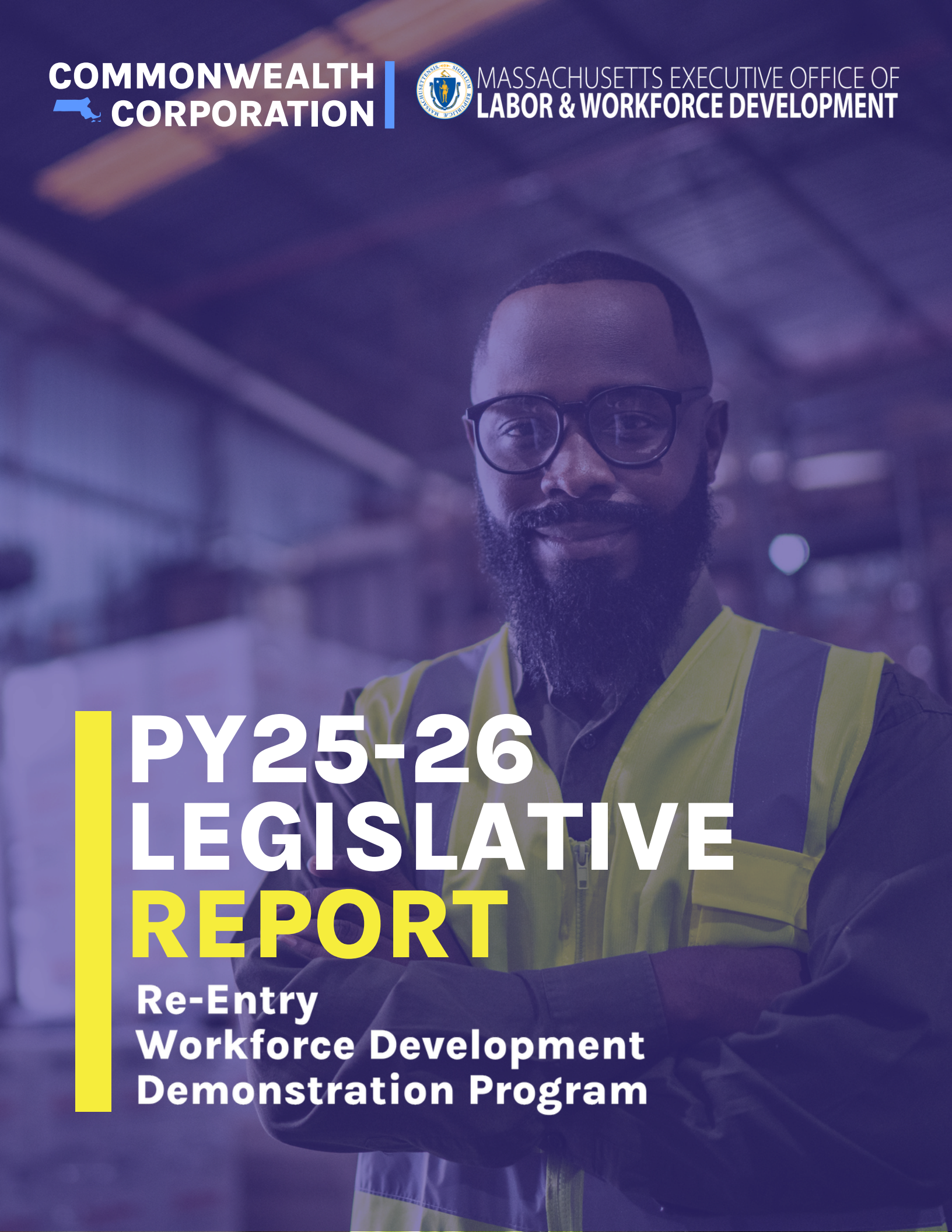
COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



PY25-26 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Re-Entry Workforce Development Demonstration Program

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BACKGROUND & PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Re-Entry Workforce Development Demonstration Program ("RWDDP") is administered by Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development ("EOLWD") with the goal of improving workforce outcomes for Massachusetts individuals returning to their communities after incarceration (i.e. returning citizens). This grant program is funded annually through line item (7003-0150) of the Commonwealth's General Appropriations Act.

Most recently, the FY26 GAA appropriated $2.725 million for the Re-Entry Workforce Development Demonstration Program. This investment builds on $2.750 million appropriated in the FY25 GAA budget. Commonwealth Corporation allocated the available funds each year to support re-entry workforce development grants, as outlined in the table below.

