

Transitioning Gang-Involved Youth to Higher Education (TGIY) Program Fiscal Year 2023 Summary of Funding

- **FY 2023 Appropriation:** \$5,000,000
- **FY 2023 Amount for New Awards:** \$4,950,000
 - **New Awards from the FY 2023 Competition:** \$4,947,869
- **Number of New Awards:** 5
 - **New Awards from the FY 2023 Competition:** 5 New Awards

Institution/Organization Name	State	Type of Institution	Award Amount	Type of Award	Abstract Page
University of Cincinnati	OH	Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	\$987,871.00	New Award from the FY 2023 Competition	
Orange County Bar Foundation	CA	Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	\$990,000.00	New Award from the FY 2023 Competition	
Uncornered, Inc.	MA	Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	\$990,000.00	New Award from the FY 2023 Competition	
PathStone Corporation	NY	Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	\$990,000.00	New Award from the FY 2023 Competition	
Affirming Youth Foundation, Inc.	FL	Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	\$989,998.00	New Award from the FY 2023 Competition	

ABSTRACT

Transitioning Gang-Impacted Youth to Higher Education Opportunities through the Urban Youth Leadership Academy

The University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice proposes to establish the Urban Youth Leadership Academy (UYLA) to support gang-impacted youth between the ages of 16 to 24 years by creating supportive pathways to higher education and workforce opportunities. The proposed project involves an innovative university-community partnership with exceptional capacity to fulfil the priorities set forth by the DOE in the solicitation; it includes both universal and targeted services, collaborates with numerous partners to address the diverse needs of the target population, supports the meaningful inclusion of underserved youth in higher education and career placement opportunities, and enhances the capacity of our local support system to improve outcomes for justice-involved people. The program model is grounded in evidence-based practices and an understanding of the social, academic and personal experiences of gang-impacted youth.

The UYLA includes three main program components: (1) a structured, on-campus experience for underserved high school students to teach leadership skills, provide mentorship, and connect youth with resources to access higher education and/or employment opportunities; (2) a trauma-informed, holistic case management framework for gang-involved youth who are enrolled at the University of Cincinnati; and (3) a centralized infrastructure at the University of Cincinnati to leverage the collective impact of community partners in our local jurisdiction. Additionally, this proposal includes an evaluation plan.

The UYLA long-term project goals are: (1) to develop and implement evidence-based services to transition gang-impacted youth into postsecondary programs that will allow them to pursue a certificate, degree, or other credential; (2) to reduce risk factors for delinquent behaviors and strengthen protective factors with essential wraparound services to enhance social and emotional support; (3) to deliver an experience that is culturally competent and responsive to the needs of racial and ethnic minority youth; (4) to strengthen the network of system partners to enhance the collective impact of services and provide support to disconnected students and their families; (5) to provide professional development opportunities to create a positive, inclusive, and identity-safe campus climate for gang-impacted youth; and (6) to foster system-based changes that enhance outcomes for underserved youth.

This proposal addresses the *absolute priority* specified in the solicitation as the primary purpose of the proposed project is to increase the likelihood of high school completion and college or career success for gang-impacted youth. It also addresses the *first competitive preference priority* in three ways. First, the UYLA program aims to create a positive, inclusive and identity-safe climate at the University of Cincinnati through holistic case management and peer support. Second, the UYLA will use evidence-based assessments and incorporate best practices from previous evaluations of similar projects. Third, the UYLA will provide professional development opportunities to faculty, staff, students, and community partners. This proposal also addresses the second competitive preference priority by strengthening inter-agency coordination and community engagement to enhance collective impact and advance systematic change.

Abstract

1. Applicant Institution: The Orange County Bar Foundation DBA Project Youth OC.

2. Project Title: ICAN! (Independence, Competence, and Aptitudes Now!)

3. Target Population: For the proposed TGIY program, ICAN!, Project Youth OC (PYOC) will serve underserved, gang-involved youth, ages 16-24, in Orange County, CA. Our target population will be identified as transition-age youth that are gang-involved, justice-involved, reentry, and/or otherwise disconnected who are interested in obtaining a certificate, degree, or other credential. Each year of the 3-year grant period, 30 youth will be served for a total of **90** unduplicated youth. Services will be available to all demographics (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.) and in all Orange County cities. We anticipate that client demographics for the proposed ICAN! services will mirror those of our current diversion programs and ICAN! clients: 90% of our youth will be Latino, less than 50% of their caregivers will have a high school education, 70% will be from Santa Ana, and 95% will be from low-income households, and 100% of our youth will be gang-involved.

