

# 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



**OIC PHILADELPHIA**  
TRANSFORM YOUR FUTURE

---

**THE WORKFORCE ENGINE.**

# Table of Contents

<b>3</b> OIC Founder, Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan	<b>13</b> Looking Towards the Future	<b>26-27</b> Advancing Healthcare Careers at OIC Philadelphia	<b>35</b> Sullivan's Lasting Impact World Wide: OIC Cameroon
<b>4</b> Message from CEO & President, Sheila Ireland	<b>14-15</b> Celebrating Our Future Workforce	<b>28-29</b> Healing Our Communities	<b>36-38</b> OIC Supporters
<b>5</b> Message from Board Chair, Steven Scott Bradley	<b>16-17</b> OIC in Action	<b>30</b> Building The Workforce Hub of the Future	<b>39</b> Employer & Community Partners
<b>6-7</b> Celebrating 60 Years of Impact	<b>18-22</b> Celebrating 35 Years of the HTTI	<b>31</b> Mildred Jenkins	<b>40</b> Organizational Growth
<b>8-9</b> Inaugural Alumni Block Party	<b>23</b> Generational Impact: The Parler & Jenkins Family	<b>32</b> Support for Returning Citizens	<b>41</b> Photo Collage: Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan
<b>10-11</b> Advancement of OIC Philadelphia	<b>24</b> Building Equitable Clean Energy Opportunities	<b>33</b> Advancing Economic Empowerment for North Philadelphians	<b>42</b> Board of Directors
<b>12</b> Who We Serve	<b>25</b> Sullivan Champion Spotlight: Erika Watkins	<b>34</b> Sullivan's Lasting Impact on North Broad	<b>43</b> OIC Philadelphia Staff





# OIC Founder, Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan

Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan's founding of OIC Philadelphia in 1964 sparked an international movement centered on empowering communities through economic opportunities and training. What began as one man's vision for social justice and self-sufficiency in North Philadelphia blossomed into the global OIC network, with OIC Philadelphia standing today as the flagship institution 60 years later. Sullivan embodied the intersection of civil rights, faith-based activism, and equipping individuals with skills for economic mobility. OIC Philadelphia remains Sullivan's most enduring legacy - the singular organization that ignited a global force harnessing human potential to dismantle systemic disparities and create pathways to prosperity.



# A Year of Growth—Laying the Foundation for Success



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Annual reports provide important reflection points for organizations and as I reflect on my first 18+ months as President and CEO of OIC Philadelphia, I am happy with the progress we have made and filled with optimism for our future. Our organization has experienced significant growth, expanding our programs from 4 to 14 and increasing our applicants from 895 in 2023 to more than 5,150 in 2024—an astounding 475%+ increase. This tells me that the need for connection between people seeking opportunities and organizations seeking talent is stronger than ever. That need will only increase as we prepare for major international events in 2026, including the Semiquincentennial, FIFA World Cup Club, MLB All-Star Game, and more.

These events represent a clear opportunity to move the dime on poverty in Philadelphia. Here at OIC Philadelphia we have ambitious plans to answer the call that these

opportunities represent, which you will read about in this report. Innovation, collaboration and leveling the playing field for the people that we serve is nothing new to OIC Philadelphia. Our organization’s rich history dates back to 1964, when it was founded by the renowned civil rights leader and social activist, Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan. The origin is deeply rooted in addressing the profound disparities faced by African Americans and underserved communities in Philadelphia during the Civil Rights Era. Dr. Sullivan recognized the urgent need for collective action to level the playing field for economic empowerment.



**83%**  
Wage  
Increase



**876**  
Served  
Yearly



**51,000**  
Lives Transformed,  
Since 1964

His unwavering belief in self-help, resource development, and skills training led to the founding of OIC Philadelphia. He famously asserted that "integration without preparation leads to frustration," emphasizing the importance of equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to seize new opportunities. Our approach includes professional and vocational skill development, job readiness training, and placement services, empowering individuals to gain employment, advance their careers, and achieve financial independence. Perhaps more importantly, we’re deeply focused on helping people build the lives of their choosing, igniting that spark of greatness that allows them to take hold of the American dream – opportunity for all. This approach has transformed lives and built stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities.

I believe that, as we continue our work in this upcoming year, we must remember that, collectively, we hold the power. The power to change outdated systems, hold ourselves accountable, and create the future we envision.

Friends, family, and supporters, I hope you’ll join us on this journey.

*Sheila Ireland*  
**Sheila Ireland**  
CEO & President



# Positioning Ourselves to be the Workforce Engine for 2026

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I reflect on my first year as Board Chair of OIC Philadelphia, I am deeply inspired by the legacy of our founder, Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan, and our commitment to propelling his vision forward 60 years later. OIC Philadelphia is on the move and is providing a critical connection for vulnerable communities in North Philadelphia and beyond.

As we look to the future, I asked OIC Philadelphia a crucial question: *How can we leverage the global opportunities ahead in 2026 and beyond to change Philadelphia's narrative from being the city with the deepest poverty among the 10 largest US cities to one of equitable prosperity?*

Philadelphia's extensive experience in hosting significant events, such as the 2019 USWNT Victory Tour, the 2018 Eagles Super Bowl Victory Parade, the 2017 NFL draft, and the 2015 Papal Visit & World Meeting of Families, demonstrates our capability to host the world's biggest and best events.

However, we have not always capitalized on these opportunities to generate equitable impact across all neighborhoods.

As we prepare for monumental events like the 2026 FIFA World Cup, I am dedicated to ensuring that diverse businesses are integral to these events. The World Cup is expected to draw 500,000 visitors and boost our region's economy by \$460 million. It is crucial that these opportunities benefit all Philadelphians.

In honor of Dr. Sullivan's legacy, we are committed to driving his vision forward, fostering an inclusive economy, and building a brighter future for Philadelphia.

Thank you for your unwavering support as we continue to advance our mission.

  
**Steven Scott Bradley**  
Board Chair



- **Vice Chairman Board of Directors** - World Trade Center Greater Philadelphia
- **Delegate** - World Trade Center General
- **Assembly** - 2024 Bangalore , India & 2023 Accra, Africa
- **Board of Directors** - Chairman Philadelphia OIC
- **Board of Directors** - 2026 FIFA Philadelphia Soccer
- **Board of Directors** - Philadelphia Ballet
- **Vice Chairman Board of Directors** - Philadelphia Workforce Inc.
- **Chairman Emeritus** - African American Chamber of Commerce PA, NJ, DE
- **Secretary of the Board** - WHYI Public Radio & Media
- **Vice President Advisory Board** - UNCF Philadelphia Area Leadership Council
- **Board Member** - Foundation for Delaware County
- **Board Member** - Pennsylvania Economic Development Financing Authority
- **Board Member** - DELCO Community Transit
- **Board of Trustee** - Pierce College
- **Advisory Board** - PHL Airport Advisory Board
- **Board of Directors** - Avenue North Renaissance



# Celebrating 60 Years of Impact

OIC Philadelphia marked a major milestone by commemorating our 60th anniversary at the "Beacon on Broad Street" Gala. With 60+ corporate, foundation and nonprofit partners sponsoring the evening, the OIC Philadelphia's 60th Anniversary rekindled hope and excitement in our city.

The gala featured a dynamic conversation with Congressman Dwight Evans, Mayor Cherelle Parker, and Council President Kenyatta Johnson about empowering communities through access to opportunities.

This inspiring event brought together over 600 influential leaders and raised \$310,000 in support of our workforce development initiatives and \$10,000 to support OIC Cameroon. As we begin our next chapter, we remain dedicated to uplifting lives and neighborhoods through the legacy of Dr. Sullivan.







“ Few organizations in Philadelphia have the legacy, impact, and leadership of OIC Philadelphia. With a renewed sense of optimism sweeping the city, OIC Philadelphia will be one of the driving forces as the Greater Delaware Valley builds our workforce to take advantage of the opportunities that will present themselves in the years to come. ”



**Kenyatta Johnson**  
Council President



# Inaugural Alumni Block Party

600 alumni spanning 59 years of OIC Philadelphia history gathered in unity and pride to celebrate our legacy and envision our future at our Inaugural Alumni Block Party. Distinguished guests included Philadelphia's first female black mayoral candidate, Cherelle Parker; Congressman Dwight Evans; and Senator Sharif Street. The event featured an unforgettable barbecue extravaganza presented by OIC Philadelphia's culinary team, showcasing their dedication and skill. Chef Franceska Jean was honored with the inaugural Vennel Jones OIC Spirit Award, commemorating the lasting impact of both her and Vennel Jones' legacies. Vennel Jones, OIC alumna, is the late mother of Raymond Jones, Chief of Staff to Senator Vincent Hughes.



