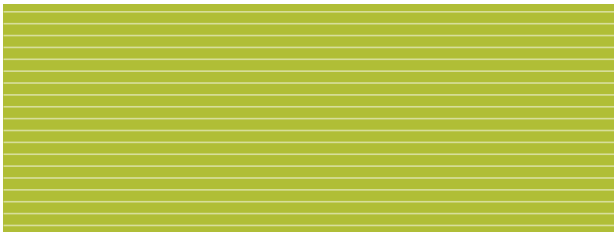




CEO

**COMMUNITY
EMPOWERMENT
& OPPORTUNITY**

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





“We did not feel prepared to be the heirs of such a terrifying hour. But within it we found the power to author a new chapter, to offer hope and laughter to ourselves.

So, while once we asked, how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe, now we assert, how could catastrophe possibly prevail over us? We will not march back to what was, but move to what shall be.”

- Excerpt from *The Hill We Climb* by Amanda Gorman

FROM THE Executive Director

Fewer words were better written than these by the young poet Amanda Gorman to capture how I was thinking of CEO's charge as we headed into 2021. CEO had always been focused on advancing economic justice and opportunity by eliminating racial disparities that harm communities of color. The challenge of 2021 meant growing into the moment to recover from the devastating impact of COVID-19 equitably while keeping focus on our core work as Philadelphia's Community Action Agency. Here's some of how we did it:

- To protect wealth built by entrepreneurs of color, CEO partnered with the Philadelphia Department of Commerce to make emergency grants to beauty salons and barber shops. These businesses help sustain our neighborhood shopping corridors, are capital-building opportunities for entrepreneurs of color, and are vital gathering spaces for the community. (pg. 21)
- We helped remove barriers to economic mobility for individuals who are incarcerated and their loved ones by working with the Philadelphia Department of Prisons to increase the amount of free phone and video communication at county jails. Research shows communication is vital for successful re-entry to the community after incarceration. (pg. 13)
- The newly expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) held the promise of lifting 75,000 Philadelphians out of poverty through advance monthly payments of \$250 or \$300 per child to families earning as little as \$0. This is exactly what the U.S. should be doing: providing flexible cash assistance so every family can be healthy, safe, and stable. CEO led the community outreach to ensure families were able to claim their money. (pg. 16)
- Far too many of our youth felt hopeless as they were isolated from their friends, their community, and their support system when our schools were forced to go virtual during 2020. That made the work of our Youth Strategies Unit critical in 2021 as they re-engaged high school students around planning their future through one-on-one coaching and group supports. (pg. 11)

Additionally, CEO's long-standing work was as important as ever in funding and partnering with others to ensure Philadelphians enroll in the benefits they are eligible for (pg. 16), receive financial counseling (pg. 12), get access to housing (pg. 14), and engaged in our collective impact work in the West Philadelphia Promise Zone (pg. 19).

To do this work, we invested in building our team in 2021. We brought on our first deputy director of family supports and basic needs, our first policy director, and a new data manager, among other roles. These and other new CEO staff are helping us fulfill the commitment we made to you in our [2019 Strategic Framework](#).

This is the work of community action and the work of CEO: We look holistically at the barriers to stability and mobility Philadelphians face in housing, economic opportunity, education, neighborhood conditions, and basic needs. Then we act strategically to address those barriers: as a **FUNDER** of people and programs, an **ADVOCATE** of policy change, a **CONVENER** to bring stakeholders together, and a thinker that **USES DATA** to inform action. You'll see in the pages that follow how we play those roles.

Please join us in our march toward a more equitable city for all Philadelphians. Follow us on Twitter @PHL_CEO, like us on Facebook @PHL_CEO, sign up for our email updates at www.phila.gov/ceo, or join us at one of our upcoming events.

Mitch Little, Executive Director

ABOUT Us

COMMUNITY ACTION. The Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) serves as the Community Action Agency (CAA) for the City of Philadelphia. As a CAA, CEO administers Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds in support of the agency's mission to promote economic mobility for Philadelphia residents by advancing racial equity and economic inclusion.

The Community Action Program was created by the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act as a means to fight against poverty. Its mission is to help families and individuals with low incomes gain self-sufficiency and mobility out of poverty. CEO is the only Community Action Agency in Philadelphia.

PUBLIC SERVICE. In addition to serving as the city's CAA, CEO is a public agency, serving as part of the City of Philadelphia's Health and Human Services (HHS) Cabinet. We work in collaboration and partnership with other HHS departments including the Office of Homeless Services, Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, Department of Public Health, Mayor's Commission on Aging, and the Office of Domestic Violence Strategies. CEO also serves in leadership roles addressing critical needs within the city's neighborhoods related to racial equity and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION. Our dual roles in community action and public service guide our activities, programs, and investments. CEO has two overarching strategies and four key roles that serve as the pillars for our strategic framework. They define how CEO functions on a day-to-day basis and provide the underlying structure that guides how CEO organizes itself as well as how it allocates personnel and investment dollars.

MISSION

The Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity provides leadership on issues of economic justice by advancing racial equity and inclusive growth to ensure that all Philadelphians might share in the city's prosperous future.

GUIDING Principles

WE BELIEVE:

City government has the responsibility to provide opportunities to and promote the well-being of all residents while representing their best interests.

The people of Philadelphia deserve the opportunity to live happy, healthy, full lives.

People can offer meaningful insights into both their personal experiences and how the systems around them function.

Poverty is a systemic issue and city government can lead in dismantling the barriers that often prevent opportunities.

