

OPPORTUNITY WORKS

A national initiative led by JFF with the Aspen Institute for Community Solutions shows the power of carefully designed interventions to improve the lives of low-income young people who are not in school or fully employed. Opportunity Works (OW), which scaled JFF's "Back on Track model," had remarkable results over three years, as illustrated below. Learn more about OW below.

WHY WE CARE



10.3 million
Opportunity youth (OY) are locked out of the labor market

These young people ages 16 to 24 do not have a path to family-sustaining work. The consequences are dire for them, for our economy, and for our society.



Back on Track
models make a difference

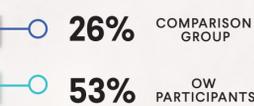
Through OW, local "anchor" organizations received funding and coaching to implement the Back on Track model for successful transitions to postsecondary education and training.

DIRECT RESULTS

Increased Enrollment

2x more
Opportunity Youth

The Urban Institute found that Back on Track's postsecondary bridging model made an impressive positive impact. Twice as many opportunity youth from OW enrolled in postsecondary programs as opportunity youth in a comparison group.



6x more OY who are
young men of color

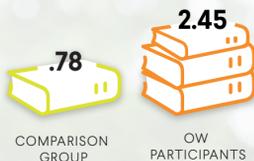
OW had an even greater impact on opportunity youth who are young men of color, a population historically underrepresented in higher education. Six times more OY young men of color enrolled in postsecondary programs as young men of color from a comparison group.



Increased Persistence

3x more semesters

OW participants enrolled in college for three times more semesters on average than the comparison group.



Increased Completion

7x more credentials

Over seven times as many OW participants earned a postsecondary credential as the comparison group.



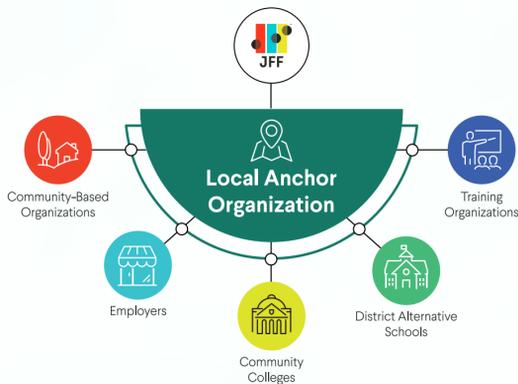
[Contact us for more information](#)

EMAIL LALLEN@JFF.ORG

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Program Structure

In each geographic area, JFF contracted with a community-based organization that served as a local "anchor" to spearhead the work. Each anchor assembled local partners—including other CBOs, employers, community colleges, alternative high schools, and training organizations—to provide pathways and supports connecting OY to education and employment success.



Back on Track: Core Features

The Back on Track model serves several opportunity youth populations, including those with and those without a high school diploma. The Postsecondary/Career Bridging Phase prepares young people who have a diploma but are not in school or work, with a strong start on college and career success.

Postsecondary/Career Bridging

Builds college/career-ready skills and provides informed transition counseling

- A focus on college knowledge and success strategies, and employment readiness
- Personalized guidance on connection to "best bet" programs of study

Opportunity Works Across the Country

From 2015 to 2018, Opportunity Works operated in seven urban areas.