RACE AND CULTURE

**OIC BLOCK PARTY**









# Advancement of OIC Philadelphia

## 2023-24 Milestones



**Opening of Admissions Office**

**OIC PHILADELPHIA**  
TRANSFORM YOUR FUTURE

**OIC Rebrands With New Logo & Tagline: Transform Your Future**



**OIC Expands Healthcare to AMA & CMA**



**OIC Receives Funding to Imbibe Financial Literacy in Training Programs**

Aug 2023

Sep 2023

Oct 2023

Nov 2023

Dec 2023



**Inaugural Alumni Block Party**



**WHYY Presents Sullivan Progress Plaza**



**Launch of OIC Studios**

**Surpass Applicant Total from Last Year**





**60th Anniversary Gala**

Jan 2024

**Expansion of Student Support Services**

Feb 2024



**Congressman Evans Secures Funds for Bringing the Future of Work to Disconnected Workers**

Mar 2024

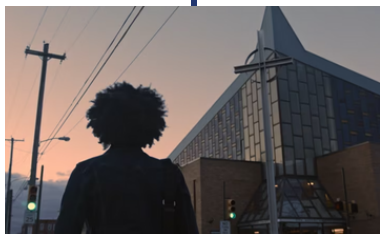
**Expansion Into Behavioral Health with Support From City of Philadelphia**

Apr 2024



**OIC Celebrates National Cameroon Day With \$10,000+ Donation to OIC Cameroon**

May 2024



**Beacon on Broad Street Video Premiere**



**First Step Staffing Partnership**



**2024 Graduation**

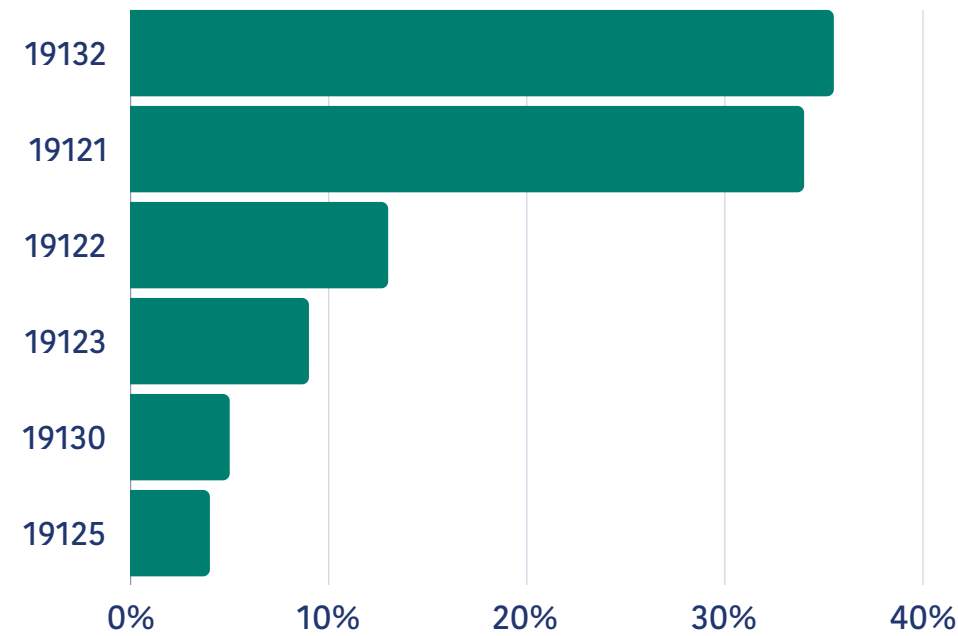


# Who We Serve

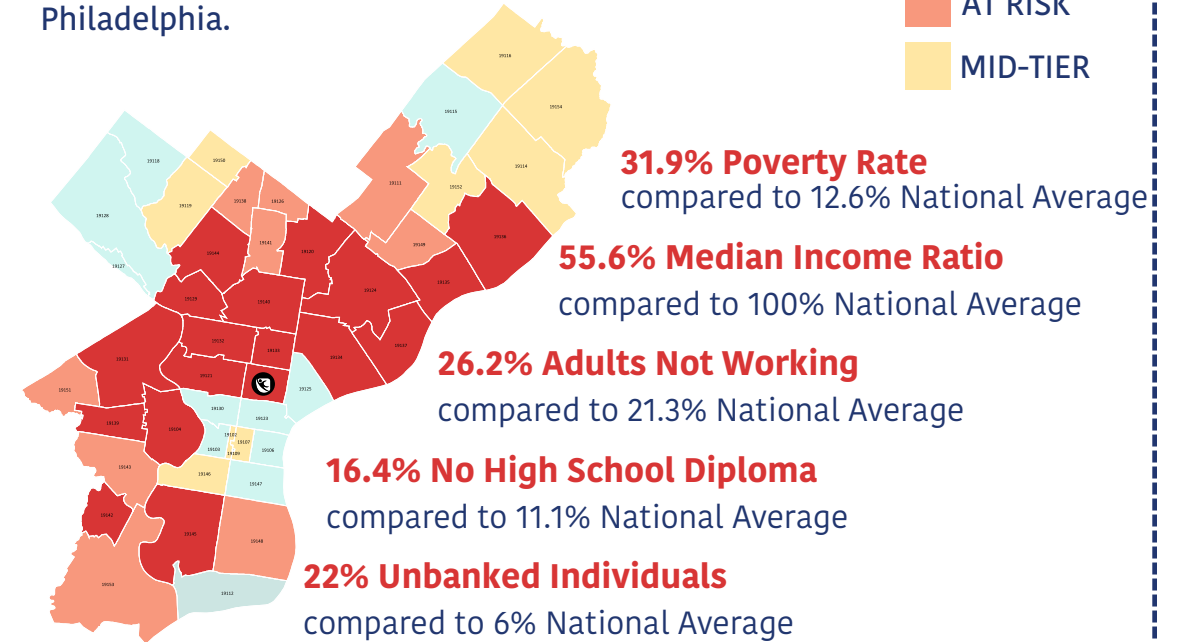
OIC Philadelphia is located in the 19122 zip code and focuses on serving its six surrounding zip codes: 19121, 19123, 19125, 19130, 19132, and 19133, however, we do accept applicants from all over Philadelphia. These communities are characterized by high poverty levels, elevated crime rates, low educational attainment, and high incarceration rates.

According to the Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative, the region has a 43% unemployment rate, a median household income of \$25,000, and a significant number of residents with incarceration records.

**Breakdown Per Zip Code of the 5,150 Applicants**



The red zone marks the most distressed neighborhoods in Philadelphia.



