

# COLORFUL BACK → GROUND S EXPO

EX-INCARCERATED  
PEOPLE ORGANIZING

## REQUEST FOR SUPPORT



“The structural problem is one of mass incarceration and of returning citizens not having an opportunity to move forward after they paid their debt to society and still being hindered from securing gainful employment, housing, and access to resources to help build skills to aid them.”

- Ella Scales

**Colorful Backgrounds/E.X.P.O. (Ex-Incarcerated People Organizing)** is a 12 week class cohort chartered by West End P.O.W.E.R. and Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network (P.I.I.N) with courses on areas such as job readiness, leadership skills, computer skills, financial literacy, community organizing, and more. The cohort is to train formerly incarcerated people to organize for change in the criminal justice system and build their employment prospects. Graduates have already reported enrolling in the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh and registering to vote for the first time. The Center for Shared Prosperity is working with West End P.O.W.E.R. and PIIN to document the impact of this program, then to organize local corporate and foundation pledges to make this effort permanent and integrated into the post-carceral experience, in partnership with ACJ and related programs.

For the past two years, the Center for Shared Prosperity has provided funding for this program, with great success. They've had three completed cohorts thus far with 18 graduates, and are looking to have 180 more graduates over the next four years. We are now seeking donors to ensure this important program's continued success.



We are reaching out to you because we need your pledge so that the Colorful Backgrounds program can continue to have a great impact on its graduates, their families, and our city as a whole. We are seeking an annual funding commitment of \$25,000, for one year or more, to support the Colorful Backgrounds' \$100,000 in yearly program costs. All donations will support program costs of Colorful Backgrounds. Donations will go directly to West End P.O.W.E.R, a 501©(3) organization. All sponsors will be recognized for their generosity throughout the program.



“The best we can do for our returning CITIZENS is to make sure we provide them with the best opportunity to be a productive member of our community. Too often, a lack of opportunity led them down a less productive path. The graduates of Colorful Backgrounds demonstrate the possibilities when we recognize them as human beings deserving a chance to explore their potential.”

- Mark Lewis

Thank you for considering to support this important program that will continue to change lives for generations. If you have any questions on our program, or how your donation will support our efforts, please reach out to [1terriminor@gmail.com](mailto:1terriminor@gmail.com) or [ella.scales@unionbaptistpgh.org](mailto:ella.scales@unionbaptistpgh.org).

Find more information about Colorful Backgrounds at [www.WestEndPower.net](http://www.WestEndPower.net).