract development, budgeting, mechanic's liens, invoicing, insurance and bonding.



Once the interns have successfully completed the 560 hour training program, they will receive a Certificate of Completion, a recommendation from the general contractor that has been acting as their supervisor and will receive priority consideration from the Cuyahoga Land Bank for selected future renovation work.

The Cuyahoga Land Bank and CDPSI have come together to make this workforce development program

possible.

“We are always looking for ways to create opportunities for the community using the resources that we have,” said Gus Frangos, President of the Cuyahoga Land Bank. “Through this partnership with CDPSI, we are able to transform our properties into training platforms. The end result is at least six successfully renovated properties a year and at least four lives that have been permanently improved.”

The Cuyahoga Land Bank will make three homes available per internship cycle as well as up to \$45,000 in program administrative costs per home, which will be recovered once the rehabilitated home is purchased by a qualified buyer. Furthermore, CDPSI will provide for the funding of tools and materials for each of the renovations and cover up to \$300 in transportation costs for the interns in the form of RTA passes. CDPSI will recruit and hire the interns as well as the general contractor and provide administrative support.



“Our mission is to provide workforce and personal development training opportunities to our target population. We are privileged and honored to be in partnership with Cuyahoga Land Bank, which gives us the ability to add technical skills training to existing programming that has a proven track record of success,” said Maurice Stevens, Executive Director of CDPSI. “Thanks to the County’s Fatherhood Initiative Program and the Community Endeavors Foundation. Historically, our participants have been faced with multiple barriers to becoming successful in the employment market. This will assist in eliminating one critical barrier – the lack of experience to be competitive in the job market. Clearly, this partnership will create economic and job development for the greater Cleveland area.”

Note: A program participant can be made available to the press for comment – Please contact Katherine Bulava at (216) 357-9508 to set up an interview.

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