4. Services and Proposed Activities: Phase 1: (Intake)—Each ICAN! participant is assigned a case manager to help them address their unique needs and barriers and provide them with resources, services, and assistance needed to enable a successful career pathway. Phase 2: College and Career Readiness—Clients receive 6-24 months (depending on the length of their vocational/educational program) of bi-weekly, one-on-one intensive case management (adapted from A-CRA's evidence-based case management model) that provides our Job Readiness Curriculum, while at the same time providing critical wrap-around services that include culturally-competent, trauma-informed, social and emotional support to overcome identified barriers. Caregivers are provided with a 2-hour workshop that highlights gang and substance abuse awareness, as well as emphasizing parental monitoring skills. Phase 3: Finding the Path (Career Exploration)—Clients work with their case manager to complete intensive self-assessments and research to identify career options. They receive assistance in applying to community colleges, vocational programs, or alternate pathways. Phase 4: Career Pathways—Participants attend their certificate, degree, or other credential program, while receiving continued case management. Phase 5: Follow-up (Employment)—Participants receive assistance gaining employment in their field and receive case management through the first three months of their jobs.

5. Anticipated Results: Youth Outcomes: (1) 75% (90) of recruited students will complete vocational training or certification program. (2) 80% of students report increased knowledge of career pathways. (3) 80% of students will demonstrate increased financial literacy knowledge and skills. (4) 75% of students will obtain gainful employment within three months of completing the program. Caregiver Outcomes: (1) 80% of caregivers will report increased awareness of gangs and substance use. (2) 70% of caregivers will report increased parental monitoring skills. (3) 70% of caregivers will report increased awareness of local prosocial activities available to their youth. Community Outcomes: (1) Increased youth access to community linkages offering continued prevention and care services. (2) Increased coordination among local schools and services providers.

6. Absolute Priority Addressed: Yes. The purpose of the proposed TGIY program, ICAN! (Independence, Competence, and Aptitudes Now!), is to assist gang-involved and other underserved youth, ages 16-24, in Orange County, CA, to obtain a post-secondary certificate, degree, or other credential. ICAN! utilizes an intensive case management model for the target population (adapted from the evidenced-based A-CRA model) to provide youth with the wrap-around services they need to succeed.

7. Competitive Preference Priorities Addressed: Yes. (1)(b) ICAN! has long-standing partnerships with post-secondary institutions, local high schools, justice system, and community social service agencies. (2) (a & b) PYOC has significant involvement with key stakeholders and committees to create justice policy change. ICAN! has a program phase dedicated to job and college readiness.

8. Invitational Priorities Addressed: Yes. (1) Our ICAN! program is already effectively working with gang-involved youth to access post-secondary education. (2) ICAN! promotes equity by working with gang-involved youth in high school, career and technical education programs, alternative schools, juvenile justice system and correctional facilities. Attainment of project goals may improve quality of education in juvenile justice facilities and improve long-term outcomes of reentry youth.

1. **Applicant Institution:** Uncornered, Inc.
2. **Project Title:** Community Violence Intervention Specialist Credential Program
3. **Target Population:** Gang-involved youth and young adults (age 14-24 years) from high-crime communities in the Greater Boston area
4. **Services and Proposed Activities:** Uncornered, and its academic and criminal justice partners, will work with gang-involved youth and young adults from Greater Boston area to (a) create pathways that increase postsecondary education access, affordability, completion, and post-enrollment success among gang-involved youth/young adults; (b) address the social, emotional, and academic needs of gang-involved youth/young adults to support college and career readiness; and (c) strengthen cross-sector collaboration and coordination to advance systemic change for equitable and inclusive access to education and career opportunities. The collaboration will include intensive case management with wraparound services such as mental health counseling, individualized education plans, postsecondary enrollment/application assistance, including financial aid, and evidence-based services for academic support, such as advising and tutoring. Through this funding opportunity, Uncornered and Roxbury Community College will create a specialized credentialing program for Community Violence Intervention with direct employment opportunities.
5. **Anticipated Results:** (a) Decreased antisocial behaviors; (b) Increased prosocial behaviors; (c) Decreased recidivism; (d) Increased number of underserved youth/young adults enrolled in a postsecondary education program; (e) Increased number of underserved youth/young adults earning a certificate, degree, or other credentials; (f) Increased number of underserved youth/young adults active in internships, apprenticeships, or other work experiences.
6. **Absolute Priority Addressed:** Yes - services address the accessibility, affordability, completion, and post-enrollment success of underserved youth.
7. **Competitive Preference Priorities Addressed:** Yes
 - X Competitive Preference Priority 1** – Uncornered model provides intensive case management with wraparound services for building resiliency via clinicians who specialize in mental health. Restorative justice practices are a cornerstone of the engagement approach.
 - X Competitive Preference Priority 2** – In partnership with Roxbury Community College and the Suffolk and Plymouth House of Corrections, Uncornered will create a permanent postsecondary pathway from gang involvement to a credentialing program in Community Violence Intervention directly linked to viable employment opportunities.
8. **Invitational Priorities Addressed:** Yes
 - X Invitational Priority 1** – Since 2016, Uncornered has achieved a 70% college matriculation rate, an 80% retention rate in programming, and a recidivism rate of only 7%.
 - X Invitational Priority 2** – With 98% of program participants self-identifying from communities of color, racial justice and equity principles are central to Uncornered’s mission.