OVERARCHING Strategies

- » CEO advocates at the program, operational, and system level for solutions for mobility out of poverty
- » CEO is guided by listening to, supporting, and including communities while working collaboratively to foster greater economic mobility

ROLES

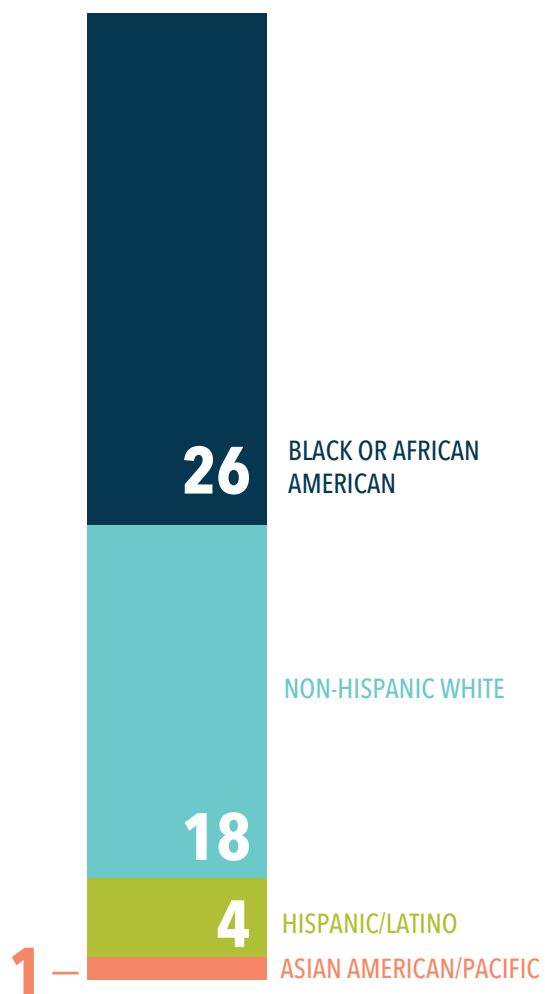
- » **INFORM AND ADVOCATE:** We support policy changes with a focus on equity, economic mobility, and community inclusion.
- » **UTILIZE DATA:** We use data to define, track, report, and inform equitable solutions to alleviate poverty in Philadelphia.
- » **SUPPORT AND LEAD PROGRAMS:** We fund programs through community partners that have a direct and visible impact on empowering people to rise out of poverty. We also lead by deploying CEO staff to those efforts.
- » **HOST CONVENINGS:** We convene city and regional stakeholders to coordinate and bolster economic mobility efforts.

VALUES

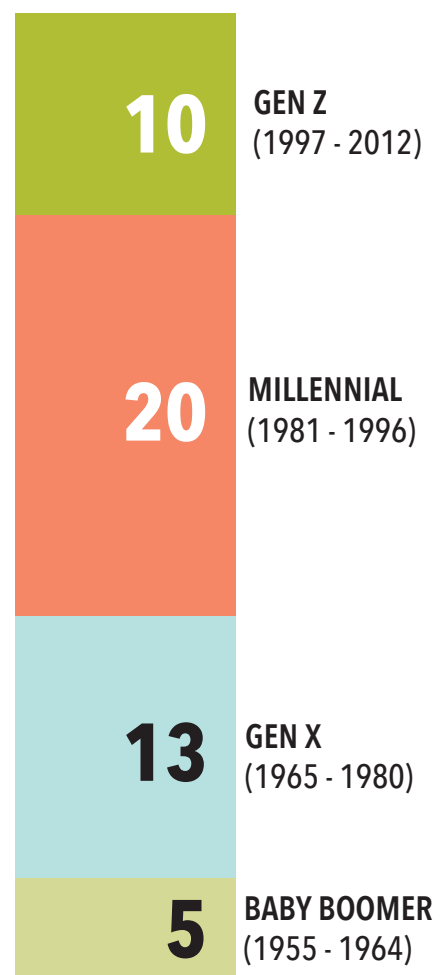
- » **DIGNITY:** How we treat the community we serve is reflective of how we treat each other.
- » **INCLUSIVITY:** We all benefit when the talents and contributions of all members are available to our communities.
- » **PERSISTENCE:** When we get discouraged, we find ways to lift each other up and push forward.
- » **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We are transparent and honest about our plans, our actions, and our results.
- » **HONESTY:** We create a safe space without judgment to have healthy and honest dialogue about systems, people, and misconceptions.

STAFFING Snapshot

RACE AND ETHNICITY AT CEO



AGE GROUPINGS AT CEO



IMPACT in 2021

OVER \$14.8M

in federal refunds processed for low-income Philadelphians by our tax preparation partners



\$4.8 MILLION

Received in cumulative public benefits from 1,781 confirmed enrollments



1,058 PARTICIPANTS

received 1-on-1 financial counseling services.



1,678

unemployed adults who obtained employment



\$1.8 MILLION

In grants supported by the West Philadelphia Promise Zone focusing on education, workforce development, public safety, health and wellness, housing and economic opportunity.

West Philadelphia
**PROMISE
ZONE**

100%

of 370 seniors served by Promise Corps graduated high school.

West Philadelphia
**PROMISE
CORPS**

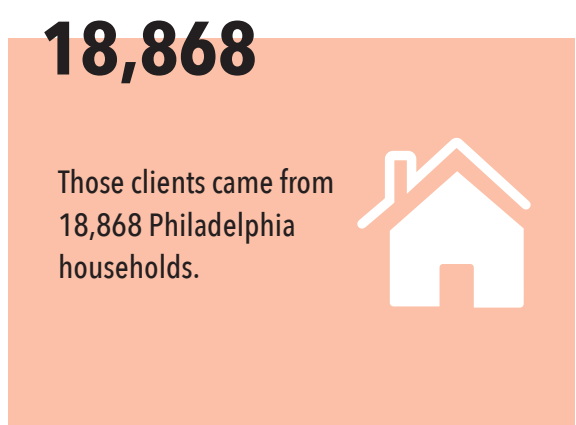
CURRENT PROGRAMS and Investments

CEO's current portfolio of programs and investments covers employment services, youth strategies, financial inclusion, income supports, housing security, and place-based initiatives. We also worked in 2021 to help Philadelphians recover and rebuild from COVID-19.

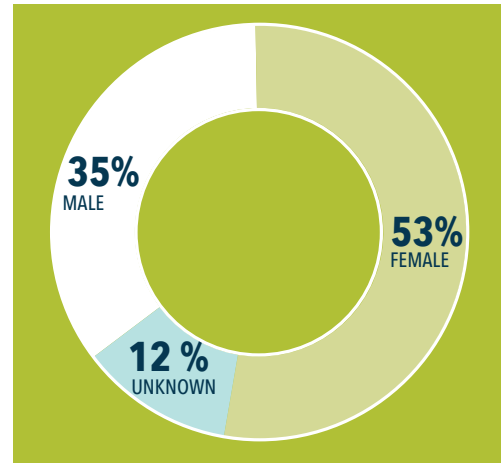
OVERVIEW OF CEO CLIENTS Served in 2021

In 2021, CEO helped **23,397 PHILADELPHIANS** advance toward economic mobility.

