

What is the reward for giving?



From Henry Rock <contact_point@citystartuplabs.com>

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There are those who give
with joy, and that joy is their
reward.

KHALIL GIBRAN

Throughout the year, you have likely been keeping up with us at City Startup Labs and following our venture into the realm of reentry entrepreneurship and workplace readiness. All year we have been busy at work developing the entrepreneurial talent and capacity of justice-involved persons who have a desire to put their new ideas to the test.

One recurring theme that we consistently see with the budding entrepreneurs in our ReEntry Entrepreneurship Program (REEP) is our participants' desire to build businesses that can be in service to others. Often, they may be at or even below the poverty line – *their reward for having served time* – but nevertheless, they maintain a deep reservoir for wanting to give back. We can preach the virtues of creating great profits and scalability, and they tell us that giving back is their reward. This attribute shows up over and over again.

In many ways, REEP is a dream-catcher and a lifeline of sorts. But, nurturing these dreams and talents take time – close to a year to be exact – along with the countless hours of accountability partners, coaches, facilitators and staff. Our high-touch approach takes moolah too, which includes the training stipends that we provide our participants. Some even tell us that the stipends are indeed a life preserver.

We all have heard that the measure of an "effective" program is all in the outcomes and outputs and what the evidence points to. Of course, REEP can site chapter and verse our completion rates, certificates awarded, project deliverables and business starts. But how do you measure the effectiveness of a child seeing their mom working on new skills week in and week out and the pride that endears? How do you measure the effectiveness of finally putting the mistakes of one's past in the rearview mirror, as their new future as a business owner lies right in front of them? How do you measure a father and his sons reuniting around a business they all can have a hand in building and sharing? It's tough to quantify these things and all that we do, when we speak of impact. How it shows up? Where and when it does so? *It isn't quantity, but rather quality.*

This is what we've been up to this year. You may not have given much thought to how you might be able to give to this work with joy. Both your time and your treasure matter to us. As you wrap up the year, let your giving be your reward.

Select a [donation that suits you](#) or [inquire about how you can volunteer](#).

The Latest Charlotte Restorative Pathways Graduation



City Startup Labs graduated its fifth Restorative Pathways cohort! We're closing out the year with a celebration of this major milestone for both this cohort and our organization. We wish them well as they transition into full time employment at Atrium Health. We look forward to the impact they will make in their new roles in the healthcare field! Learn more about Restorative Pathways and our partnership with Atrium Health on our [website](#) and on our [YouTube Channel](#).



We are excited to welcome a new funder – the US Bank Foundation and their year-end award of \$10,000 from the Vice President of Community Affairs Manager's office.

City Startup Labs is also appreciative of the support from Wells Fargo Bank, Ally Bank, Principal Financial Services, Mecklenburg County, NC Idea and Atrium Health this year.

Happy Holidays ~

Henry Rock



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