

NEWS FROM



June 2024

This month, we celebrate our 2024 summer commencement. Congratulations to all of our graduates! We'd also like to give a very warm welcome to Hannah Yonas, our newest Program Specialist here at Uplift. Additionally, SCI Chester is holding a mock interview program July 10th and August 7th. The annual award ceremony, Hardship to Hope, will also be held Thursday, November 7th. Finally, order to beat the heat, Ms. Mo introduces us to her latest delicious, cool treat.

Workforce Solutions

On Tuesday, June 4th, Uplift celebrated our 2024 Workforce Solutions summer commencement at the stately Mitten Hall at Temple University. The energy in the room was palpable as friends, family, and staff gathered to celebrate Uplift's largest graduating class ever including 42 graduates from Uplift's HVAC certification program, 47 from Uplift's CDL Class B certification program, 9 from the Retail and Customer Service program, 70 people from Same Day Work Pay and 2 individuals from the Youth Program.

"I am so very proud of the 170 graduates, and I know they will continue to make us all proud as they launch a new career armed with the skills we have given them," says Barry Johnson, Vice President of Workforce Operations at Uplift. Attendees were treated to a passionate "Spoken Word," reading from fellow graduate Malik Jarrett and an inspirational speech about the importance of never giving up hope from graduate Joshua Lockley.

"This program gave me hope," says Jason S. "It made me feel like I can do anything I put my mind to. Before, I thought that the streets were going to be my life until I made a change." A graduate from the Same Day Work Pay Program praised Uplift for its quality training and caring staff: "This program shined a light on me to see that I can accomplish my goals as long as I stay in the right direction. This program has done for me the exact name it is, UPLIFT, in more than one way! I have already been applying the tools learned into my everyday life and seen results," he says.

Graduates gave special shout outs to CDL Life Skills Instructor, Wayne Garrett, who challenged them to be a better person, Dr. Mark Tucker for his patience in teaching the intricacies of HVAC and Monique Oakman-Robinson, Education and Training Manager for her care and support.

Thank you to our program partners including ODAAT, SEPTA, Temple University, The Fresh Grocer, North 10, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, and The City of Philadelphia's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity. A special thank you to Uplift Employer Partner, Brotherly Grubb who provided a scrumptious buffet lunch.

To view the Summer 2024 Commencement Program, click [HERE](#).

To view photos from the event, click [HERE](#).

Class of 2024

HVAC

Aazhe Young	Luis Santiago
Chris McClean	Malik Jerret
Christina Smith	Marc Pennock
Darian Holloman	Marcus Stoker
D'mitri Copeland	Mark Rainey
Elijah Black	Michael Gordon
George Shelton	Michelle Anthony
Izais Thompson	Naziir Sims
Jabron Miller	Nicholas McIntosh
Jason Simmons	Octavius Garrison
John Bridy	Patricia Muhanji
Kahil Lewis	Quran Towns
Khalil Tenner	Raquib Johnson
Larry Smith	Rashed Lewis
Laura Farrington	Renee Pennock
Rodney Eleazer Jr.	Stanford Campbell
Ronald Myers	Tymir Harrison
Ruben Cezaire	U-allah King
Sean Henderson	Vermor Marino
Shadeed Gainey	Wendell Muse
Sharif Thomas-Brown	Yaseem Mcleod

CDL

Amir Ellis	Jason Martino
Andrew Carr	Jeffrey Torpey
Anthony Jones	Jesuferanmi Ogunlokun
Brandon Grahman	Joshua Lockley
Damir Moore	Kasshian Elliot
Danny Matthews	Luis Rafael Irizaray
Darren Sherman	Mario Williams
Darryl Debnam	Mekhi Sawyer
David Simpkins	Michael Burton
Demetrius Davis	Michael Durden
Dondi Ringgold	Michael Torrez-Rodriguez
Eric McLaurin	Mustafa Crenshaw
Eric Sims	Nathaniel Powers
Evee Rowland	Porsha Nelson
Henry Weaver	Steven Brant
Prince Alston	Steven Young
Quadir Moon-Barnes	Sulaiman Dosunmu
Ramir Handy	Tahj Jones
Randall Overton	Tazmir Finney
Ronnie Burwell	Terrance Wilson
Shakeya Green	Tracy Taylor
Sharif Tindal	Venus Hicks
Starlen Wilder	Vincent Myers