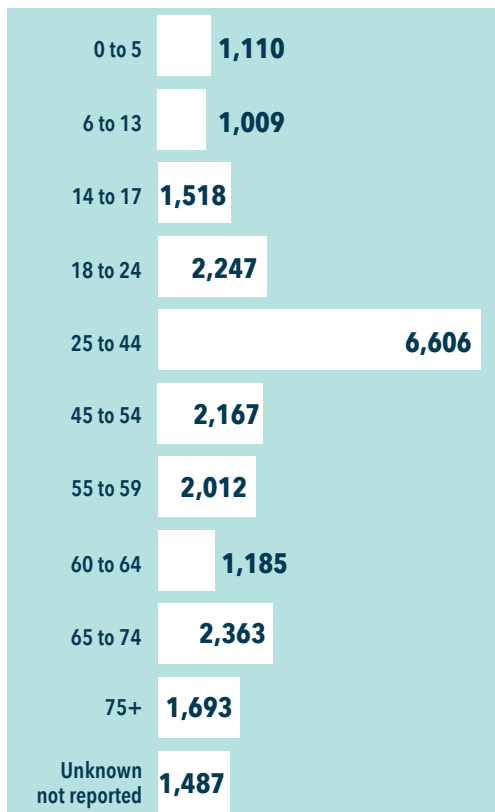
HOUSEHOLDS Helped



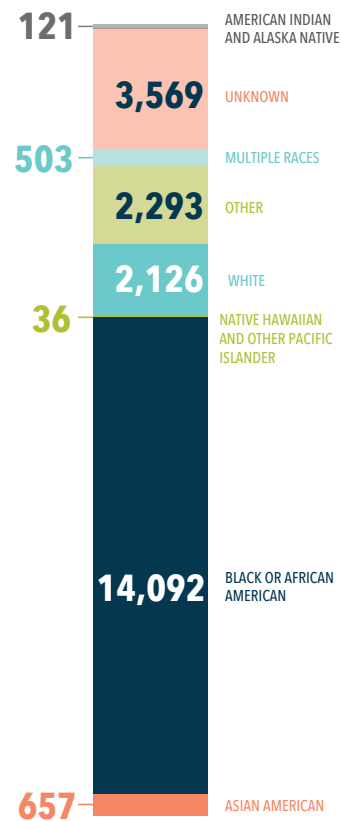
GENDER



AGE



RACE



EMPLOYMENT Services

A key to economic mobility is having a job that offers a family-sustaining wage, yet many Philadelphians face significant barriers to living-wage employment. As a Community Action Agency, CEO is required to conduct a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) every three years assessing the extent of local needs and resources. In the CNA survey, among those who cited finding or keeping a job as a top challenge, one in four low-income respondents said they needed help finding or keeping a job because of childcare, and nearly one in four (24%) noted that their criminal history was an employment barrier.

CEO continues to provide services to the most vulnerable jobseekers, such as those lacking a high school diploma, returning citizens, and young adults. CEO provides funding for the Center for Employment Opportunities, which has a workforce training model that has a proven track record of connecting returning citizens to career pathways. The Center for Employment Opportunities is a nationally recognized, evidence-based model for combating recidivism that provides adults with short-term, paid transitional employment while supporting their efforts to get and retain unsubsidized, full-time employment.

CEO also provides funding for First Step Staffing, a non-profit, light-industrial alternative staffing agency. First Step Staffing offers employment opportunities for individuals transitioning out of homelessness, including veterans, returning citizens, and others facing barriers to employment.

CEO administers a grant from the PA Department of Human Services for the provision of Work Ready services for eligible Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). JEVS Human Services provides an intensive case management services program focusing on the management of families' mental health, rehabilitation, social support, and other needs. Program services are designed to help participants and their families secure and retain employment by removing barriers and building skills.

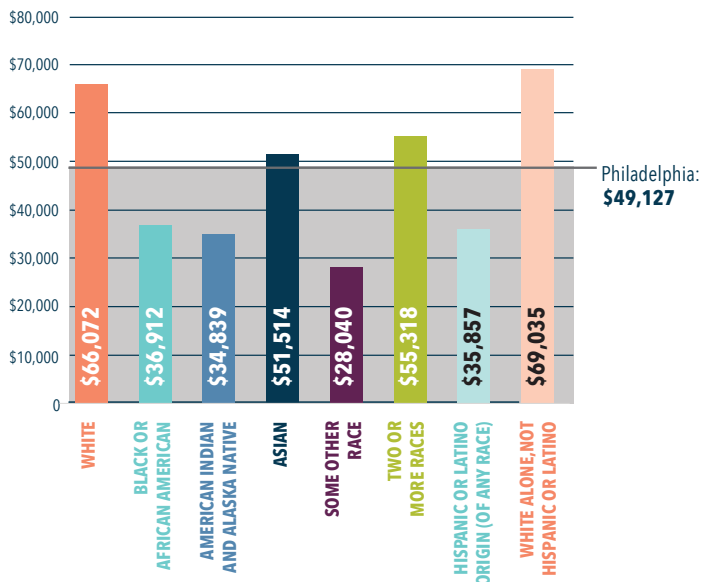
KEY Outcomes

2,078 PARTICIPANTS enrolled in program services at First Step Staffing. About **72 PERCENT** were placed into jobs.

280 WORK READY PARTICIPANTS enrolled in a pre-credentialed activity, such as obtaining a GED or their high school diploma. **94 PARTICIPANTS** obtained employment toward their career path after long periods of unemployment.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

in the past 12 months by Race and Ethnicity in Philadelphia



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020, S1903

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES Client Story

Meet Mr. Griffin

Mr. Griffin went to First Step Staffing in June 2021 after getting a referral from his cousin who had obtained employment through First Step. He had recently returned home from incarceration and was unsatisfied with the treatment at his first job.

First Step provided him with job coaching and other resources. Shortly after he completed the intake process, Mr. Griffin was asked how soon he could start a job, to which he replied "tomorrow." To his surprise, he was placed with an employer the next day, a food distribution warehouse where he is still employed. The job offered higher pay and eventually hired him permanently.