**↑ 250%**

**10 New Programs Launched**



**↑ 98%**

**876 Participants Served**



**↑ 475%**

**5,150 Applicants**



**86%**

**Placement Rate**

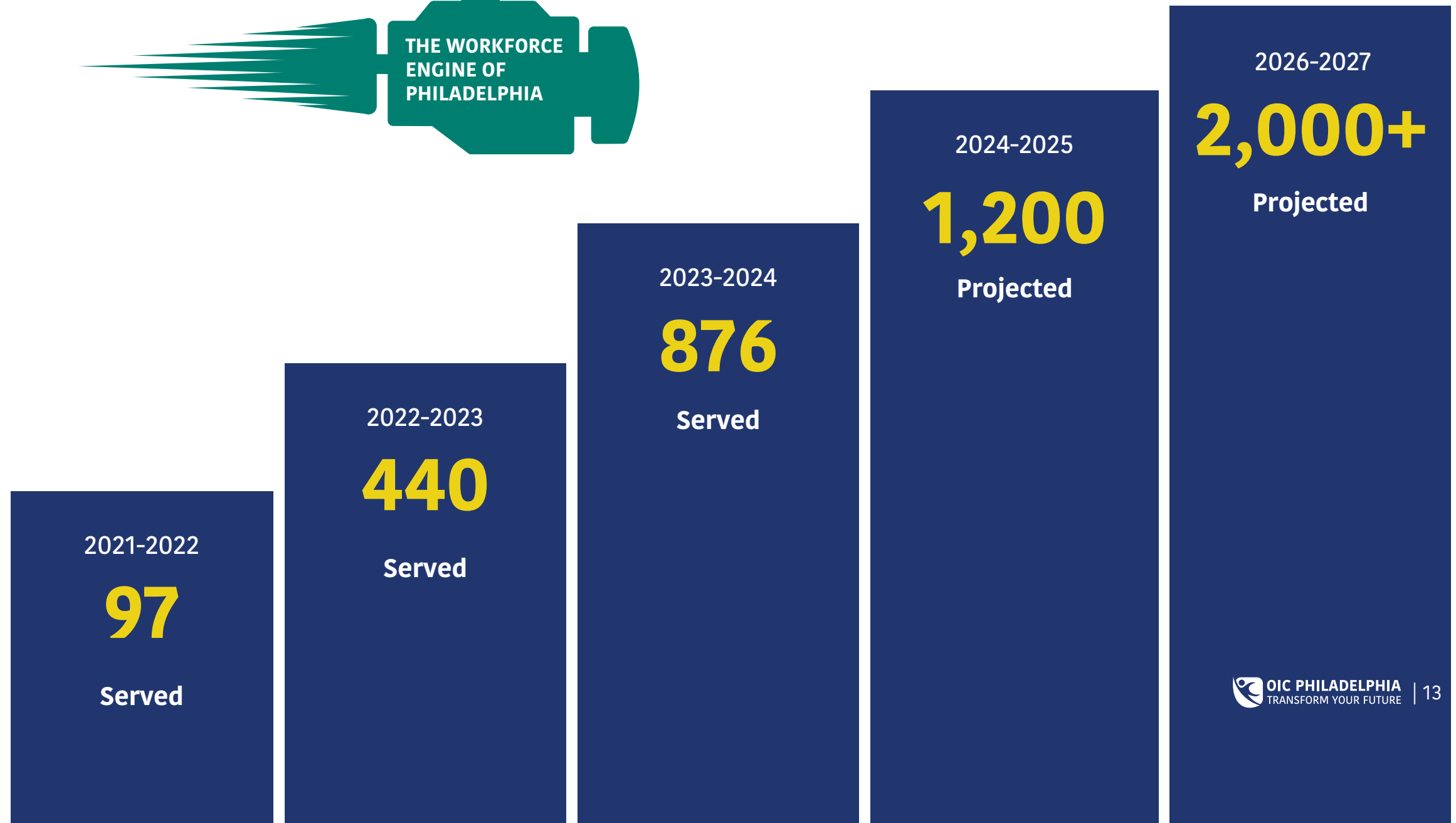
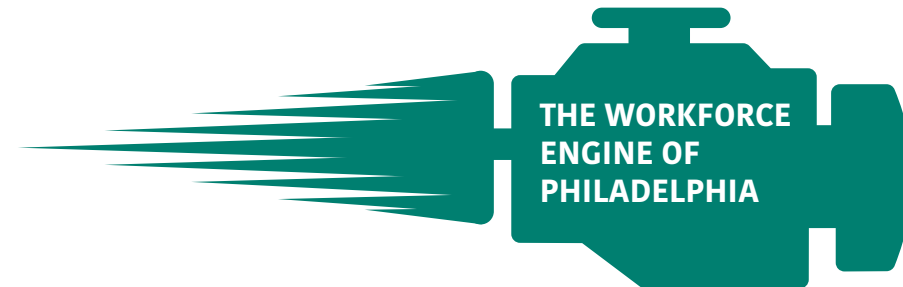
Compared to FY 2022-23



# Looking Toward the Future

OIC Philadelphia is strategically positioned as the Workforce Engine of Philadelphia in preparation for major international events in 2026. By scaling operations and capacity, we are serving more individuals and connecting them to employment opportunities that provide a family sustaining wage with career ladder opportunities for growth.

## Participants Served by OIC Philadelphia per Fiscal Year





# Celebrating Our Future Workforce

OIC Philadelphia proudly celebrated the accomplishments of over 100 graduates at the prestigious PECO's Energy Hall, our long-term partner. This momentous occasion marked the culmination of our latest workforce training programs, where each graduate received a well-earned certificate of completion, signifying their dedication, hard work, and resilience.



# OIC Philadelphia Hosts Spring Graduation

## Honoring Exceptional Achievements

A highlight of the event was the presentation of two special awards celebrating the outstanding accomplishments of our graduates. Elisabeth Sullivan-Johnson, the granddaughter of our founder, Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan, presented the Moving Mountains Award to Lonnel Duckett. This award recognized Lonnel's exceptional achievements and resilience in overcoming personal challenges, showcasing his remarkable journey of transformation and success.

Adding to the significance of the day, Philadelphia's own rapper, Philadelphia Freeway, honored Saquanna Daniels with the Sullivan Champion Award. Saquanna's outstanding commitment and dedication to her career and community were celebrated, underscoring the spirit of perseverance and excellence that OIC Philadelphia aims to instill in all its participants.





## An Inspiring Keynote Address

The ceremony was enriched by an inspiring keynote address from Erika Watkins, an OIC Philadelphia alum and current PECO employee. Erika shared her transformative journey through OIC Philadelphia's training programs, detailing how they provided her with the skills and confidence needed to embark on a successful career at PECO. Her story served as both inspiration and testament to the life-changing impact of our programs, demonstrating to the graduates that with determination and the right support, they too can achieve their dreams.



“ Congratulations to OIC Philadelphia on 60 years of connecting Philadelphians to family supporting and sustaining career opportunities! As a member of Philadelphia City Council, and now Majority Leader, advancing workforce development opportunities has been one of my top priorities. From the skilled trades to the health care industry, and everything in between, OIC Philadelphia has transformed the lives of countless residents, especially the lives of our young people. I look forward to our continued partnership with OIC Philadelphia President & CEO Sheila Ireland and wish them another 60 years of success. ”



**Katherine Gilmore Richardson**  
Councilwoman





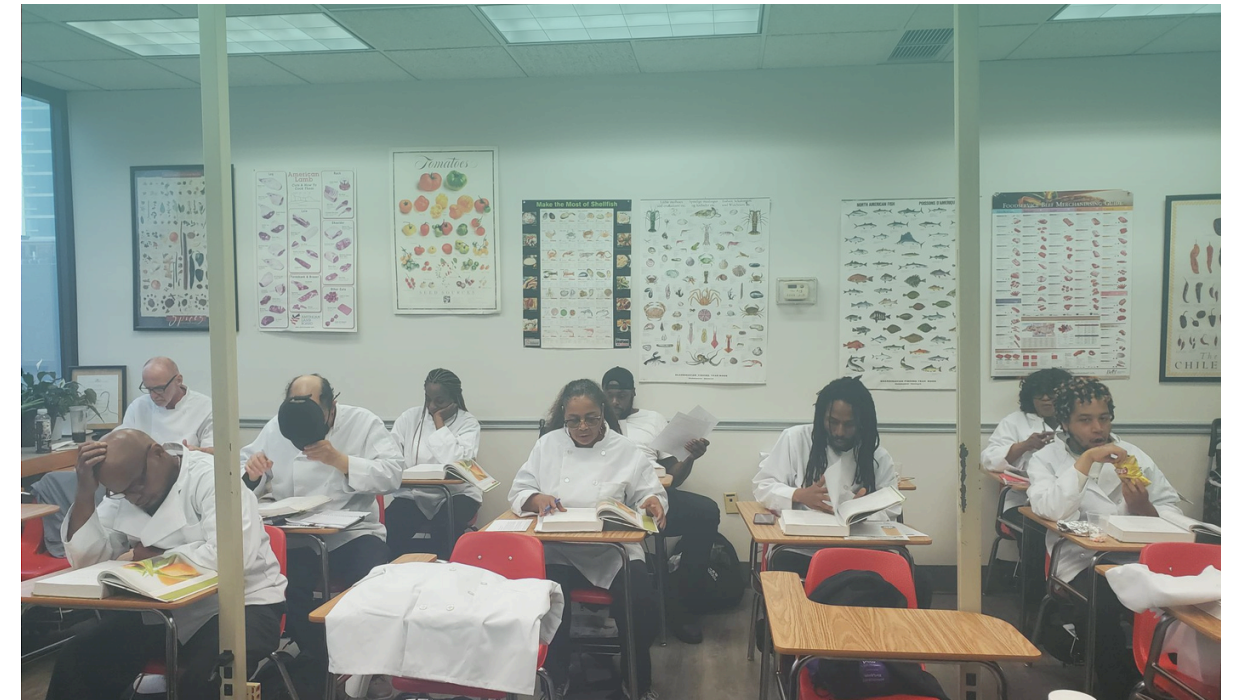
# OIC in Action



**OIC integrates experiential learning opportunities to equip participants with skills necessary for entering the workforce.**









# Celebrating 35 Years of the Hospitality Training Institute



## Honoring a Legacy of Empowerment and Progress

For over 35 years, OIC Philadelphia's Hospitality Training Institute (HTI) has equipped individuals with in-demand hospitality skills. Established in 1989 through a partnership with the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority (PCCA), HTI was founded by a consortium of key players in Philadelphia, along with Congressman Dwight Evans to meet Philadelphia's hospitality workforce needs.

