From tree branches to career branches: developing pathways to sustainable employment for returning citizens

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Program goal

Provide an educational and work experience that enables returning citizens to successfully reintegrate into society and obtain permanent full-time employment.
These are growing industries.
Philadelphia is committed to sustainability.
Temple’s North Philadelphia neighborhood has a high poverty rate and returning citizen population.

48% of North Philadelphia residents are not participating in the labor force, and another 9% are unemployed (compared to 39% and 7% in the rest of the city)

Of the 43% employed, approximate annual earnings are $25,000 (compared to $42,500 for the rest of the city)

Of North Philadelphia’s 275,453 residents, 23,200 are returning citizens

PDP has amazing resources already in place.
We had a ready-made partnership with PHS.
Who are our students?
Curriculum strands

- Organic agriculture and sustainability
- Landscaping and horticulture
- Job readiness skills
- Nutrition and food budgeting
- Fatherhood and relationship management
- Putting it all into practice at work
Our partners
Program overview

Education program
- Inside PDP
- Includes experiential learning at work sites
- Includes other curriculum strands

Early parole

Paid internships
- With Temple or PHS
- “Real world” work experience in a supportive and structured environment
Early parole

Decided by PDP / Defender’s Association / District Attorney / each participant’s judge – not by us!

PDP considers early parole a major incentive for participants to complete the program – but is it the right incentive?
Internships

6-week placements at either Temple or PHS

Paid at $12.50 per hour

Supported by case managers
How did we do? Cohort 2

- Started program
- Completed education program
- Started internships
- Completed internships
- Entered full-time employment

Vertical bar chart showing the comparison of different categories with the highest being 'Started program'.