Mr. Griffin obtained a full-time job with better wages after receiving services from First Step Staffing.



"I didn't think it would happen that fast. Usually it'll be 'Okay, we'll give you a call and set up a time,'" he said. "I told them what I wanted to do, they helped me out, and I got it...literally the next day. I got in there the next day, and I've been working ever since."

A year later, Mr. Griffin has transitioned from unloading trucks to working in sanitation. He credits the placement from First Step Staffing with not only helping him earn an honest living, but also getting more stable housing and being able to provide for his two children.

"I was able to catch up, take care of the kids and do what I needed to do," he added.

YOUTH Strategies

In Philadelphia, 15 percent of adults over the age of 25, or 164,444 individuals, do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Nearly 37 percent of them live in poverty, and 14 percent live in deep poverty. These data also illustrate the impact that educational attainment has on economic mobility: poverty rates decline by about 35 percent for Philadelphians who complete high school, while earning an advanced degree is associated with declines ranging from 54 to 75 percent.

CEO's Youth Strategies Unit works to break the cycle of poverty by leveraging our Promise Corps initiative, which is uniquely positioned to impact the academic advancement of students in the West Philadelphia Promise Zone. Promise Corps provides teams of

AmeriCorps College and Career Coaches (CCCs) to four high schools: West Philadelphia High School, William Sayre High School, School of the Future, and Overbrook High School. Promise Corps exposes students to post-secondary options, including diverse careers and college pathways, then collaboratively plans towards the most desired post-secondary plan for each student by role-modeling positive self-esteem, high expectations, persistence, and resilience. Students receive academic assistance, graduation support, career exposure, college access guidance, paid internships, and employment opportunities.

KEY Outcomes

587 STUDENTS across four high schools were served by the Promise Corps Program and received academic assistance, post-secondary coaching, resume building support and career awareness workshops.

377 SENIORS received support on their final project required for graduation, college application prep, FAFSA and aid package help, and scholarship application assistance.

92 STUDENTS went on a college visit or a field trip to learn about post-secondary opportunities in the industries of engineering, marketing, hospitality, media, entertainment and leisure.

A group of students enrolled in Promise Corps visited the Temple University Center City campus as part of their college visits.



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Philadelphians with low incomes and those historically marginalized need a spectrum of income supports, money management services, and asset-building opportunities to secure their financial futures. CEO's focus is to advance economic justice using the lens of racial equity by working with partner agencies to ensure that residents have access to quality financial empowerment services. CEO and its non-profit partner, Clarifi, continue to operate Financial Empowerment Centers (FECs) across the city. By serving clients who are predominantly low-income and from communities that have been historically marginalized, FECs are positioned at the forefront of the fight to close the racial wealth gap, more equitably distribute wealth, and empower clients to thrive in a modern economy. FECs assist residents in reducing debt, increasing savings, improving credit scores, preparing for homeownership, and opening bank accounts.

Among a sub-sample of 2020 CNA Survey respondents who identified household finances as a top challenge, households with incomes below poverty were much more likely to be financially strained at the end of a typical month. Twenty-six percent of respondents below poverty lacked a bank account and 45 percent lacked a personal credit card, compared to 7 percent and 16 percent for respondents above poverty, respectively. Within this sub-sample, unaffordable municipal fines and fees was a problem for 43 percent of respondents below poverty, compared to 26 percent of respondents above poverty.

To further address financial shortfalls, summer employment opportunities provide an option for youth and young adults to enter the workforce and engage in the economy at a critical time, when they are developing their professional interests and exploring longer-term career pathways. Paid work experiences are particularly critical for low-income young people, who can earn additional income while developing connections to caring adults, build social capital through access to professional networks, gain work-readiness skills, and gain exposure to high-growth fields and real-world professional work environments. Summer Jobs Connect is a partnership between CEO, Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN), and the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund to provide banking access, direct deposit, and financial empowerment training and access to safe and appropriate financial services to youth and young adults ages 12-24 participating in WorkReady Philadelphia summer, schoolyear, and year-round youth employment programs.

CEO also leads the Philadelphia Bank On Coalition. This initiative is aimed at tackling financial access and financial education to reduce the number of people who are unbanked in Philadelphia by offering low- or no-fee accounts that meet the Bank On National Account Standards.

KEY Outcomes

Financial education workshops were held for youth, with over **200 TOTAL ATTENDEES**, on topics including opening a bank account, credit management, and budgeting.

1,058 CLIENTS RECEIVED 1-on-1 financial counseling services. Of those, **339 CLIENTS** increased their savings through bank accounts; **63 CLIENTS reduced their debt by 10 percent**; and **103 CLIENTS increased their credit score by 35 points**.

379 YOUTH signed up for direct deposit with PYN.

Since 2018, the number of safe and affordable "Bank On" checking accounts available in the market has tripled, going from **THREE ACCOUNTS IN 2018 TO NOW 10 AT NINE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**.

CEO AS DATA ANALYST, ADVOCATE:

Using Data for Fines & Fees Justice

In addition to leading and supporting programs, CEO also seeks to inform, advocate, and collaborate for policies with a focus on equity, economic mobility, and justice.

To increase opportunities for economic mobility for returning citizens and their families, in 2020, CEO joined a national partnership called Cities and Counties for Fine & Fee Justice (CCFFJ). CEO led a working group which included staff from several departments to evaluate the impact of financial obligations charged to incarcerated individuals and their families. Part of that evaluation included a survey of current and formerly incarcerated individuals and their loved ones. Among its findings, the survey revealed that 96 percent of respondents reported relying on loved ones to financially support them while incarcerated and 84 percent of respondents reported times that they could not afford to call their loved ones while incarcerated.

CEO provided the survey data to the Philadelphia Department of Prisons, which was able to use the data to support eliminating their commissary surcharges for individuals who are incarcerated, more than doubling the amount of free communication per week and

adding video conferencing. The collaborative effort earned a 2021 “Budgie” Award for Racial Equity from the City of Philadelphia’s Finance Director for increasing equity in how budget decisions are made and targeting resources to reduce disparities.