PROGRAM YEAR	# GRANTS	$ AWARDED	GRANTEE PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE
PY25	11	$2,617,900	June 28, 2024 - September 30, 2025
PY26	11	$2,225,000	October 1, 2025 - September 30, 2026

Eligible lead applicants include:

- Community-based organizations
- Non-profit education
- Training or other service providers
- MassHire Career Centers
- MassHire Regional Workforce Boards, and
- House of Correction/Department of Correction facilities

KEY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Consistent with the requirements in Line Item 7003-0150, Commonwealth Corporation issues a Request for Proposals soliciting applications from eligible organizations to provide a comprehensive set of re-entry services tailored to assist with workforce training and employment services for the target returning citizen population, while strengthening their partnerships to achieve positive outcomes. Eligible applicants are asked to:



Create a partnership between a regional House of Correction ("HOC")/Department of Correction ("DOC") facility, two employer partners, a training provider, and a community-based organization.



Develop a training program to meet the needs of employment partners and address the barriers of formerly incarcerated individuals.



Collaborate with HOC/DOC staff on behind-the-wall activities, engage and recruit prospective participants to the program, and introduce prospective participants to employer partners.



Implement wrap-around services and culturally responsive management immediately upon release, designed to support the unique barriers to employment faced by formerly incarcerated individuals.



Provide either a cohort-based training program or individualized pathway training program model, both behind-the-wall and post release, creating a community of formerly incarcerated individuals to support one another.



Provide job placement support to formerly incarcerated individuals to obtain and retain employment with sustainable wages in growing occupations or industries with viable career pathway potential at pre-identified partner businesses.



Report on program outcomes achieved by participants, including important benchmarks like enrollments, program completions, credentialing, and job placements (measured at 30 days of unsubsidized employment).

GRANTS SUPPORTED IN PY25 & PY26



COMMUNITY SERVINGS

PROGRAM YEAR 2025

GRANTS SUPPORTED IN PY25 AND PY26

Program Year 2025 (PY25)

The following chart provides information about the eleven organizations that were awarded grants in PY25, including the grant award amount and a description of the project. These grants began on June 28, 2024, and provided services through September 30, 2025.

AWARDEE	AWARD AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Bridge Club of Greater Lowell	$250,000	Bridge Club of Greater Lowell partnered with Middlesex County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the culinary arts and manufacturing industries. The goal was to place successful program graduates into line cook roles at Lenzi's Catering and warehouse worker, machine operator, and package handler roles at Spruce Environmental.
Community Action Pioneer Valley	$165,000	Community Action of Pioneer Valley partnered with Hampshire County Sheriff's Office and Franklin County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the culinary arts and manufacturing industries. The goal was to place successful program graduates into line cook and production occupation roles at High Brow, Local Burger, Herrell's Ice Cream, and Fitzwilly's Restaurant, and Franklin County CDC Food Processing Center.
Community Work Services	$250,000	Community Work Services partnered with Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the clean energy technology and culinary arts/hospitality industries. The goal was to place successful program graduates into solar photovoltaic installer, electrical power analyst, terraponics farm to table worker, and hotel hospitality manager roles at Nexamp and Finesse Hospitality.
Future Hope Apprenticeship and Recovery Program	$244,464	Future Hope Apprenticeship and Recovery Program partnered with Plymouth County Sheriff's Office and Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the building trades industry. The goal was to place successful program graduates into skilled laborer, roofer, painter, and carpenter roles at Cross Country Painting, Inc., and Built Better 55, LLC.
New England Culinary Arts Training	$249,593	New England Culinary Arts Training partnered with Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the food service and hospitality industry. The goal was to place successful program graduates into line cook, prep cook, sous chef, and first-line food prep supervisory roles at Tatte Bakery, Sodexo, Hilton Boston Park Plaza, and Earls Kitchen and Bar.