Evans' advocacy secured crucial support for launching comprehensive hospitality training programs. The Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority has remained a committed HTI partner, providing resources and industry connections to produce job-ready graduates for hotels, restaurants, catering companies and more.

HTI's hands-on instruction from experienced professionals prepares students for certifications and careers across culinary arts, hotel operations, tourism and guest services. Notable alumni like chefs Darlene Jones and Kristol Bryant exemplify HTI's transformative impact in creating pathways to fulfilling hospitality professions over 35 years.

“

OIC Philadelphia has been transforming lives and uplifting communities through workforce development for over 60 years. From supporting the opening of the Hospitality Training Institute by securing Convention Center tax revenue, to now investing nearly \$1 million through Community Project Funding to bring OIC's training to 2024 standards, I am honored to work with this vital organization because their mission of economic empowerment resonates deeply with me.

”



**Dwight Evans**  
Congressman



---

Expanding Our Vision:  
**The Hospitality  
& Tourism  
Training  
Institute (HTTI)**



**Philadelphia  
Freeway**

### Forging Dynamic Partnerships

In 2024, to mark the 60th anniversary of OIC Philadelphia, we expanded and rebranded the Hospitality Training Institute as the Hospitality & Tourism Training Institute (HTTI). This expansion includes new programming in the digital media and audio engineering sectors.

A significant part of this expansion has been the development of a dynamic partnership with Philadelphia Freeway and the Freedom Thinkers Academy. Additionally, OIC Philadelphia is working with renowned branding agencies such as ChatterBlast and academic institutions like Temple University’s School of Media and Communication. Together, we are developing industry-aligned workforce training programs to meet the rising demand for Brand Messengers, such as Tour Guides, Digital Creators, Project Managers, and Events Specialists, in anticipation of the significant events coming to Philadelphia in 2026.

### Building OIC Studios: A Hub for Creativity & Excellence

This program is just the entry point as we begin to expand further in 2024. With the generous investment from Congressman Dwight Evans, OIC Philadelphia is building our own OIC Studio.

This state-of-the-art facility will provide hands-on training in digital media production, audio engineering, and related fields. The media studio is set to become a hub for creativity and technical excellence, preparing participants for a variety of roles in the fast-evolving media landscape.



### Preparing for 2026

Our expanded HTTI program aligns with Philadelphia’s preparations for several major events in 2026, including the Semiquincentennial, FIFA World Cup, and MLB All-Star Game.

These events are expected to significantly boost tourism and the local economy, and our program aims to meet the increased demand for skilled professionals in the hospitality and tourism sectors.



**Philadelphia Freeway  
Sheila Ireland, OIC President & CEO  
Jordan Harris, Chairman of the  
Appropriations Committee**



# Introducing Sullivan's Way Café:

## Providing Experiential Internship Opportunities for HTTI Graduates

In celebration of the Hospitality & Tourism Training Institute's (HTTI) 35th anniversary, we are excited to announce the vision of Sullivan's Way Café, an innovative project providing experiential learning opportunities for students while making a meaningful impact in the Philadelphia community.

In North Philadelphia, where food insecurity and lack of access to nutritious options are prevalent issues, OIC Philadelphia is taking proactive steps to address these challenges head-on. The first step towards promoting food justice and equity has been the removal of vending machines from our facilities and replacing them with healthy, freshly made food alternatives.

Sullivan's Way Café aims to address food insecurity by providing meals free of charge to individuals enrolled in OIC Philadelphia's workforce development training programs. Located on the ground floor of our facility, this café will not only serve as a source of nourishment but also as a platform for empowerment and skill development.



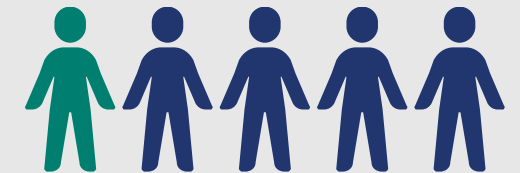
**Experiential Learning Opportunities for Participants**

**At Cost Food for Community**

**Free for Participants**

## Addressing Food Insecurity in Philadelphia

The need for such an initiative cannot be overstated, as 1 in 5 Philadelphia residents struggle to access nutritious food. Sullivan's Way Café will serve as a beacon of hope, providing free meals to those enrolled in workforce development programs at OIC Philadelphia. By addressing this critical need, the café exemplifies our commitment to supporting the well-being of our community and fostering food justice and equity.



**1 in 5 residents struggle  
to access nutritious food.**



*Future Lobby Rendering*

Through Sullivan's Way Café, OIC Philadelphia is not only providing tangible solutions to food insecurity but also creating a pathway for HTTI graduates to gain valuable hands-on experience, further solidifying their skills and preparing them for successful careers in the culinary industry.



# Sullivan Champion Spotlight

## Amir Jordan

The founder and CEO of Amir's Kitchen LLC.



## Empowering Dreams through Culinary Excellence

When Amir Jordan first joined OIC Philadelphia, he was driven by a passion for cooking. He had a vision of offering fine dining experiences in an affordable and accessible setting. Through the dedication of Chef Tracey Borden and the entire OIC Philadelphia team, Amir was equipped with the knowledge, professionalism, and expertise needed to launch his own culinary venture.

## Leveraging Support and Resources

Amir's time at OIC revealed an incredible support network and abundant resources. It was through OIC's guidance that he discovered and successfully applied for the Leon H. Sullivan Moving Mountain Scholarship from the Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust. This support was pivotal in helping Amir elevate his culinary skills and turn his dreams into reality.



## A Thriving Business and Community Impact

Today, Amir wakes up each day with excitement, driven to grow his brand and business. Amir's Kitchen LLC is rapidly gaining recognition and success. Amir has frequently catered OIC lunches for participants and notably catered the spring graduation at PECO Energy Hall.



Amir's journey has been marked by significant mentorship and guidance. John McNichol, CEO of the Pennsylvania Convention Center, has been a remarkable mentor to Amir.



Earlier this year, John invited Amir for lunch at the Convention Center Board Room with Aramark GM, Gene Donato, and Malik Staten, Vice Chair of the Board for PCCA.



# Cultivating Food Entrepreneurs

“ Our partnership with OIC Philadelphia over the last 35 years has been instrumental in shaping the landscape of our Hospitality & Tourism Training Institute. Together, we've not only trained countless individuals for successful careers but also cultivated a thriving community of food entrepreneurs in the city of Philadelphia. This collaboration has empowered our residents, fueling economic growth and innovation in the culinary scene. We're proud to continue this journey, building a brighter future for all.

”



AN  MANAGED FACILITY



**John McNichol**  
CEO of PCCA

## Kristol Bryant

**CHOPPED Champion**  
**Host, City Eats TV**

Since joining OIC Philadelphia in 1999, Kristol Bryant, a Philadelphia native, pursued her culinary dreams with zeal. Graduating at the top of her class, she impressed at the "Book and the Cook" Rising Star event and earned externships at Philippe on Locust and the Park Hyatt at the Bellevue. Rising to Executive Chef at The Sonesta Hotel, she was named "Top Chef of Philadelphia 2016" by Thrillist Magazine. A CHOPPED Champion, Kristol now hosts City Eats TV, solidifying her status as a culinary trailblazer.



## Ernesto Ventura

**Founder, La Ingrata**  
**Restaurant**

Ernesto, a passionate cook from South Jersey, sought to elevate his culinary skills but found the Art Institute's tuition too high. Instead, he enrolled in OIC Philadelphia's culinary program. After graduating, Ernesto worked at Osteria and then at Sampan, where he met his wife, Karla. On April 1, 2022, they opened La Ingrata Restaurant in Camden, New Jersey. Since then, they have received significant recognition, including a write-up in the Philadelphia Inquirer by Craig LaBan.