Additionally, CEO partnered with Drexel University, Rutgers University, and others to secure \$1.5 million in funding to study the effect of fee elimination on criminal diversion court outcomes. Starting later this year, the researchers will eliminate fees for Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD) participants to determine if fee elimination leads to more individuals completing ARD and eliminates racial disparities in ARD outcomes. ARD is a program usually for first time offenders. The program is intended to encourage offenders to make a fresh start after participating in a rehabilitative program and offers them the possibility of dismissal of charges and the expungement of the offender’s arrest record upon completion of the program.

THE IMPACT of CRIMINAL COURT AND PRISON FINES AND FEES in Philadelphia



CEO’s report on the impact of fines and fees in Philadelphia highlighted key findings from a survey of incarcerated individuals and their loved ones.

HOUSING Security

Low incomes and rising housing costs mean many households struggle to afford a safe place to call home. Thirty-two percent of all owners and nearly 53 percent of all renter households in Philadelphia are cost-burdened, paying more than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs.

To promote housing security for vulnerable individuals, CEO provides funding for the Office of Homeless Services' Homeless Prevention Program, a rental assistance program for those facing homelessness. CEO continues to offer direct assistance to the Department of Public Health's Lead and Healthy Homes Program, which provides support to families with children under age six who test positive for elevated blood lead levels. Helping individuals maintain housing is also critical for fostering economic mobility. CNA focus group and qualitative survey participants noted that it is very hard to apply for a job without an address.

Returning citizens and opportunity youth surveyed as part of the CNA said that having a criminal record (or fear of a criminal record) was keeping them from housing or being added to the lease of a family member in public housing. In 2021, CEO also partnered with JPMorgan Chase and Clarifi to provide financial and housing counseling and housing supports to individuals in re-entry as part of a pilot program. CEO's referral partner was the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Eastern District of Pennsylvania Court on the Supervision to Aid Re-Entry (STAR) Program. STAR is a voluntary program for individuals leaving federal incarceration that targets those with a high risk of recidivism. In addition to the financial and housing counseling funded by CEO and JPMorgan Chase, CEO also funded micro-grants of \$1,000 and targeted additional grants from OHS to provide funds to participants to pay for housing move-in or ongoing rental assistance.

KEY Outcomes

225 INDIVIDUALS FACING HOMELESSNESS received rental assistance from OHS to remain in their homes or relocate to suitable housing.

327 HOUSEHOLDS received lead remediation and/or virtual lead poisoning prevention education.

OVER 40 PARTICIPANTS in the pilot STAR program engaged with Clarifi and received an average of **7 COUNSELING SESSIONS** each to work toward their individual financial and housing goals.

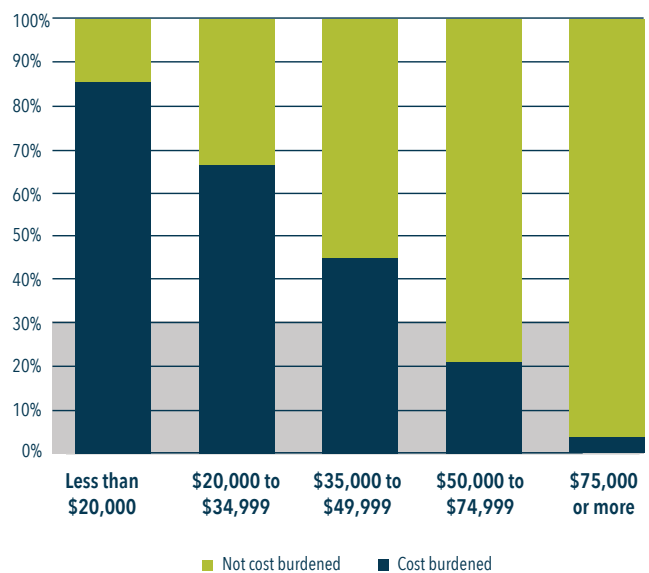


CEO AS ADVOCATE, CONVENER: the Housing Security Working Group

CEO convenes the Housing Security Working Group (HSWG), which strives to collectively advance changes to systems, policies, and programs to prevent evictions and ameliorate the effects of evictions for Philadelphia residents. The HSWG is leading the implementation efforts for the recommendations issued by the Mayor's Taskforce on Eviction Prevention and Response. It prioritizes residents (both landlords and tenants) living below the poverty line, especially those in substandard housing. In 2021, action teams affiliated with the HSWG advocated for legislation that would increase consistency and transparency in the tenant screening process, provided input on implementing regulations for the City's Right to Counsel initiative, and worked with partners in law enforcement to improve their ability to identify and respond to illegal evictions. HSWG members also provided strategic and programmatic support to the City's Eviction Diversion Program, which was critical to keep families housed at the height of the pandemic, and worked with a communications firm to plan for a campaign designed to help tenants access information about available programs and resources.

HOUSEHOLD COST BURDEN BY INCOME IN PHILADELPHIA

Rates are highest for households with incomes below \$34,999



A household is considered Cost Burdened if 30% or more of their income goes to housing expenditures.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020

INCOME Supports

CEO works to strengthen the social safety net by funding programs that supplement income for individuals living at or near the poverty level. These programs help Philadelphians afford basic needs and stabilize their households until they can achieve economic independence. Inability to afford basic needs not only results in financial strain, but psychological and mental stress as well, according to numerous studies.

Through CEO's Benefits Access Unit and BenePhilly Centers, operated in partnership with Benefits Data Trust, CEO offers individuals and families access to over 20 public benefits, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Homestead Exemption, and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Our Benefits Access Unit, run by CEO staff, is strategically deployed to high-need areas and operates a mobile unit used for travel to community events.

CEO provides funds to Community Legal Services (CLS) for legal assistance for those denied for benefits and to host expungement clinics to assist clients with obtaining criminal and arrest record expungements to make clients more employable.

With the adoption of President Biden's American Rescue Plan and the expansion of the federal Child Tax Credit (CTC), CEO made a significant new investment in 2021 in Campaign for Working Families for free community-based tax preparation. We also supported the Latino Economic Development Collective, which is led by Ceiba and includes HACE, Congreso, and Esperanza, to expand their free tax prep services to the Latino/a/x community. Additionally, CEO coordinated the City's outreach efforts to families with low incomes who are most likely to miss out on tax benefits. This outreach, done in partnership with the Mayor's Policy Office and PhillyCounts, included phone calls, text messages, mailings, and spreading the word through the media to educate families about the benefits they are eligible for.

