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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Greater Cleveland Works Expands Staff to Accelerate Its Growth

Grant from Cleveland Foundation validates direction of newly revamped organization

CLEVELAND, OH—July 21, 2025—Greater Cleveland Works announced Monday that it received a \$450,000 one-year grant from the Cleveland Foundation to expand its staff and accelerate its growth. Through the grant, Greater Cleveland Works has hired a Director of Strategic Initiatives and a Manager of Employer Solutions.

The funding also supports wraparound services for more job seekers, professional development opportunities for staff, and software to modernize the OhioMeansJobs Center and Greater Cleveland Works' operations.

Greater Cleveland Works is both a provider of services and a leader within the broader workforce development system in Greater Cleveland, collaborating with partners to improve job quality, reduce racial disparities, and grow the regional economy. Previously known as the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board, the government organization historically operated behind the scenes, overseeing the OhioMeansJobs Center at 1910 Carnegie Ave. in Cleveland.

Last year, the organization became a nonprofit, changed its name to Greater Cleveland Works and laid out an ambitious vision for the future centering on improved service delivery, deeper partnerships with the business and economic development community, diversification of funding, and program innovation. Its programs and services include those provided through OhioMeansJobs as well as other initiatives, such as the Built Environment Collaborative.

“Our first order of business as Greater Cleveland Works has been getting our own house in order to ensure our primary customers—job seekers and employers—have what they need to succeed,” said CEO Michelle Rose. “Through this funding and our expanded team, we can create a results-oriented customer experience while positioning ourselves to grow and serve more people and businesses.”

As Director of Strategic Initiatives, Serena Jezior will spearhead strategic partnerships, fundraising, and other special projects in support of a stronger and more effective workforce ecosystem. Jezior has extensive experience in the philanthropic, government and private sectors. Most recently, she served as Program Director at Recast City, leading initiatives to ensure equitable deployment of small business capital and supporting local economic development efforts across the country. Prior to that, she served as a charitable tax expert, organizing federal policy initiatives to create an environment where philanthropy and charities can maximize their impact for those they serve.

By filling the newly created role of Manager of Employer Solutions, Ian Marks becomes the face of Greater Cleveland Works to employers of all types and sizes. His job is to make it easier for employers to navigate the many Greater Cleveland Works offerings and to represent employer interests in workforce challenges. Marks most recently led all programming at The Foundry Community Rowing & Sailing Center. Prior to that he served as Vice President of Workforce Development at Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry (LMM), leading all programming and services, including the nationally recognized program Chopping for Change, Metro45 Café and Catering, and the LMM Central Kitchen, which provided more than 1,000 meals each day to Northeast Ohioans experiencing homelessness.

“A strong, well-functioning workforce development system is critical to our region’s growth and prosperity as we strive for a vibrant Northeast Ohio where no Clevelander is left behind,” said Nicole Rosenbaum, Program Officer, Workforce Development & Talent Cultivation, Cleveland Foundation. “In Greater Cleveland Works, we have a focused, collaborative, and strategic partner — the kind others across the region can count on to drive meaningful change.”

The addition of Jezior and Marks closely follows the hiring of Marcus Harris as Director of Programs and Services. Harris joined Greater Cleveland Works in May to oversee all of Greater Cleveland Works’ programming with a focus on operational excellence and customer service. Harris brings over a decade of experience in workforce development, leading successful initiatives in both urban and rural communities, including Cuyahoga County and the city of Sandusky.

About Greater Cleveland Works

Greater Cleveland Works is leading the way to a better workforce system for all. In 2024, we supported more than 12,000 people in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County with their career pursuits, placing over 1,000 individuals in jobs and helping more than 700 individuals secure industry-recognized credentials. We collaborate with dozens of partners to strengthen the workforce system and grow the regional economy. Learn more at greaterclevelandworks.org.