## Darlene Jones

**Founder, Star Fusion**  
**Express Restaurant**

Chef Darlene Jones is the visionary Founder and CEO of Star Fusion Express Restaurants, a pioneering culinary empire in West Philadelphia. Overcoming early life challenges, Darlene achieved her GED through OIC Philadelphia in 2001, which propelled her towards her culinary dreams. Renowned for her unique fusion of global flavors, Darlene's dedication to sustainable sourcing and community empowerment has garnered her numerous accolades, making Star Fusion a beacon of innovation and social responsibility.





# Generational Impact

## The Parler & Jenkins Family: A Story of Generational Impact

The Parler & Jenkins family story highlights the profound, multi-generational impact of OIC Philadelphia. From Eboney's career success to her daughter Summer's professional growth, OIC Philadelphia has been a catalyst for their achievements. Their journey underscores our mission to provide equitable education and training, enabling individuals and families to overcome barriers and reach their full potential, striving for a brighter, more inclusive future.



### Eboney Parler

Eboney Parler, now an Engineer at Comcast, began her transformative journey with OIC Philadelphia in 1998. Referred by a friend, she honed her skills in front desk operations and secured her first job at the Four Seasons Hotel in 1999. Over eleven years, she excelled in communications, reservations, and sales, eventually becoming a trainer. Joining Comcast in 2018 as a contractor and becoming full time in 2019, Eboney now works with software and hardware applications and recently achieved scrum certification, aspiring to become a Scrum Master. She enjoys the benefits of a 401k, pension, and comprehensive benefits package.

### Summer Jenkins: Following in Her Mother's Footsteps

Summer Jenkins' journey highlights the generational impact of OIC Philadelphia. Passionate about video production, she missed her initial goal of attending film school but found a new path through OIC Philadelphia, creating an OIC commercial. Through the program, she learned to believe in her ideas and found her voice, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Now, as a Digital Media Intern for Councilmember Jeffrey Young, she strategizes content, updates media lists, and enjoys photographing City Council events.



**Eboney Parler**, Engineer at Comcast

**Summer Jenkins**, Digital Media Intern for Councilmember Jeffrey Young

“OIC Philadelphia has been an invaluable partner to the Philadelphia community. Thanks to their program, Summer Jenkins has become an essential member of my Communications team. She learned to believe in her ideas and find her voice, fostering a sense of community. Now, she strategizes digital content, updates media lists, and enjoys photographing City Council events. Summer's journey shows the power of her tenacity, community support, and mentorship.”



**Jeffery Young**  
Councilman



# Building Equitable Clean Energy Opportunities: Expanding Our Vision for a Sustainable Future



## History

Since 2017, PECO has been a steadfast supporter and partner of OIC Philadelphia's Smart Energy Technical Training (SETT) program. Over the years, we have trained and connected more than 200 individuals to clean energy jobs, contributing to a greener and more sustainable future in Philadelphia.

Thanks to an investment from Philadelphia Works, OIC Philadelphia is poised to expand our programs to train more clean energy professionals. Our clean energy workforce efforts align with broader national and state initiatives, including President Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which allocates \$65 billion for clean energy and grid improvements. This provides significant funding opportunities to scale programs like SETT.

The Philadelphia Energy Campaign, coordinated by the Philadelphia Energy Authority (PEA), is leveraging \$1 billion over 10 years for energy efficiency and clean energy projects across the city. This major investment is expected to create over 10,000 new jobs. Through our partnership with the PEA, OIC Philadelphia is strategically positioned to build an equitable clean energy workforce pipeline and career pathways as this transformative initiative uplifts Philadelphia neighborhoods.



**Emily Schapira**  
CEO of PEA



“ We are thrilled to partner with OIC Philadelphia to create clean energy jobs across Pennsylvania. This collaboration is vital for advancing our mission of building a robust, equitable clean energy economy in Philadelphia that creates meaningful employment. Together, we aim to make a significant impact on the economy and environment, ensuring clean energy benefits all communities and empowering individuals with essential skills. ”





---

# Sullivan Champion Spotlight

## Erika Watkins

Electrical Designer at PECO



### A Journey from Aspiration to Achievement

Prior to her tenure at OIC Philadelphia, Erika Watkins found herself navigating the challenges of the COVID era while employed at Whole Foods.

It was during this time that a glimmer of hope emerged when she stumbled upon OIC's comprehensive training program online. This discovery ignited a newfound sense of optimism within Erika, prompting her to take a daring leap of faith by enrolling in the Smart Energy Technical training program.

Despite possessing no prior knowledge or experience in the realms of solar energy or efficiency, and having never even wielded a power tool, Erika's decision to embrace this unfamiliar path marked the genesis of her transformative journey.

### Empowered by OIC Philadelphia

Through the unwavering support and encouragement of OIC Philadelphia instructors, Erika found the motivation to challenge herself and strive for more. This determination led her to overcome her initial fears and embrace new opportunities. Erika's dedication was evident as she progressed through the training program, gaining the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the energy industry.

### Rising through the Ranks at PECO

After graduating from the Smart Energy Technical training program in Fall 2020, Erika's first job in the industry was as a sales representative for a well-known energy supplier. Though initially daunting, Erika's perseverance and adaptability allowed her to excel. She soon realized her desire to pursue a more fitting role within the energy sector.

“

PECO has been a committed partner for 20 years. As a founding investment partner of the SETT program, I am proud to say that, since inception, over 200 participants have enrolled, with 82% securing wage-sustaining jobs and many graduates establishing careers at PECO. The SETT program has enabled us to foster a healthier and more equitable economy by eliminating barriers to opportunities, ensuring the workforce of tomorrow can achieve family-sustaining careers in the energy industry.

”

## Michele Wells-Bates

PECO

OIC Philadelphia Board Member





# Advancing Healthcare Careers at OIC Philadelphia

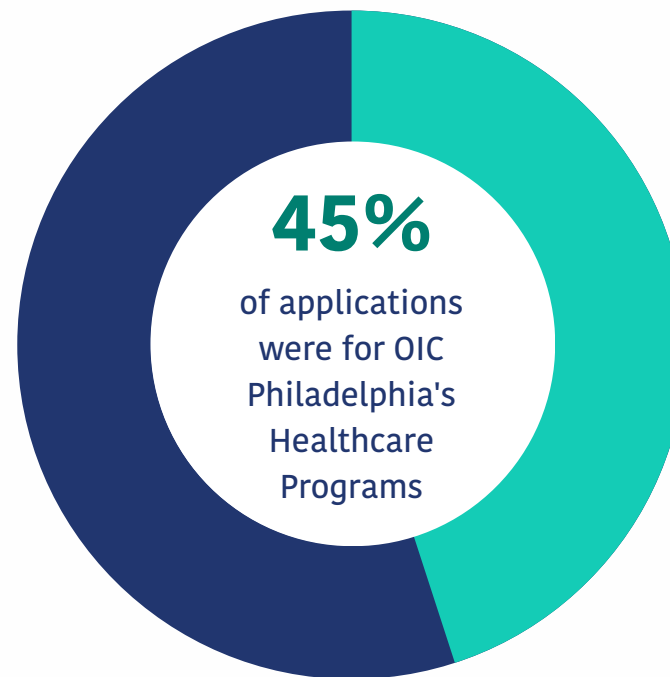


**Administrative Medical Assisting (AMA)**  
**Clinical Medical Assisting (CMA)**  
**Phlebotomy**  
**Behavioral Health Technician \*Coming this fall\***

## Program Achievements and Growth

What began as a summer phlebotomy course has rapidly expanded into one of the most sought-after sectors at OIC Philadelphia. Thanks to the generous support of Congressman Brendan F. Boyle, who granted his first federal earmark of \$575,000 to OIC Philadelphia, we have successfully launched our Clinical Medical Assisting (CMA) and Administrative Medical Assisting (AMA) programs. This funding has enabled us to create a comprehensive healthcare career pathways, providing career ladder opportunities for growth.

“Advocating for federal funding for healthcare employee training is essential to promoting equity and providing individuals with the necessary job skills to succeed in the workforce. OIC has proven time and again that by investing in comprehensive training programs, we ensure that healthcare workers, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to develop the expertise required to deliver high-quality care and improve health outcomes in their communities.”