KEY Outcomes

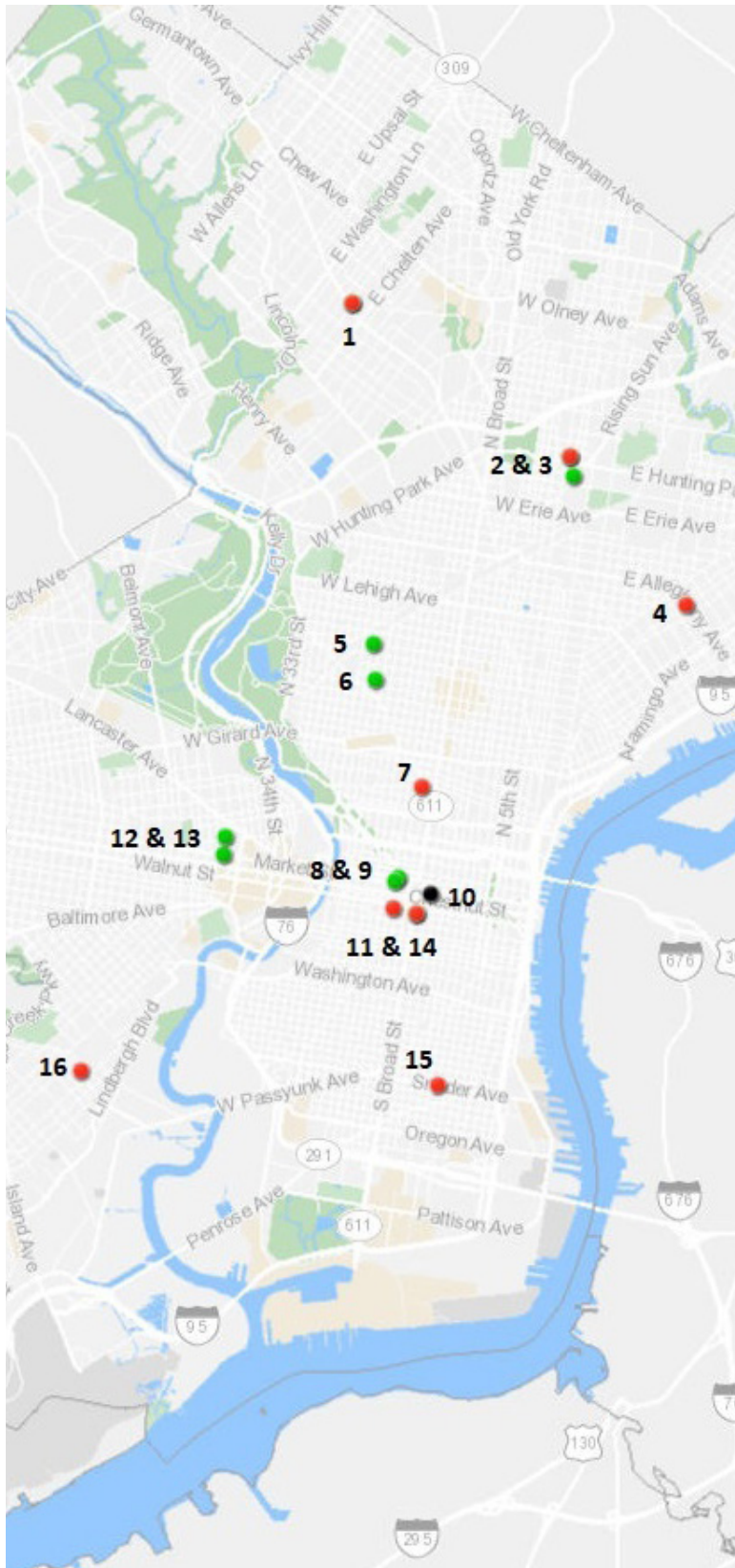
BenePhilly centers completed **5,619 APPLICATIONS** for benefits. Of those applications, there were at least **\$4.8 MILLION** in cumulative benefits from **1,781 CONFIRMED ENROLLMENTS**.

More than **500 INDIVIDUALS** scheduled appointments with Campaign for Working Families or Ceiba for help claiming advanced Child Tax Credit payments as a result of direct outreach by City and nonprofit partners.

8,000 TAX RETURNS were filed by Campaign for Working Families, resulting in over **\$14.8 MILLION IN FEDERAL REFUNDS** and over **\$3.6 MILLION** in Child Tax Credits and Earned Income Tax Credits.

85 NEW CLIENTS received representation for public benefits from Community Legal Services. Of those, **44 NEW AND CONTINUING CLIENTS** achieved successful outcomes for public benefits. CLS also hosted six virtual expungement clinics and two workshops on unemployment.

INCOME Support Service Map



Location Legend

1. Impact Services at PA CareerLink Northwest Philadelphia
2. Esperanza
3. PA CareerLink North Philadelphia
4. Impact Services
5. PHA, Raymond Rosen Manor
6. Helen Brown Community Center
7. Project Home
8. PA CareerLink Suburban Station
9. Clarifi's Main Office
10. Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity
11. Philadelphia FIGHT
12. People's Emergency Center
13. PA CareerLink West Philadelphia
14. Utilities Emergency Services Fund (UESF)
15. United Communities Southeast Philadelphia Houston Center
16. Catholic Social Services Southwest

Color Legend

- BenePhilly Center
- CEO Main Office
- Financial Empowerment Center

Deputy Secretary of U.S. Treasury Wally Adeyemo talks with Mayor Jim Kenney during a roundtable discussion organized by CEO about the expanded Child Tax Credit with nonprofit leaders, parents, and community outreach workers in Philadelphia in October 2021.



CEO AS ADVOCATE:

Pushing for expansion and access to the Child Tax Credit

CEO joined forces with the Mayor's Policy Office to advocate with the White House and U.S. Treasury on ways to make it easier for local communities to maximize access to the CTC, and advocated with our Congressional representatives to make the expanded CTC permanent. At the City level, CEO worked in partnership with the Mayor's Policy Office and the Department of Human Services to revise guidance to provide information foster parents needed to claim tax credits for children in their care.