1. **Applicant Institution:** Affirming YOUth Foundation (AYF)
2. **Project Title:** Delivering Educational Access for Liberty City (DEAL)
3. **Target Population (e.g., faculty, staff, students):** Gang-involved and disconnected Liberty City, Miami, FL YOUth age 14-24
4. **Services and Proposed Activities:** DEAL utilized the following Educational Attainment Strategies: (1) strengthening economic supports; (2) promoting healthy environments that support healthy development; (3) strengthening participants' skills; (4) connecting participants to supportive adults and activities; (5) creating protective community environments; and (6) intervening to lessen harm and prevent future risks. Each strategy will be addressed utilizing the following activities: (1) providing mentorship, (2) alternative education opportunities, (3) culturally competent and trauma-informed services, (4) skills development interventions, (5) connection to scholarships and financial aid, (6) connection to community-based resources, and (7) holistic support to managing life stressors.
5. **Anticipated Results (e.g., learning outcomes):** DEAL activities will aid in improving youth access to and enrollment in postsecondary education and support improved outcomes for gang-involved youth. This overall outcome will be measured by 4 goals: (1) promote equity in student access to education resources, opportunities, and inclusive environments as measured by improvements in 75% of participants in College Student Inventory (CSI) Assessment Package scores by the end of the funding period; (2) increase students' social, emotional, and academic skills as measured by improvements in 75% of participants in College Student Inventory (CSI) Assessment Package, Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment (ANSA), Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS), and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores by the end of the funding period; (3) 75% of participants will demonstrate an increase in social and cultural capital as measured by improvements in 75% of participants in College Student Inventory (CSI) Assessment Package by the end of the funding period; (4) enhance AYF's capacity to improve justice policy and college readiness as measured by 75% improvements in Affirming YOUth Foundation Community Stakeholder Survey, Affirming YOUth Foundation Client Satisfaction Survey by the end of the funding period
6. **Absolute Priority Addressed:** Yes
7. **Competitive Preference Priorities Addressed:** Yes. Competitive Preference Priority 1 will be addressed by implementing evidence-based practices for advancing student success, providing evidence-based professional development opportunities, and fostering partnerships across agencies. Competitive Preference Priority 2 will be addressed by convening federal, state, and local agencies and community-based organizations to address justice policy and college readiness
8. **Invitation Priorities Addressed:** Yes. Invitational Priority 1 will be addressed by the collective qualifications of AYF staff members, as well as their consistent record of being funded and supported by local, state, and federal agencies. Invitational Priority 2 will be addressed by providing youth with educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for gang-involved youth in high school, career and technical education programs, and alternative schools and programs.

ABSTRACT: Obstacles to Opportunities

1. Applicant institution: PathStone Corporation
2. Project title: *Obstacles to Opportunities*
3. Target Population: 75 Youth aged 14 to 24 in Erie County, NY
4. Services and Proposed Activities

PathStone Corporation, a 501(c)3 non-profit, requests funding to operate a Transitioning Gang-Involved Youth to Higher Education Program designed to serve 75 Youth aged 14 to 24 in Erie County, NY. PathStone's TGIY program has been titled *Obstacles to Opportunities* and will serve disconnected youth and youth impacted by the justice system.

The Positive Youth Development approach, which is PathStone's strategy, emphasizes building protective factors or what we call "loading assets" as a shield against risk factor exposure. PathStone's customer-centered youth project incorporates the full range of Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act/WIOA services, a strategy that randomized and econometric evaluation have shown to have a significant positive impact on employment, wage rates and earnings. Our design addresses challenges of underserved youth's poverty with supportive services, low academic skills with basic education, and lack of work and life skills with individualized plans and intensive case management, plus integration of classroom and work-based learning, including Work Experience/WEx, pre-Apprenticeship, and On-the-Job Training/OJT. This comprehensive service approach promotes attainment of post-secondary education and employment placements, credentials and retention goals.

5. Anticipated Results (e.g., learning outcomes)

Goals: Provide youth with evidence-based program components to

- Increase Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion, and Post-Enrollment Success
- Meet Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs
- Promote Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources

Objectives:

1. Youth attain education/workforce credential
2. Youth not engaged in/victimized by violence
3. Youth complete Individual-Family Development Plan for their current goals
4. Youth complete Career Exploration
5. Youth attain 90 days of post secondary education or employment retention
6. Youth complete cognitive behavioral training & work readiness training

6. Absolute Priority Addressed: Yes
7. Competitive Preference Priorities Addressed: Yes
8. Invitation Priorities Addressed: Yes