**Brendan F. Boyle**  
Congressman PA-02





“ The City is excited to be supporting the innovative work of OIC Philadelphia. The partnerships and career pathways OIC has forged in the healthcare industry are integral for moving residents into quality jobs and fostering inclusive growth in the City’s economy. ”

## Gianna Grossmann

Deputy Commerce Director for the City of Philadelphia



We are proud to celebrate the achievements of the first cohorts of our Clinical Medical Assisting and Administrative Medical Assisting students. These students have completed their programs and are now gaining valuable experience through externships or have already secured placements in the healthcare field. Additionally, we have graduated two cohorts of phlebotomy students, all of whom have successfully entered the workforce. The demand for our healthcare programs continues to grow, as evidenced by our extensive waitlist for future phlebotomy courses.



# Healing Our Communities: Building Resilient Communities through Empowerment



Philadelphia hopes to put some 250 residents to work with \$1.2 million in grants to 4 nonprofits  
msn.com

## Holistic Support for Healing

### The Need

19122, OIC Philadelphia's zip code, had a suicide rate of **16.7 per 100,000 residents** between 2013 and 2017, **nearly double the city's overall rate** during that period.

Among Black male teenagers in Philadelphia, **the suicide rate is estimated to be 60% higher than the overall rate.**

Mental health is a significant concern, particularly in underserved communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **suicide rates have increased by 30% in the United States over the past two decades, with the highest rates among individuals aged 25-44.** In Philadelphia, the pandemic has exacerbated existing mental health disparities and stressors, making accessible mental health services more important than ever.

### Addressing Mental Health

To truly empower our community, we have forged a dynamic partnership with Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS), a tenant in our building. This collaboration has brought a full-time therapist to OIC Philadelphia, providing mental health services, free of charge to our participants. This initiative addresses the critical need for mental health support in our community, helping individuals to heal and build resilience.

“As we prepare individuals for the workforce, we need to recognize the barriers and challenges they are experiencing and work to mitigate them in a proactive approach.”

**Sheila Ireland**  
CEO & President

### Testimonial

“Leading up to the start date, I was recovering from a long duration of grief, depression, and suicidal ideation. I had lost an anchor in my life and my grip was slipping.

This program was, I don't know, a miracle & a godsend.

I really needed this opportunity to re-ground myself. Being in the program has re-instilled a belief in myself and confidence to face the work ahead.”



Behavioral and Mental Health Support



Transportation Assistance

Success Coordinators



Career Development

Re-Entry Support Services



Employment Placement

Stipends & Incentives



Professional Presentation



Progressive Ventures Inc.  
Commercial Real Estate Management



## Support from the City of Philadelphia

OIC Philadelphia is also grateful for the \$250,000 investment from the City of Philadelphia's Department of Commerce. A portion of these funds will support our healthcare training programs, while another portion will be used to launch an innovative Behavioral Health Technician Program pilot. This new program aims to address the growing need for mental health support services in our community.

“OIC Philadelphia serves as a linchpin in our city's workforce development landscape, and this investment is pivotal to advancing access to Economic Opportunity for All,” said **Mayor Cherelle L. Parker**. "Investing in OIC Philadelphia's healthcare training programs underscores my commitment to bridging economic disparities and creating innovative pathways to jobs and careers that benefit local workers.”

**Mayor Cherelle Parker**





# Building The Workforce Hub of the Future

The Beacon on Broad Street



## A New Way to think about Workforce Development

Too often the supportive services that are needed by the people we serve are cobbled together in a fashion that is neither supportive nor expeditious. OIC Philadelphia owns its 100,000 square foot space on North Broad Street and is uniquely positioned to create a holistic environment of support. Our Workforce Hub concepts will co-locate the services that the people and community we serve need.

In pursuit of this transformative vision, we have established key partnerships in the building that expand and enhance our capabilities. Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS) now provides therapeutic services to our participants, addressing critical mental health needs that OIC Philadelphia is not equipped to handle alone. By integrating JFCS's expertise, we ensure our participants receive the comprehensive support they need to succeed.

Additionally, we have welcomed First Step Staffing to our building, occupying the second floor. This collaboration ensures that our participants not only receive training but also achieve meaningful employment outcomes. First Step Staffing's presence fortifies our mission by connecting individuals to job opportunities, thereby bridging the gap between training and employment.

From economic stability, to training for job of future to access to quality healthcare, to job placement, to access to the tools and services that allow our participants to be competitive in the job market – the Workforce Hub will provide it all, in one location, by a trusted community partner.

## Expanding Our Ecosystem

Over the next year, OIC Philadelphia is committed to further expanding this ecosystem by bringing in partners that provide complementary services essential to the overall well-being of our participants. Our extensive 100,000-square-foot space offers ample room to accommodate these new partners. We are actively seeking organizations that align with our mission and can contribute to streamlining the workforce development system.



# Mildred Jenkins

In the mid-1960s, Mildred Jenkins found herself working in housekeeping, doing her utmost to support her family. She firmly believed in the principle: **"an honest day's work is an honest day's pay."** It was this determined spirit that brought her to the doors of OIC Philadelphia in 1966.



Mildred's time at OIC between 1966 and 1968 was transformative. Upon graduation, she embarked on a new chapter in her life when she was hired by Fidelity Bank in the Center City office. As the only black woman in the office during those times, she was truly a pioneer. Beginning her career in filing, she didn't let that be the end of her journey. Over the next three decades, Mildred's dedication, hard work, and the skills she acquired at OIC propelled her through the ranks at Fidelity Bank. She rose to the esteemed position of court accountant, specializing in probating estates.

## Ripple Effect

The ripple effect of Mildred's success at Fidelity Bank extended beyond her own career. Due to her position, she secured student loans for her four children at a reduced interest rate through the bank. This financial assistance was instrumental in all her children completing their education. Today, they stand as shining examples of community service: two teachers, a principal, and a counselor at Masterman School in the city, a testament to the doors that education can open.



After 32 dedicated years at Fidelity Bank, Mildred retired in September 1999, reaping the rewards of her hard work with full benefits and a comfortable pension. Retirement didn't mean slowing down for Mildred. Instead, she embraced her golden years, traveling the world and enjoying the fruits of her labor.

## Transformative Power of Education

Looking back at her remarkable journey, Mildred credits OIC not just for the trajectory of her career but also as the cornerstone in building her family's generational wealth. Her story underscores the transformative power of education, determination, and the right opportunities.

"I have witnessed, firsthand, the incredible impact OIC Philadelphia has had on workforce development," said House Majority Appropriations Chairman Jordan Harris. "During my recent visit, I saw the dedication and hard work that goes into equipping our community with the skills and opportunities they need to succeed. OIC Philadelphia is not just a training center; it is a beacon of hope and a critical partner in shaping a robust and resilient workforce. Together, we are building a brighter future for Philadelphia, one skilled worker at a time."

**Jordan Harris**  
Chairman of the  
Appropriations Committee





# Support for Returning Citizens

**324% Growth**

<b>128</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
served	served	Recidivism
FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	Rate



## Comprehensive Support and Remarkable Outcomes

Through these partnerships, OIC Philadelphia supported a total of **543 returning citizens this year**. The impact of our efforts is reflected in an impressively low recidivism rate of just 2.4%, showcasing the effectiveness of our programs in helping individuals reintegrate successfully into their communities.

### SOAR Program



The SOAR (Skills, Opportunities, Achievement, and Responsibility) program has been instrumental in our re-entry efforts. This year, we engaged with 307 participants through phone and email follow-ups. Our ongoing support ensured that many participants re-engaged with our SDWP and OIC training programs, enrolled under PCCD, and attended hiring events.

## PCCD Partnership



Our partnership with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) has been another cornerstone of our re-entry work. **This year, we enrolled 127 participants in PCCD-supported programs.** These participants received comprehensive support, including job readiness training, educational opportunities, and access to essential services, all aimed at facilitating their successful reintegration into society.

### SDWP Program



The Same Day Work & Pay (SDWP) program, in collaboration with the city of Philadelphia, supported **109 participants in the last 45 days**. This innovative program provided immediate employment opportunities and fair wages to returning citizens, helping them gain financial stability and build a foundation for long-term success.

## Intensive Holistic Support

OIC Philadelphia's re-entry programs offer intensive holistic support through Success Coordinators who provide personalized guidance and mentorship. Participants receive mental health therapy, professional coaching, transportation assistance, housing assistance, clothing assistance, and more. This comprehensive support system ensures that returning citizens have the resources they need to overcome barriers and build sustainable, successful futures.

## A Holistic Approach to Re-Entry

OIC Philadelphia's re-entry programs are designed to address the unique challenges faced by returning citizens. Our holistic approach includes job training, educational support, mentorship, and access to essential services. By creating a supportive and inclusive environment, we empower individuals to overcome barriers, build new skills, and pursue meaningful careers.



