

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Louisville awarded \$1.3 million in new federal funding to expand Reimage program**

*Program helps youth transition from court system to jobs, education*

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Oct. 18, 2018)** – Mayor Greg Fischer announced today that Louisville has been awarded additional federal funding to increase efforts to help break the cycle of crime and violence among young adults ages 18-24, by connecting them to training, jobs and education.

The \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor will expand the city's existing Reimage program, targeting an additional 200 young adults who have been involved in the court system. The new grant will fund training to get youth into jobs in key fields including technology, manufacturing, construction and youth development. Participants will also get help with continuing their education, navigating the court system and addressing drug and alcohol issues.

“Connecting with these young people and giving them a second chance is not only the right thing to do, it’s a key part of our strategy for preventing violence and creating safer neighborhoods,” Mayor Fischer said. “Providing rapid training and connecting them to jobs and careers increases their chance for success, while also reducing the odds that they will be further involved in crime and violence.”

Louisville is among five communities receiving grants and joining the national reentry project known as the Compass Rose Collaborative, which is led by FHI 360, an international nonprofit working to improve the health and well-being of people in the United States and around the world. The other communities are Boston, Baltimore, Albany, N.Y., and Southeast Arkansas.

"I'm thrilled to see this federal investment being made here in Louisville to provide at-risk youth and young people involved in the court system with a better shot at improving their lives," said Congressman John Yarmuth. "The Reimage program's targeted approach helps lead young people down a path for success through education, job training, and work experience, reducing incidents of crime and violence and promoting a safer Louisville."

The new funding allows the hiring of four additional Reimage team members, including three Career Pathway Coaches, who will focus on connecting youth to training and jobs in the key business sectors, and providing follow-up and support.

A variety of training will be available to participants. For example, youth interested in manufacturing will be able to join existing classes at the Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center. Those targeting the construction field can enroll in the Kentuckiana Builds program at the Louisville Urban League. In the technology field -- the Google IT Support Professional Certificate will prepare young adults for entry level jobs in IT support in about eight months through a combination of online learning and mentoring from a dedicated IT coach.

The social services track will combine internships with participation in a series of professional youth development workshops.

All career pathways will connect with KentuckianaWorks' existing employer partnerships in manufacturing, construction, technology and youth development.

More than 440 young people have enrolled in Reimage since it began in in September, 2015, and the program has achieved a recidivism rate of less than five percent. Staff with the program do street-level outreach in high-need neighborhoods, including Shawnee, Russell and Park Hill, although eligible youth from all areas of Louisville can participate.

"We appreciate the confidence that FHI 360 has with our record of providing skills and confidence to people of all ages," said Michael Gritton, executive director of KentuckianaWorks. "I mentor a Reimage participant, and I've seen with my own eyes the difference this program can make in the life of a young adult."

Reimage is a collaboration between KentuckianaWorks and the city's Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods (OSHN).

"Reimage has been a key part of our goal of helping every young person in every neighborhood have every chance to realize their full human potential," said Rev. Vincent James, who oversees OSHN as the city's Chief of Community Building. "This new emphasis on workforce training will provide even greater opportunities for success for these youth and their families."

In addition to recruitment efforts in the targeted neighborhoods, young people are referred to the program by partner agencies including OSHN, Department of Juvenile Justice, Louisville Metro Youth Detention Services, the Louisville Public Defender, Kentucky Youth Career Center, Restorative Justice Louisville and JCPS.

Individuals 18 and over who are interested in being a Reimage mentor or any youth interested in joining the program can call (502) 574- 4115 or go to [wearekycc.org/reimage](http://wearekycc.org/reimage).