PROGRAM YEAR 2025 CONTINUED

AWARDEE	AWARD AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction*	$260,000	Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction partnered with Bristol County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the health care and addiction treatment services industry. The goal was to place successful program graduates into community health worker, recovery specialist, recovery coach, recovery counselor, peer navigator, and outreach worker roles at High Point Treatment Center and Seven Hills Foundation.
Quinsigamond Community College	$239,216	Quinsigamond Community College partnered with Worcester County House of Correction to offer a training program focused on the culinary and hospitality industries. The goal was to place successful program graduates into food preparation worker roles at Snapchef and Massachusetts Restaurant Association members.
Snapchef Foundation	$219,626	Snapchef Foundation partnered with Norfolk County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the culinary industry. The goal was to place successful program graduates into cook roles at Snapchef and Southside Tavern Restaurant.
STRIVE Boston*	$260,000	STRIVE Boston partnered with Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the health care and social assistance industries. The goal was to place successful program graduates into security worker, patient transport worker, food and environmental service worker, direct and relief positions, and therapeutic mentor roles at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Justice Resource Institute, Inc.
Uncornered	$250,000	Uncornered partnered with Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the health care and social service industries. The goal was to place successful program graduates into social and human service assistant roles at Uncornered Inc. and Inner City Weightlifting.
WeReach	$250,000	WeReach partnered with Essex County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program focused on the information technology industry. The goal was to place successful program graduates into cybersecurity support technician and computer support specialist roles at Roads Consulting Group, Boston Project, DPV Transportation, and Assura, Inc.

*Contracts for PY25 grantees were extended by three months through September 30, 2025, for the purpose of expanding programming and/or services and supporting workforce outcomes for participants. Furthermore, after assessing the needs of all of grantees, Commonwealth Corporation identified and provided funding to two additional programs that would benefit from supplemental funding. Those two programs were: Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction, which received $10,000, and STRIVE Boston, which received $10,000



PROGRAM YEAR 2026

Program Year 2026 (PY26)
The following chart provides information about the eleven organizations awarded grants in PY26, including the grant award amount and a description of the project. These grants began October 1, 2025, and are active through September 30, 2026.

AWARDEE	AWARD AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Ameelio Emerge Public Benefit Corporation	$240,000	Emerge Career is partnering with nine Sheriff's Offices: Dukes, Franklin, Norfolk, Hampden, Hampshire, Worcester, Middlesex, Essex, and Suffolk Counties to offer a training program with a focus on the transportation industry. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as commercial truck drivers at Aramark, Eric Z Disposal, Boston Concrete, Wind River Environmental, Feeney Brothers Utility Services, MAS Building & Bridge, Inc., Bay State Sewage Disposal, Inc., and Trucking Association of Massachusetts (TAM).
Community Action Pioneer Valley	$200,000	Community Action Pioneer Valley is partnering with Franklin County and Hampshire County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program with a focus on the manufacturing, culinary, social services, and healthcare industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as line cooks, recovery coaches, custodial workers, and production occupations at Franklin Co. Community Development Corporation, Fitzwilly's Restaurant, Whitman Properties, Inc., Nortek, Inc., and Center for Human Development.
Community Servings	$120,000	Community Servings is partnering with Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and Suffolk Superior Court Probation Department to offer a training program with a focus on the culinary and hospitality industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in food production and service-related occupations at Max Ultimate Food and City Experiences - Boston Harbor City Cruises.
Community Work Services	$151,000	Community Work Services is partnering with Suffolk County Sheriff's Department to offer a training program with a focus on the culinary and hospitality industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as Kitchen Assistant and Food Service workers at Tatte Bakery & Cafe and Finesse Hospitality.

PROGRAM YEAR 2025

AWARDEE	AWARD AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Interseminarian-Project Place	$240,000	Project Place is partnering with Community Resources for Justice, Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, and Massachusetts Department of Corrections to offer a training program with a focus on the maintenance and manufacturing industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as facilities maintenance technicians, warehouse associates, material handlers, and drivers at New Market Business Improvement District and Aramark.
New England Culinary Arts Training	$240,000	New England Center for Arts & Technology is partnering with Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and Boston Pre-Release to offer a training program with a focus on the culinary industry. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as prep cooks, line cooks, catering cooks, sous chefs, and station chefs at Tatte Bakery & Cafe and Hilton Boston Park Plaza.
Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction	$225,000	Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction is partnering with Bristol County Sheriff's Office and New Bedford District Court Probation to offer a training program with a focus on the healthcare and social assistance industries. Successful program graduates will be placed roles as community health workers, peer navigators, recovery specialists, and recovery coaches at Ignite Recovery and Burnes & Fortes Consulting.
Second Street Second Chances	$89,000	Second Street Second Chances is partnering with Berkshire County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program with a focus on the advanced manufacturing and engineering industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in machinist roles at Onyx Specialty Papers and Unistress Corporation.
STRIVE Boston	$240,000	STRIVE Boston is partnering with Suffolk County Sheriff's Department to offer a training program with a focus on the healthcare and transportation industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as security staff, direct & relief staff, therapeutic mentors, licensed CDL truck & heavy equipment operators, shuttle drivers, and track laborer workers at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Keolis America Transport Inc.
Straight Ahead Ministries	$240,000	Straight Ahead Ministries is partnering with Bristol County Sheriff's Office to offer a training program with a focus on the construction and carpentry industries. Successful program graduates will be placed in roles as construction workers, design workers, and wood working and craftsmanship workers, and remodeling workers at Carpentry Works and Outdoor Personia.

LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK UPDATE



JRI BOSTON

LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK



In 2024, the program piloted a longitudinal evaluation framework, funded through the FY24 GAA state budget (line item 7003-0150) to assess long-term outcomes for program participants. Consultants from Rojas Blakely & Associates helped clarify both the opportunities and the operational challenges involved in implementing a longitudinal evaluation framework. Through their pilot study with PY23 program graduates, Commonwealth Corporation learned that while a longitudinal survey can generate meaningful insights about past participants' employment, readiness, and overall well being, securing a strong response rate proved challenging. Achieving strong participation will require improved data collection systems and more effective strategies for staying connected with alumni. The 9% response rate underscored the need for diversified outreach methods, consistent data management practices, and stronger relationships with participants after they complete the program.

Moving forward, CommCorp's approach will focus on building a sustainable, participant-centered framework that tracks participants over time using multiple touchpoints, participant interviews and surveys for qualitative insights, provider interviews, and facilitated focus groups to better understand the impacts of the program over time. Commonwealth Corporation also recognizes that pursuing these more rigorous, comprehensive longitudinal approaches may require additional investment to achieve meaningful and reliable results.

ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE

PY25 & PY26



2ND STREET 2ND CHANCES

ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE FOR PY25 & PY26

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

As of December 2025, all 11 grants included in the PY25 cohort have concluded and reported final outcomes. As a reminder, these grants served individuals between June 28, 2024 and September 30, 2025.

During the reporting period, a total of 623 individuals enrolled in a training program. Of those, 471 participants successfully completed their training, resulting in a completion rate of 76% - an increase of 7% compared to PY24 completion rates. High completion rates continue to be a testament to the commitment of grantees and perseverance of participants.

Program enrollees received training in a variety of industries, many of which are considered to be CORI-friendly fields (i.e. job sectors that tend to be more open to hiring individuals with a criminal record). The most common industries represented were accommodations and food service (20%), health care and social assistance (16%), and construction (8%). Participants also received training in other fields including transportation and warehousing, retail trade, and manufacturing.

Employment outcomes remained a central focus. A total of 230 of the participants who completed training obtained and maintained employment for at least 30 days, yielding an employment placement rate of 49% among completers.

Wage outcomes were equally encouraging, ranging from $15.00/hour up to $43.79/hour. The median wage stood at $19.00 per hour, indicating consistent earning potential across placements. When compared to the Massachusetts minimum wage of $15.00/hour, it is positive to see wages for participants notably higher than the minimum in many cases.

Employer engagement efforts continued to be successful, with more than 135 unique employers hiring program graduates. This growing network of employer partners plays a vital role in sustaining long-term workforce development and economic mobility.

Overall, significant program outcome indicators trended in a positive direction in PY25 when compared to PY24, including higher completion and employment rates, as well as a higher median hourly wage. Final data for PY26 will be included in a subsequent annual report. Please note that the values below for PY26 represent year-to-date results through January 2026 and are not directly comparable to full-year 2025 figures.

ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE FOR PY25 & PY26

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

	PY2024	PY2025	PY2026*
Enrollments	463	623	80
% Completed (of enrolled)	69%	76%	31%
% Employed (of completed)	46%	49%	28%
Median Wage (of employed)	$18.50/hr	$19.00/hr	$17.50/hr

*Note: Programming is ongoing, and figures are expected to evolve over time

[1] The 49% employment rate includes 38% of completers with employment documented by the grantee during programming, along with 11% whose employment was subsequently identified through DUA wage-record matching.
[2] During PY25, one participant self-reported a post-training wage that was less than the Massachusetts minimum hourly wage of $15/hr. This value was removed from analysis, attributable to reporting error.

COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.



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