# From Unbanked to Banked



**181**

PARTICIPANTS  
MOVED FROM  
UNBANKED TO  
BANKED

Since January 1, 2024

# Advancing Economic Empowerment for North Philadelphians

“

Connecting individuals to bank accounts is a pivotal step in building long-term financial stabilization. By providing access to traditional banking services, we help our participants lay a solid foundation for future financial success and independence.

”

**Sheila Ireland**

CEO & President, OIC Philadelphia



This fiscal year, OIC Philadelphia has made a deliberate shift to include a financial literacy curriculum tailored to the demographics we serve across all our workforce development training programs. Financial literacy is now an integral part of every program we offer.

- 1 Financial Empowerment Budgeting
- 2 Mastering Delayed Gratification
- 3 Mastering Debt
- 4 Banking Essentials
- 5 Financial Resilience
- 6 Decoding Credit



# Sullivan's Lasting Impact on North Broad

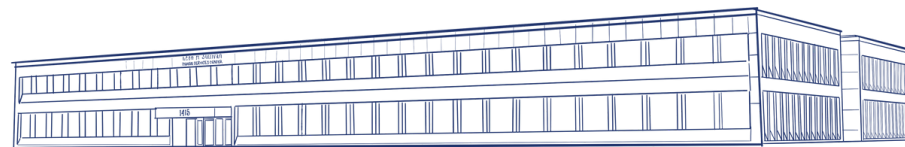
Our ecosystem is further strengthened by the Sullivan Entities on North Broad Street, which include the Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust, Progress Plaza, Zion Baptist Church, The Zion Community Impact Center, and OICA. Each of these entities plays a vital role in supporting the community and enhancing the reach of our initiatives.

## Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust

Dedicated to continuing the legacy of Leon H. Sullivan, the Trust provides crucial resources and support for community development and empowerment.

## Leon H. Sullivan Human Services

As a historic shopping center, Progress Plaza offers commercial opportunities and supports local businesses, contributing to the economic vitality of North Broad Street.



## The Zion Community Impact Center

This center will serve as a hub for social services, providing a space where community members can access the resources they need to thrive.

## Progress Plaza

Progress Plaza is the first African-American owned and developed retail development project in the United States. As a historic shopping center, Progress Plaza offers commercial opportunities and supports local businesses, contributing to the economic vitality of North Broad Street. Today, Progress Plaza has more than 20,000 visitors per month.

## OICA (Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America)

OICA is the parent organization of the standing 25 OIC affiliates across the United States.

## Zion Baptist Church

A cornerstone of spiritual and community support, Zion Baptist Church offers a range of services that nurture the well-being of our participants.



# Sullivan's Lasting Impact World Wide

At the 60th Anniversary Gala, OIC Philadelphia launched a pay-it-forward campaign to raise funds towards the construction costs of a new building for OIC Cameroon.

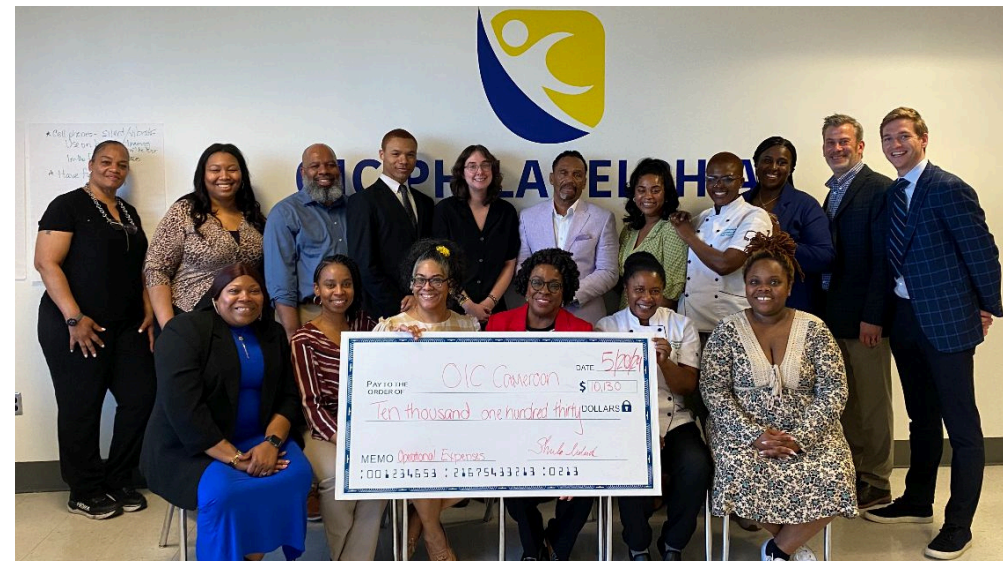
To celebrate National Cameroon Day, OIC Philadelphia staff presented OIC Cameroon with a \$10,000 donation, thanks to the generosity of donors; 100% participation from OIC Philadelphia staff; and a donation match from the organization.

Together, we are expanding the wellspring of opportunity, carrying forward Dr. Sullivan's vision of empowerment through education and economic independence on a global scale.

# Expanding the Wellspring of Opportunity

Driven by Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan's vision of empowering African Americans to forge brighter futures by drawing from their heritage, the OIC franchise spread across the globe, with a special focus on Africa.

Recognizing the transformative power of education and economic independence, Dr. Sullivan's vision manifested in the establishment of OIC Cameroon, a beacon of hope that has touched the lives of over 25,871 young men and women across the continent for 39 years.





# OIC Supporters

## \$1,000,000+



AN  MANAGED FACILITY

## \$1,000,000-\$500,000



## \$500,000-\$250,000



**\$250,000-\$100,000**



**\$100,000-\$50,000**



**\$50,000-\$25,000**





## \$25,000-\$10,000

Aramark  
Frank Tait, OIC Board Member  
Independence Blue Cross  
PNC Bank  
The Philadelphia Foundation

## \$10,000-\$5,000

---

Comcast Spectacor  
Community College of Philadelphia  
Daniel J. Keating Company  
Jefferson Health  
Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust  
OIC of America  
Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau

Satell Institute  
Team Clean  
Temple University  
The Goldenberg Group  
Visit Philadelphia  
World Trade Center Greater of Philadelphia

## \$5,000-\$1,000

---

African American Chamber of Commerce  
AmeriHealth Caritas  
Shift Capital  
Beech Companies  
Bradley & Bradley Associates Inc.  
Brown's Super Store, Inc.  
Carr & Duff  
Cozen O'Connor  
Creative Repute  
Empower Construction  
Exact Solar  
Express Employment Professionals  
Free Library of Philadelphia  
Gordon Policy Group

Graduate Philadelphia  
Insperity  
JEVS Human Services  
Key Medium  
Keystone First  
Nerney Family Foundation  
Parx Casino  
Philadelphia Ballet  
Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Philadelphia Insurance Companies  
Philadelphia Phillies  
Philadelphia Works, Inc.  
Pierce College  
Procacci Brothers

Progress Investment Associates  
PRWT Services, Inc.  
Rivers Casino Philadelphia  
Rockland Fund  
UC Science Center  
Sheila Ireland  
ShopRite  
Solar States  
Sovereign Security  
Stradley Ronon  
Steven Scott Bradley  
Sullivan Progress Plaza  
Supra Office Solutions, Inc.  
Tech Impact

The Nicoletti Family  
The North Broad Renaissance  
The Bergman Family  
The ROZ Group  
Third Floor Media  
TSIB  
Turner Surety & Insurance Brokerage, Inc.  
University City District  
Uplift Solutions  
Visit Philadelphia  
WURD  
YMCA

