**Capital Workforce Partners Receives Hartford Foundation Grant to Support Hartford Region’s Returning Citizens**

***Job training and support services for formerly incarcerated and other residents boosted by funding from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving***

Hartford, CONN. – January 30, 2023 - Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) today announced that it has received $299,885 in grant funding from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to support CWP’s BEST Chance Program.  The BEST Chance Program is an initiative which provides under-skilled, under-employed, and unemployed returning citizens with the education and training necessary to secure living wage jobs in high-growth industries.

The Hartford Foundation’s grant will allow CWP to provide more BEST Chance participants from Greater Hartford with training, job placement and retention, mental health counseling, and other services, and evaluation.  BEST Chance is designed to connect participants to opportunities to overcome literacy, health, housing, access to good jobs, and other challenges by tapping flexible support funds in the grant and a referral network of partner agencies.  Led by CWP, BEST Chance services are offered by a partnership that includes the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Connecticut Department of Corrections, Community Partners in Action, the Reentry Welcome Center, Career Resources Inc., Career Resources, Inc., NAACP, and other second-chance advocates.

In addition to helping returning citizens, the Hartford Foundation’s grant will aid BEST Chance in serving justice-involved youth (JIY), young people aged 18 to 24 who have been arrested, though not necessarily incarcerated.  These young people have a higher risk of recidivism than other age groups and are in need of training and employment supports.

“Capital Workforce Partners is incredibly grateful to the Hartford Foundation, not only for its generous financial support of our programs, but also for the years of sustained collaboration with our organization,” said Alex B. Johnson, president & chief executive officer of CWP.  “This funding will make a real difference in the lives of returning citizens and justice-involved youth as well as their broader communities.  Every BEST Chance participant who becomes gainfully employed results not only in reduced incarceration and social service costs, but also meets the workforce needs of Connecticut employers and stimulates the local economy by increasing tax revenue.  The return on investment for BEST Chance participants  is remarkable, and we appreciate the Hartford Foundation making it possible for us to serve even more people.”

Jay Williams, president of the Hartford Foundation said, “The foundation began supporting BEST Chance in 2016, and this additional funding will help participants who need support in building their academic and work readiness skills advance in their career paths to better jobs. We know that Black and Latinx populations are disproportionately represented in the justice system, and we need to help ensure that all Greater Hartford residents have opportunities to advance their economic and social mobility to reach their potential.”

While the October 2022 unemployment rate for the Hartford area was 3.9%, the rate in City of Hartford was 6.2%.  Further, research indicates that that the unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated individuals can be as much as five times higher than the national rate.  Funding from the Hartford Foundation will help the BEST Chance Program make a positive impact on the unemployment rate for people returning home from incarceration and justice-impacted youth in Greater Hartford.

***About Capital Workforce Partners***

*As the state’s Regional Workforce Development Board for north central Connecticut, Capital Workforce Partners helps individuals overcome barriers to employment and closes the gap between skills and business hiring needs. Capital Workforce Partners invests in youth and future workforce development, develops sustainable career paths for adult workers, and assists employers in targeted industries through a variety of programs and services provided through the American Job Center network.  Capital Workforce Partners is a 501 (c)3, private, non-profit organization.  Please visit* [*www.capitalworkforce.org*](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=http%3a%2f%2fwww.capitalworkforce.org&c=E,1,IZtJ5hAAJsiAy59YUfV51PBEN4aEbl7s81GAQjW3LOUHVsfcfCIthvA5k88q4nGFAzs9_MDZnfI4i0cqqyvgUW7j-E6YNwcFdE-OzJuFlkighiMyWZQ,&typo=1) *for more information.*

***About Hartford Foundation for Public Giving***

*The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is the community foundation for Hartford and 28 surrounding communities. Made possible by the gifts of generous individuals, families and organizations, the Foundation has awarded grants of more than $948 million since its founding in 1925. For more information about the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, visit* [*www.hfpg.org*](http://www.hfpg.org) *or call 860-548-1888.*