CEO AS CONVENER:

Spreading the word to local partners about the Child Tax Credit

As part of the outreach around the expanded Child Tax Credit, CEO hosted a webinar, in partnership with Community Legal Services and Campaign for Working Families, for community-based organizations on how to sign-up eligible Philadelphia residents for CTC. The session had over 60 participants, including Council offices and groups serving individuals with limited English proficiency. Modeled after Code for America's navigator training, the webinar reviewed eligibility, how to use the IRS' Non-Filer portal, and resources for more complex situations. It also provided a forum to hear common questions and concerns being raised by non-filers. This helped inform our outreach and key messages to improve our communications.

PLACE-BASED/COMMUNITY-FOCUSED Initiatives

CEO coordinates place-based anti-poverty initiatives through the West Philadelphia Promise Zone (WPPZ), which employs a collective impact model. CEO has led the WPPZ since its designation in 2014 as one of the first five Promise Zones in the country. The ten-year designations by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) were created to advance community-driven strategies and programs to support the attainment of goals defined by the community. The designation does not come with any direct funds but provides preference points that make West Philadelphia more competitive for a variety of grant opportunities from federal agencies and supports a team of 5 AmeriCorps VISTAs that work with CEO to advance the work in the Promise Zone. CEO works with more than 100 partners in the WPPZ, including civic groups, service providers, public agencies, universities, and hospitals, to coordinate anti-poverty initiatives. The

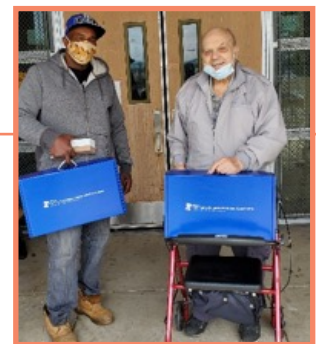
agency coordinates four committees targeting outcomes related to housing, economic development, public safety, and health and wellness. The WPPZ also works closely with the West Philadelphia Promise Neighborhood, a program of Drexel University that focuses on improving educational outcomes in the target area.

CEO also supports Philadelphia's vulnerable senior population through six (6) older adult centers managed by Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. The centers provide low-income senior citizens with recreational and support services, including health and wellness, social services, public benefits, emergency food referrals, and transportation. Center staff also provide case management services to seniors who require support. In addition to funding, CEO assembled care packages in response to COVID-19 containing healthcare items, personal protective equipment, household items, and entertainment to be distributed at the six sites.

KEY Outcomes

Promise Zone supported **11 FUNDING APPLICATIONS** from **10 DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS**. Six of those applications were successful (**55 PERCENT**), totaling close to \$1.8 million that will target the Promise Zone over the next several years.

The largest of those grant awards was the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice awarded to Mount Vernon Manor CDC. The **\$999,990 GRANT** calls for engaging a multi-sector collaborative team to build neighborhood groups' capacity, hiring street outreach workers for peer outreach, coordinating prevention and intervention activities, supporting job training and more to reduce gun violence among **14-34-YEAR-OLDS**.



300 OLDER ADULTS received care packages from CEO containing personal protective equipment, household items, and recreational materials at **SIX OLDER ADULT CENTERS**.

Attendees listen during a panel discussion on the underrepresentation of Black and brown workers in the building trades hosted by the West Philadelphia Promise Zone's Workforce and Economic Opportunity Committee.



CEO AS A CONVENER: Discussing Black and Brown Talent in the Building Trades

WPPZ's Workforce and Economic Opportunity Committee held a hybrid event in July on the underrepresentation of Black and brown workers in the Philadelphia building trades that was attended by nearly 100 people in person and dozens more online. The panel, moderated by WEO Committee co-chair Soneyet Muhammad of Drexel University, included Lark Jackson of The National Center for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment at Chicago Women in Trades, who discussed successful strategies to increase the number of women of color in the trades. Another panelist, Maurice Harris, a Mantua resident and experienced electrician, discussed barriers facing Black workers and resources available to overcome those barriers. The dialogue sparked a passionate discussion about the need to dismantle the system that excludes people of color. The committee plans to host future events on this topic.

COVID-19 Response

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating consequences for Philadelphia's residents, particularly the disproportionate impact on Black and brown communities, CEO identified priorities to guide the agency's investments and address the changing nature of the COVID-19 crisis. These priorities can be summarized in a three-tiered framework that CEO uses to direct its COVID-19 related investment strategy:

- **RESPONSE:** Programs and resources that support the immediate needs of individuals and communities, including emergency food, housing assistance, health supports (including adequate supplies of personal protective equipment) and other essentials.
- **REPAIR:** Investments that target the frayed safety net and strengthen neighborhood services, including support for critical services and resources that may be lost or diminished due to closures, bankruptcies, or staffing cuts.
- **RECOVERY:** Investments in programs and initiatives to address the prolonged impact of COVID-19. These measures will ensure that public agencies, non-profit services, and small minority-owned businesses are equipped with the necessary information, technology, and resources to operate effectively and contribute to the city's economic recovery.

As part of our recovery strategy, CEO envisioned and funded the [Salon and Barbershop Emergency Relief \(SABER\) program](#) in 2021 to support equitable COVID-19 recovery. The agency partnered with the Department of Commerce, and with community partners including VestedIn and Entrepreneur Works, who assisted us in selecting the grantees, administering the program, and distributing the funds. Salons and barbershops were closed for approximately three months in the spring and early summer of 2021 due to their status as non-essential businesses in Pennsylvania during the early days of the COVID-19 crisis. We prioritized salons and barbershops in Philadelphia's highest poverty zip codes to advance economic equity for business owners and neighborhoods of color, which were already disadvantaged prior to the pandemic and received less in Paycheck Protection Program loans.

CEO also created the [Neighborhood Economic Recovery Fund \(NERF\) Grant](#), the agency's first community-led grantmaking initiative, to support grassroots organizations serving individuals with low incomes. The goal was to empower community residents to determine what would most benefit their communities, thereby avoiding some of the biases associated with traditional grantmaking. CEO partnered with Bread & Roses Community Fund, which assisted us in identifying and training a community grantmaking committee from neighborhoods most heavily impacted by COVID. The committee reviewed the applications and chose the recipients.

KEY Outcomes

159 BARBER SHOPS and hair salons received \$5,000 each from the SABER Grant.

Of the SABER Grant recipients, **99 PERCENT** are minority-owned and **60 PERCENT** are women-owned.

