

# MILESTONE 5

## SUCCESSFULLY ENTERING THE WORKFORCE

### Lead Stakeholders:

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### Indicators:

Data should be separated by gender, race and ethnicity.

- Percentage of young men out of school and employed: ages 16-24
- Percentage of young men out of school and unemployed: ages 16-24

### Background:

The overall unemployment rate of Miami-Dade has significantly decreased from 11.4% in 2010 to 6% in 2015. Much is due to the continuously booming operations at Miami International Airport and PortMiami, and to the recent expansion of Miami's real estate market<sup>13</sup>. Unemployment among blacks, however, is still exponentially higher than among whites and Latinos. The rate of unemployment is also disproportionately high between 16 and 19 years of age in comparison to individuals older than 25. Entering the workforce is a particular challenge for young men of color who may have entered the criminal justice system at some point in their lives, even if the offense did not result in a conviction<sup>14</sup>.

Boys and young men of color represent an untapped resource in today's economy and comprise a growing segment of the labor force. Unfortunately, they face historic levels of unemployment and idleness. National data indicates with only 19% of young black and Asian teens, and 2% of Latino teens working, most youth of color will likely reach adulthood without the benefit of having worked or enjoyed high-quality career experiences to fuel aspirations and build work ethic. We are currently missing an opportunity to fully realize these young men's potential<sup>15</sup>.

**While Miami-Dade unemployment has dropped from 11.4% in 2010 to 6% in 2015, levels remain high among blacks.**

### MBK Challenges:

- Expand opportunities for young men of color to work, learn and develop career-enhancing skills.
- Provide options for out-of-school males to attain a secondary credential with pathways to post-secondary education.

### Overarching Principles:

- Education / Training – Train young adults through work-based learning experiences.
- Employment – Hire youth and increase employer demand for wider pipelines of young talent.
- Mentoring – Mentor youth through work-based, service learning or civic engagement experiences that impart transferrable skills, leadership and social capital.
- Justice reform expansion – Support programs and policies designed to help young, nonviolent offenders get on paths to careers and stable, productive lives.

### **MBK Actions for Transformation:**

- 1) Address employment challenges caused by early criminal justice implications.
  - a. Expand community-based alternatives to juvenile detention such as evening reporting centers, home-based alternative services and community-based therapy treatment. Specifically, use this strategy to address the disproportionately high rate of young men of color engaged with the justice system.
  - b. Support local policy efforts designed to create cross-system approaches to dropout recovery and reengagement programming that emphasize the importance of a “case management” function to assist youth in navigating social, educational and employment options.
  - c. Identify and fund culture-specific mentoring initiatives that have a proven track record of serving males of color and have strong connections to local education reform and collaborative youth employment efforts.
  - d. Support bipartisan policy initiatives that seek to give Americans convicted of nonviolent crimes a second chance at the American Dream by preventing mistakes made while young from turning into future criminal behavior, and by helping young adults who commit nonviolent crimes become more self-reliant and less likely to commit future crimes.
  - e. Develop and support programs that help youth both within and released from the juvenile justice system to complete high school or a GED program and receive a post-secondary credential.
- 2) Expand target resources to communities with high youth unemployment rates to create a youth employment infrastructure that expands work-based opportunities (including, but not limited to: work experience, internships, apprenticeships, transitional jobs, community service and on-the-job training).
  - a. Create job shadowing and externship opportunities for young adults to give them valuable exposure to work options and professional networks as they map their career pathways.
  - b. Support and participate in peer-to-peer and youth-to-adult mentoring models, particularly through youth-led organizations that promote leadership, skill-attainment and community service, as a powerful way to engage young black males and demonstrate their contributions and talents to employers and society.
  - c. Align support from nonprofits, schools and colleges to launch or expand youth-focused programs, understanding that mentoring is also good for business as it helps develop talent, fosters employee loyalty and creates career pathways.
  - d. Involve entrepreneurs as an effective way to identify solutions that expand employment opportunities.
  - e. Emphasize entrepreneurship as a way to give young adults a pathway to success and skills that employers covet.
  - f. Expand access to work-based learning such as internships and modern-day apprenticeships among the Beacon Council's One Community One Goal targeted industries.

- 3) Provide incentives to increase employer engagement in the development of pipelines and trial employment activities to expose in-school and out-of-school youth to careers and emerging opportunities.
  - a. Development of a tax credit program to give incentives to businesses that hire youth in targeted areas.
  - b. Increase hiring and provide meaningful, hands-on opportunities for young people that benefit both youth and employers. Businesses with supply chains and vendors should also ask for this commitment from their partner companies.
  - c. Identify internal barriers to accessing wider talent pipelines — such as degree requirements for every job, even when the necessary skill sets do not require one — and explore the value of human resources solutions in modifying or removing these requirements.
  - d. Incentivize employers (i.e., on-the-job training, paid work experience, etc.) to hire and train youth and encourage them to work with and buy services and products from organizations that employ “opportunity youth” — 16-to-24-year-olds who are neither in school nor working.
- 4) Expand education and career pathways to connect low-income male students of color to the seven targeted industries of the Beacon Council's One Community One Goal plan.
  - a. Create partnerships with two- and four-year colleges to create a pipeline from high school to college in these professions and provide support services to ensure student success.
  - b. Enhance partnerships with employers, school districts, colleges and post-secondary technical schools for integrated, work-based learning experiences and certification opportunities for youth.
  - c. Develop a resource guide to help all students understand their education and career options, including: career and technical education; internships and apprenticeships; alternative programs; and information about the fastest-growing job sectors in their region.