

*Project return is dedicated to the successful new beginnings of people who are returning to our community after incarceration.*



## **SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: THREE YEARS OF IMPACT IN CHATTANOOGA**

It's hard to believe that three years have passed since Project Return began serving the Chattanooga community, and what a journey it has been! Our mission is to foster hope and opportunity for people returning from incarceration, and the progress we've made in Chattanooga is a true testament to that mission.

In just three years, we've served over **700 participants**, each receiving the personalized support they need to build sustainable lives after incarceration. Our social enterprises, PROe and PROPS, have been crucial in this work, offering job readiness and real employment opportunities. These ventures have not only created jobs but have also bridged gaps in the local workforce by partnering with **20 local employers** to place qualified, eager workers.

Through our social enterprises, we've provided employment to **243 participants**, helping them build stable futures. Additionally, we're excited to announce the upcoming launch of PROh, our affordable housing initiative designed to address one of the most pressing barriers returning citizens face: safe and affordable housing.

As we celebrate this milestone, we're incredibly proud of how far we've come and eager for what's to come. With a growing network of partners and ongoing support from the community, Project Return Chattanooga is poised to continue making an even greater impact in the years ahead.

Thank you for being part of this journey toward change, and here's to many more years of success!

# HAPPENINGS

## REENTRY SIMULATION IN CHATTANOOGA

In Chattanooga, Project Return hosted a Reentry Simulation event that shed light on the often-overlooked barriers faced by those reentering society after incarceration. The event offered a powerful glimpse into the challenges of navigating life post-incarceration, helping participants and community members alike gain a deeper understanding of these systemic obstacles.



## LARRY'S 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

A huge congratulations to Larry, our Director of Social Enterprise, for celebrating 10 years with Project Return! Larry has been instrumental in leading our PROe and PROPS programs, which provide essential job opportunities and support for returning citizens. His dedication has shaped countless lives, and we are incredibly proud of his contributions.

## CONSTRUCTION READINESS CLASS

Our latest Construction Readiness class just wrapped up! Over two weeks, participants worked alongside Joe, a retired general contractor, learning key skills in construction and completing a hands-on project by building flower boxes. These hardworking individuals are now set to earn NCCER certifications, and we're eager to support their next steps by connecting them to employment opportunities in the construction industry.





# IN THE COMMUNITY



## TURNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

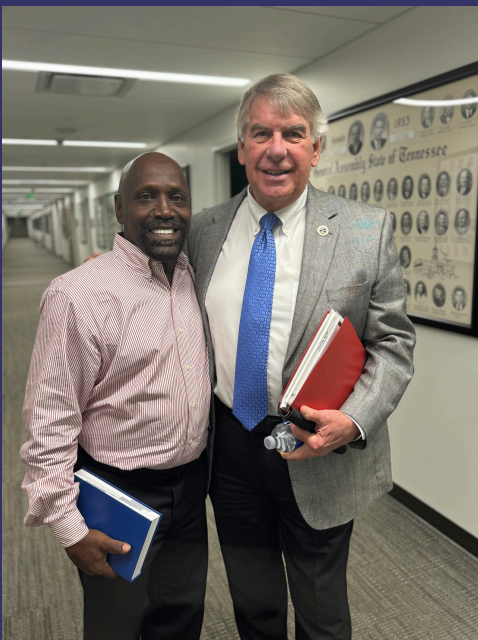
Thank you to Turner Construction Company for their generous support of Project Return and our efforts to create meaningful employment opportunities and continue our mission of successful reentry for those we serve.

## BANK OF AMERICA

Many thanks to Bank of America for their support of Project Return's affordable housing initiative, PROh. This support helps us to increase opportunities for those excluded from the housing market due to their backgrounds. We couldn't do this important work without our community partners!



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Meet Victor Dyson – pictured left with Senator Ed Jackson after a recent presentation to Tennessee State Senators. His journey is a remarkable testament to resilience and the power of second chances. After being incarcerated for 6 years, he connected with Project Return within a week of his release, determined to rebuild his life. Without reliable transportation, Victor took a position through our PROe initiative, where he worked for several months before being hired on permanently. In a full-circle moment, Victor became our Transportation Coordinator, driving our vans and ensuring that participants can get to and from work safely. Victor has also been a PROh tenant for 2.5 years, continuing his journey of growth and stability with Project Return by his side.

His story is a powerful reminder of the potential that lies in each of us and the impact of opportunity and support.

# FROM THE CEO

Throughout this edition, we've highlighted several of the events, activities and progress of our participants. There has also been some substantive internal organizational work done by the incredible staff team at Project Return. After a series of focus groups, it was decided to reexamine our core values and the role they play in the day to day work. This resulted in Project Return adopting new organizational core values: **Development, Inclusion, Collaboration, Integrity and Accountability.**



Whereas the mission statement informs the what and why of our reentry work, our values inform how we approach and accomplish it. These revised values will simultaneously impact our work with the participants we serve, our Board of Directors, organizational stakeholders and internally as a staff team. They embody the spirit of who we have been for the past 45 years, while also signaling where we are going as an organization. In the coming weeks, these values will be more visible in our branding and incorporated in all aspects of our operations. Stay tuned!

Rico X

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by an 'X'.

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