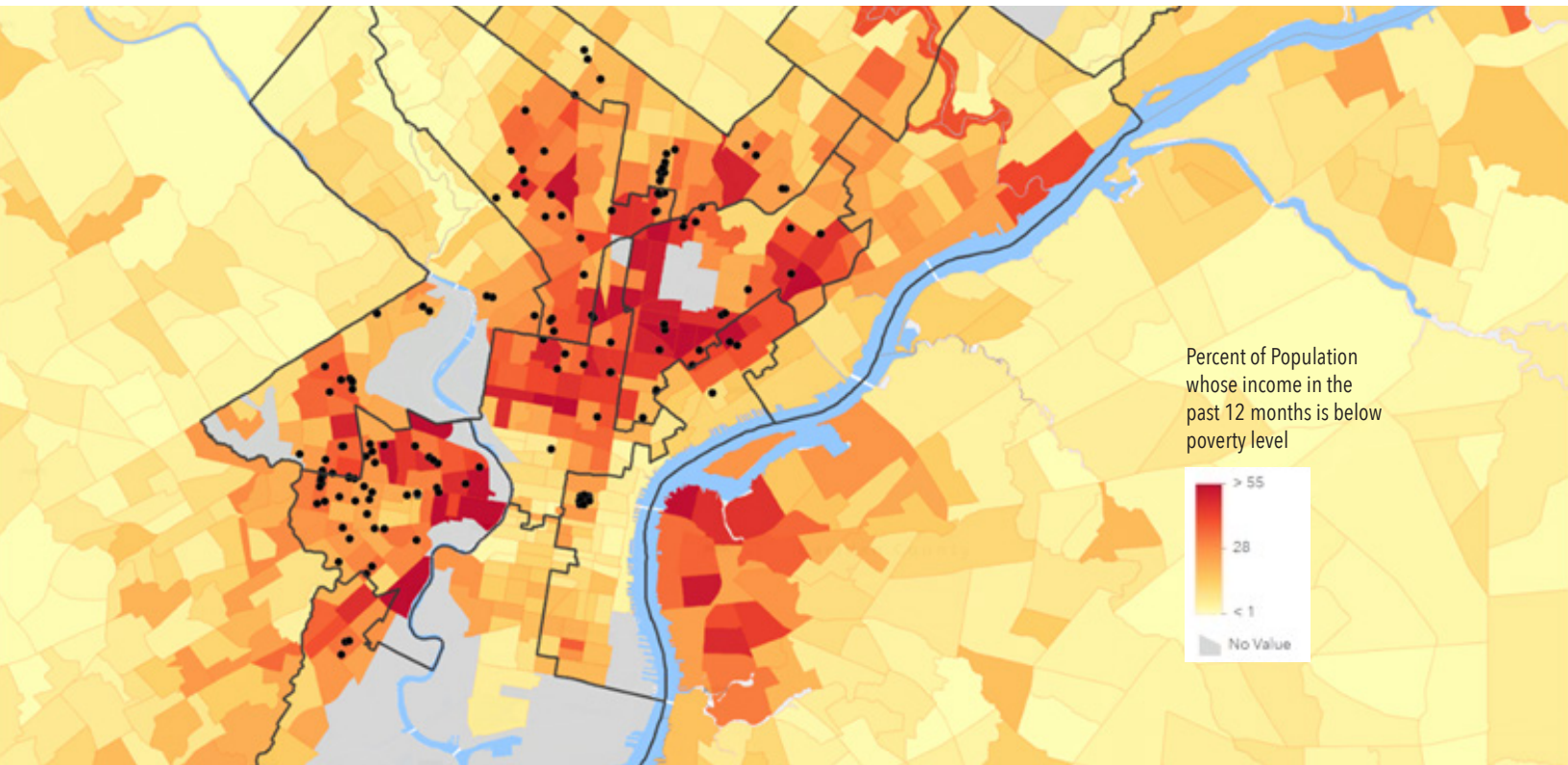
55 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS received a total of \$825,000 from the NERF Grant program.



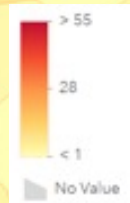
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SABER GRANT RECIPIENTS by Council District and Poverty Level



Percent of Population whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level



"It helped me a whole lot. I was trying to get the shop fixed up and get it together, but I didn't have the money. Once I got the grant, I was able to renovate the shop and now people are knocking the door down to get a job."

Mitchell Chellis, SABER Grant recipient and owner of Hair Situations in Powelton Village

MOVING Forward

Over the next few years, CEO will continue collaborating with other City agencies and departments in critical COVID repair efforts and leading work framed in equitable recovery to ensure that our most vulnerable communities are stronger and more resilient. CEO will also ensure program funding is aligned with the mission so that our budget is a moral document that demonstrates our priorities.

Specifically, CEO will continue to identify opportunities to bring new, innovative initiatives to scale. Some examples include our early investments in programs such as:

- The City of Philadelphia's Same Day Work and Pay Program;
- A guaranteed income pilot for Work Ready participants;
- And the Consumer Financial Protection Task Force.

These initiatives represent opportunities to help more Philadelphians earn wages to afford basic needs and keep those wages without being victimized by predatory and fraudulent actors seeking to drain their wealth. Leading these initiatives also enables CEO to bring its other services and partners to bear to provide a more holistic approach to upward mobility.

CEO will continue to advocate both within local government and to external stakeholders for systems change around benefits access, housing insecurity, municipal fines and fees, and utility shutoffs. At the same time, we will leverage our partnerships to ensure that more Philadelphians are enrolled in critical assistance programs and not penalized for experiencing poverty.

Additionally, Philadelphia is one of eight counties selected to take part in the Urban Institute's Upward Mobility Cohort. CEO, in partnership with the Division of Housing and Community Development, is excited to lead that work, which will include the release of an upward mobility plan. The plan will be built on insights from other jurisdictions and dive into metrics and data that holistically look at barriers to upward mobility.

We fully believe that our work can move the needle for Philadelphia's most vulnerable residents and lead to real systems change over time.

We encourage you to join our email list to receive updates about these initiatives, invitations to upcoming convenings, and opportunities to get more involved by visiting our website, www.phila.gov/ceo.

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