Class of 2024

Same Day Work and Pay

Ajasha Sanford	Jahmir Culpepper	Marissa Hoffman
Albert Montague	Jasmin Negrón	Micah Rhoades
Alicia Simmons	Jemere Moore	Michael Bormuth
Amber McDaniel	Jermaw Gass	Michael Peeks
Andrea Gales	Jerome Carter Jr.	Monique Williams
Anthony Williams	Jo-Ellen Young	Nathaniel Jones
Antonio Brown	Joeziah Ashe	Quincy Fontaine
April Womack	John Snyder	Rodney Carol
Aramis Rivera	Kareem Wharton	Romel Clark
Brian Cockett	Karma Davis	Ruth Jones
Camille McClean	Keysha Long	Sadeeq Clark
Carolina Pichardo	Khadijah Johnson	Shameekia Timms
Chesley Dietrich	Larry Gerst	Sienna Escobar
Cleo Flynn	Latoya Johnson	Stacey Leidke
Dahmir Gibbs	Larry Gerst	Stephen Cossman
Daniel Green	Latoya Johnson	Tanesha Jones
Danielle Hunter	Lawrence Moore	Thomas Jam
Dayshawn French	Leon Pittman	Timothy Cohen
Dennis Johnson	Louis Snyder	Tobi Simone
Dennis Lawry	Lyza Pagan	Tyrone Sessions
Dewan Porter	Maggie Ortiz	Vance Riddick
Dominic Whittington	Anthony Marcell Baldwin	Willie Abram
Elaine McCormick		
Erica Ashley		
Glenn Weaver	Mariah Williams	

Class of 2024

Retail

Aiyana Gomez
Breanna Quintero
Heidi Zuch
Kvonna Brown
Luz Williams

Mingo Geiger
Stephanie Williams
Tawanna Morgan
Yamiris Albino

Youth Program

Aleesa Downing
Cecil Trinh



Staff Updates

We are thrilled to welcome Hannah Yonas to the Uplift Family! With a rich background in international health, development, and public diplomacy, Hannah is eager to apply her academic knowledge to create real-world strategies that support returning citizens.. She will be working as a Program Assistant supporting Strategy and Operations.

“Hannah will be involved in every step of our program development and implementation, gaining hands-on experience and contributing to meaningful social impact. She will also stay up-to-date with the latest best practices, ensuring that our program remains innovative and effective,” says Julia Keleher, Strategic Advisor for Uplift.

Hannah was drawn to Uplift and the non-profit sector due to her deep passion for social justice and activism.

“I want to help others become the best version of themselves, while also working to remove the barriers that keeps them from doing so. Throughout my career, I have developed the philosophy that I don’t always know what’s best for others, but I can listen to them and help bring about the changes that *they* need,” she says.

In her role, Hannah will focus on engagement around special projects and strategic initiatives, crafting clear and engaging materials to connect with stakeholders, volunteers, and partners. This will help build and strengthen positive relationships and enhance and expand our impact.

Behind the Walls: Empowering Men at SCI Chester for Re-entry Success

Uplift's Behind the Walls program equips incarcerated men at SCI Chester with the skills and confidence to thrive upon release. Led by Wayne Garrett, a former participant with a unique understanding of their challenges, the eight-week program tackles essential topics:

- *Goal Setting & Values*: Defining career aspirations and core values to guide the job search.
- *Communication*: Developing strong communication skills for effective workplace interaction.
- *Job Search Strategies*: Mastering techniques for finding opportunities, crafting resumes, and writing cover letters.
- *Hard & Soft Skills*: Understanding the importance of both technical expertise and interpersonal skills.
- *Introductions & Interviews*: Perfecting the art of introductions and interview preparation, including anticipated questions and responses.

The program's crown jewel? Mock Interviews! Volunteers from the professional world provide invaluable feedback through simulated interviews, allowing participants to refine their skills, gain self-awareness, and build confidence.

Behind the Walls empowers men at SCI Chester to successfully reintegrate into society and become contributing members of the workforce.

Interested in making a difference? We're seeking volunteers for Mock Interviews! Contact Wayne.garrett@upliftsolutions.org to join our mission.

SCI Chester Mock Interview Program



Help prepare justice-involved individuals from SCI Chester for employment by conducting mock interviews!

JULY 10, 2024

AUGUST 7, 2024

9:00AM - 11:30AM

SCI Chester Correctional Facility

500 E. 4th St

Chester, PA 19013

EVENT DETAILS:

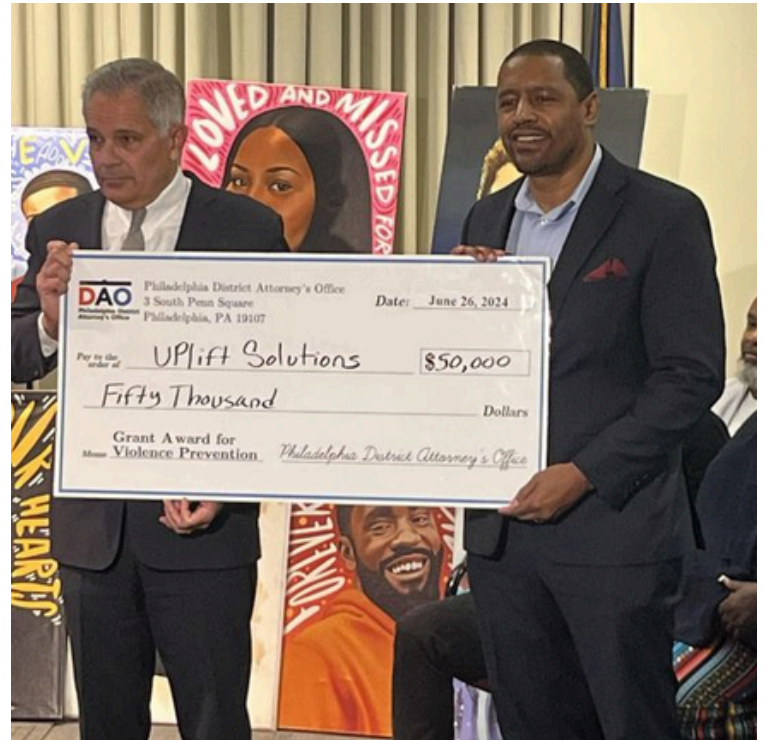
- Volunteers conduct 4-5 mock interviews
- Interview questions will be prepared for volunteers
- Volunteers will pass through security checks
- Uplift & SCI staff will be present during interviews
- Volunteers will get to provide valuable feedback to participants!



Contact:
Julia Keleher, Chief Strategy &
Operations Officer
julia.keleher@upliftsolutions.org

Uplift Awarded Highly Competitive Grant from DA's Office

Uplift was one of just 25 non-profits chosen by Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner to receive an anti-violence grant. On June 26, Krasner held a press conference to announce that \$675,000 would be disbursed in violence prevention microgrants. "\$675,000 is the largest amount given to date and comes at a pivotal time when Philadelphia enters the summer season, which has historically seen increases in gun violence," said Krasner. Uplift CEO Atif Bostic was invited to speak at the podium about the award's significance. Bostic humbly accepted the \$50,000 award and spoke about the importance of all 25 non-profits working collectively to combat violence in the city and find ways to lean in to each other.





HARDSHIP TO HOPE

Annual Award Ceremony

S A V E T H E D A T E

Thursday, November 7, 2024
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Cescaphe Ballroom

For Sponsorship opportunities, click [**HERE**](#)

State Representative G. Roni Green and Uplift Team Up for Record Clearing

112 people are off to a fresh start thanks to a record clearing hosted by State Representative G. Roni Green (D, District 190th) and Uplift Solutions at Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter in Hunting Park on June 15.

“A first-time or low-level criminal offense—or even an arrest that leads to no charges—can pose significant challenges that are lifelong and often outlast any sentence someone convicted has served,” says Uplift CEO Atif Bostic. As such, Uplift provides free and confidential record clearings in collaboration with the Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity (PLSE.) PLSE’s team of volunteer attorneys walk individuals through the record clearing process that enables them to move forward into gainful employment. June 15 was Uplift’s 3rd record clearing of the year and 2nd time partnering with State Representative G. Roni Green. Prior to her election she served as a community and labor organizer for more than 30 years. As a state representative, Green’s priorities include fighting for workers’ rights, affordable housing to preserve neighborhoods and ensure that every working family has a home, sensible gun reform to combat the gun violence epidemic, equitable community and economic development that provides opportunities to all, and criminal justice reform with a focus on ending mass incarceration.

Green’s staff and corps of volunteers that included neighborhood block captains helped run the entire event featuring on-site registration and community resource vendors. A moon bounce, cotton candy, snow cones, balloon artist and face painter were on hand for family entertainment. Saudia’s Country Cookin’ provided food for every single person to ensure no one went away hungry.

Click [**HERE**](#) to enjoy the video highlights of the event!

If you or a loved one need help with a record clearing please visit: www.plsephilly.org/intake and stay tuned for news on Uplift’s next in person clinic to be held in September.

Monique's Summer Treat



Need a quick and easy summer treat? Ms. Mo has the latest and greatest recipe for you!

Serving: 6-8

Ingredients

- 2 packages of Pepperidge Farm Chessmen Butter cookies
- 1.8 oz cool whip
- 2 (3.4oz) Vanilla Yellow Pudding (follow instructions on box and add as needed)
- 4 cups of whole or 2% milk
- 5 bananas thinly sliced

Directions:

1. Add to a large bowl- Vanilla Jello Pudding, Cool Whip, and milk.
 2. Beat ingredients using an electric mixer, on medium speed until desired smoothness and consistency.
 3. Layer pan with cookies, sliced cookies, and pudding mixture.
 4. Repeat step 3. Add small amounts of milk at a time to maintain the consistency of the pudding mixture.
 5. Enjoy!
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Uplift would not be what it is today without your help! Please continue to make our work possible by clicking the donate button below. THANK YOU!

[**DONATE HERE!**](#)