



# In Columbus, 11,406 people are unemployed, despite more than 6,500 job openings.

The problem is not an issue of availability but an issue of access. There are personal, educational, and systemic barriers that prevent some of our neighbors from working or thriving at their jobs. Without work, many begin to identify themselves with their circumstances which creates a vicious cycle of poverty—economically, spiritually, and emotionally.



**BETTER WORK Columbus** addresses these problems. We believe it takes our communities coming together to help individuals find employment and experience the sense of purpose and belonging it brings. This is why we're launching the **BETTER WORK Network**, which partners with churches and other sectors of the community to develop resource and talent networks that support local businesses. We bring this network of resources into neighborhoods where they are most needed by providing tools and resources for leaders, ministries, and job seekers through a partnership with Jobs for Life (JFL).

**JOBS FOR LIFE** JFL provides a proven curriculum and a nationally recognized program for sites within the network to implement new strategies that deepen access to meaningful work. The JFL model reinforces work is more than a paycheck but a source of pride and dignity and addresses the loss of identity that comes with unemployment. By helping poverty-stricken neighborhoods lacking access to resources, **BETTER WORK Columbus** hopes to connect the chronically unemployed with meaningful jobs and transform their lives.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

### MENTOR A STUDENT

You can mentor a student and support them as they progress through JFL classes. JFL mentors are called Champions for a reason, and this is a critically important role. As a Champion, you can give students the gentle encouragement they need to successfully begin their journey to more fulfilling work. You will accompany a student during a transformative process that allows you to provide friendship, support, guidance, assistance and a sense of community as they overcome their personal barriers to employment.

## RECRUIT STUDENTS

You can help us recruit students who live in low income areas of Columbus. Individuals who can benefit from having their needs addressed by a network that surrounds them with support and training in the neighborhood where they live, shop, and connect with others.

Students will need to submit a completed JFL applicant form for consideration in the program.

Students who are selected will be interviewed in January for our first JFL class. Classes will be held at Asbury United Methodist Church February-April of 2021.

## Completed applicant forms can be submitted:

By fax to:  
706-787-0089

Scanned and emailed to:  
Rev.mikepowell@gmail.com

Mailed to:  
Asbury UMC  
2312 Ellen Avenue,  
Columbus, GA 31903



## BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Businesses need to be engaged in transforming our community. Lasting change won't come simply from providing a meal, packing a backpack, writing a \$250 check, or serving a meal once a year. The change we need will only come by walking side-by-side with other people in our community, by standing shoulder-to-shoulder with those in our community who are invested in creating change.

You can play a critical role by providing opportunities for graduates to practice their learned skills through on-the-job training and by hiring JFL graduates.

## FUNDING SUPPORT

Over the next year, the BETTER WORK Network will leverage partnerships to provide JFL training on site in the Oakland Park Neighborhood. The training includes 12 weeks of soft skills training, focusing on the dignity of work. In addition, we will continue to recruit and connect mentors and provide monthly site support. We are looking to raise \$250,000 to cover the costs of mentor training, materials, marketing, community engagement and partner coordination, and project evaluation.

## CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Join us as we celebrate the graduation of future JFL students who will complete the training and are prepared for work. We will add you to the list of partners who are willing to show up and show students the Columbus community is cheering them on!

Email [kristin.barker@georgiaopportunity.org](mailto:kristin.barker@georgiaopportunity.org) for more information if you have questions or would like to partner with us.