# Community and Employer Partners

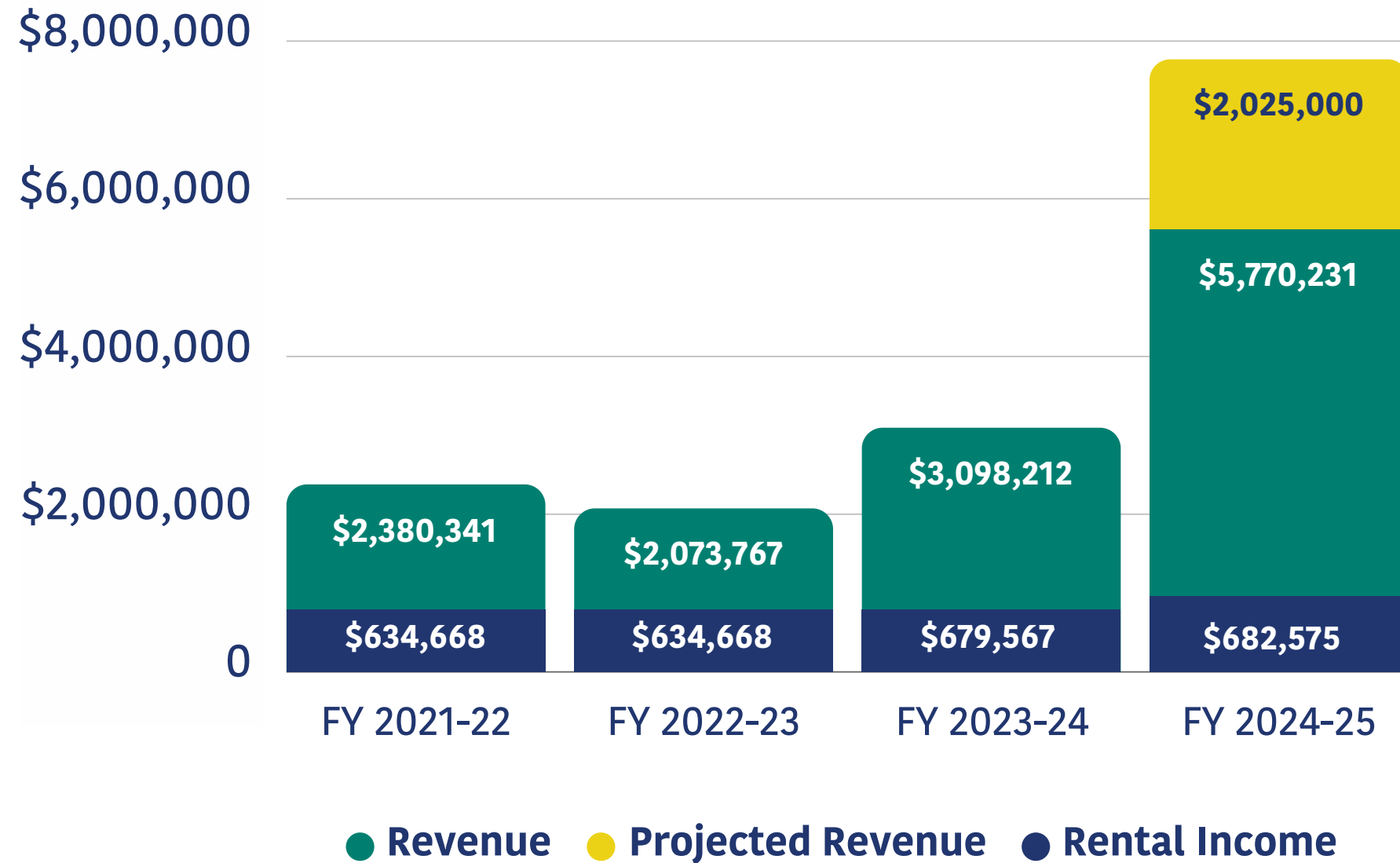
---

- AmeriHealth Caritas
- Aramark
- Arway Linen
- Beyond Literacy
- Brulee Catering
- CCI (Condensed Curriculum International)
- Career Wardrobe
- CareerWorks
- CHOP (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia)
- Cescaphe
- ChatterBlast
- Children's Crisis Treatment Center
- City of Philadelphia Behavioral Health, Mental Health & Intellectual Disability Services
- City of Philadelphia: Office of Human Resources
- Community Behavioral Health
- Community College of Philadelphia
- Community Design Collaborative
- Community Health Centers
- Community Food Center
- Compassionate Friends
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- Congreso de Latinos Unidos
- Culinary Entrepreneurship Center
- DateCode Genie
- Department of Labor
- Easterseals Southeastern Pennsylvania
- Easterseals Southeastern Pennsylvania
- Elwyn Early Childhood Services
- Exact Solar
- Fairmount Behavioral Health System
- Farmer Jawn
- Financial Empowerment Centers
- First Step Staffing
- Freedom Thinkers Academy
- Gaudenzia House
- GriefShare
- H&EIP Philadelphia Works
- Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia
- Healing Communities
- Healthy Philadelphia
- iSpy Hospitality
- J. Ambrogi Foods
- JEVS (Jewish Employment and Vocational Service)
- JFCS (Jewish Family and Community Services)
- John F. Kennedy Behavioral Health Services
- Loews Hotel
- Lutheran Settlement House
- Mastery Charter Schools Dual Enrollment Program
- MLK High School Program
- Nationalities Services Center
- Office of Disability Services
- Office of Homeless Services
- Office of Reintegration Services (RISE)
- PA Careerlink
- Parkside Recovery
- Peirce College
- Penn Jersey Paper
- Penn Medicine
- Philabundance
- Philadelphia 250 Womens Committee
- Philadelphia Bereavement Network
- Philadelphia CareerLink
- Philadelphia CEO
- Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Philadelphia Housing Authority Workforce Development Hub @ Vaux
- Philadelphia Reentry Program (PREP)
- Philadelphia Suicide and Crisis Intervention Hotline
- Philadelphia Welcoming Center
- Philadelphia Works
- Philadelphia's Children Alliance
- Philaworks
- PRO-ACT Phila. Recovery Communication Center
- Project HOME
- Public Citizens for Children & Youth
- Randolph High School Culinary Program
- Rivers Casino
- Samuels and Son Seafood
- ServSafe
- SNAP (Food Stamps)
- Solar States
- Special People In Northeast, Inc. (SPIN)
- Struther Enterprise
- Temple University
- Termac
- The Benefit Bank
- The Chefs Warehouse
- The Consortium
- The Defender Association of Philadelphia
- The Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline
- The Welcoming Center
- Urban Affairs Coalition
- Weavers Way
- Women Against Abuse
- Women In Transition
- Work Keys
- Workforce Alliance Professionals



# Organizational Growth

### Revenue Growth







Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives



Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan & President Richard Nixon



Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan & President John F. Kennedy



Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan & President Richard Nixon



# Board of Directors



**Sheila Ireland**  
President, CEO  
OIC Philadelphia



**Steven Scott Bradley**  
Chairman  
One Digital



**Javier Suarez**  
Vice Chair  
Hispanic Chamber of  
Commerce



**Ali Jaffar**  
Vice Chair  
Key Medium



**Sharana Worsley**  
Secretary



**Frank Tait**  
Treasurer  
Executive Leaders  
for Advisory Boards

**Michele Wells-Bates**  
PECO

**Vincent D. Gordon**  
Gordon Policy Group

**Ronald Howard**  
COO of OIC  
International

**Shamyune Jones, Esq.**  
Pennsylvania Convention Center  
Authority

**Ade Lawal**  
Express Employment  
Professionals

**Jennifer MacGilvray**  
Delta Dental

**Tiffany Newmuis**  
Comcast

**Judge Stephanie Sawyer**  
The City of Philadelphia  
Municipal Court

**Michael Soileau**  
CEO, O3

**Mable Welborn**  
Leon H. Sullivan Charitable  
Trust

**V. Amanda Witts**  
Eckert Seamans  
Cherin & Mellott, LLC

**Atif Bostic**  
Emeritus Staus  
Uplift Solutions, Inc

# Staff

Success is always a team sport. At OIC Philadelphia this is the team that makes the dream happen.



**Geoff Allen**  
Director of Hospitality & Tourism Training Institute



**Alida Padilla Curry**  
Director of Admissions

**Joyce Bacon**  
Coaching Program Manager

**Tracey Borden**  
Executive Chef Instructor

**JaRon Burnett**  
AV & Digital Media Program Manager

**Shantelle Faison**  
Financial Literacy Program Manager

**Arthur Fields**  
Maintenance

**Mark Fisher**  
Maintenance

**Eileen Godfrey**  
Healthcare Program Manager

**Chandria Hargrove**  
Student Service Coordinator

**Franceska Jean**  
Chef Instructor's Assistant

**Takesha Kirkland**  
Building Operations Manager

**Taleem Lewis**  
Admissions Coordinator

**Samantha Margolis**  
Database Manager

**Tatiana Molina**  
Therapist

**David Murray**  
Employment & Outreach Specialist

**Nadaysha Screven**  
Executive Assistant

**Erin Shen**  
Case Manager

**Delena Smith**  
Smart Energy Program Manager



## Support Us

Learn more about our mission – and discover how you can get involved.



OIC Alumna Mildred Jenkins, 1968

