

BridgeTogether Pardon Fellows 2022-2023

In March 2022, Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity received a BridgeTogether Grant to fund Pardon Fellows and support Pardon Projects around Pennsylvania. The grant builds on the Mike Lee Fellows who have been appointed in Philadelphia since 2018 and the inaugural Pardon Fellows who were funded in four counties around the state by a grant from the American Bar Endowment (ABE) in March 2021 <https://www.plsephilly.org/fellows>.



As of December 2022, five BridgeTogether Pardon Fellows had been appointed, with another five expected to be appointed within the next six months.

Thomas Cook (Pardon Project of Lackawanna County)



Thomas Cook is the Young Adult Program Manager at Outreach Center for Community Resources in Scranton Pennsylvania <https://outreachworks.org>. Utilizing lived experience of being labeled as a convicted felon 24 years ago at the age of 18, he is passionate about stopping the school to prison pipeline and the stigma that follows. Working with the justice involved since 2006, Thomas has earned his Certified Recovery Specialist and Certified Peer Specialist credentials as well as certification as a Trauma instructor and a Mindfulness

Based Substance Abuse treatment facilitator. Thomas is currently providing individual assessments, case management, and reentry services to those in Lackawanna County Prison, and began his service as a Pardon Fellow in June 2022.

DaShawn L. Harrison Sr. (Pardon Project of York County)



Born and raised in York, PA, DaShawn Harrison was presented with a multitude of challenges as he grew up -- poverty, learning disorders, emotional instability, and the absence of consistent parenting. Doing what he saw rather than what he was told, he ended up in state prison. Thanking the values he was taught, today he “holds the titles of Husband, Father, Credible Messenger, Coach, and Mentor,” and is a regular contributor to his community – serving as an example and “beacon of light” to youth in

similar circumstances, a volunteer coach for the YMCA, the Founder and CEO of Impact Academy (an all-girls sports organization teaching “Talent is Nothing, Without Dedication”) <https://www.impactacademyinc.com>, the second-ever Credible Messenger in York <https://cmjcenter.org> and now, the first-ever Pardon Fellow hosted by The Program – It’s About Change <https://theprogramitsaboutchange.org>.

Tyler Helmick (Pardon Project of Somerset County)



Tyler Helmick was born and raised in Somerset County where he became its Pardon Fellow in September 2022 just as the Pardon Project of Somerset County was opening its doors. He has worked in multiple treatment centers throughout his career and is now a case manager at a dual diagnostics facility in Donegal PA. Having an extensive lived experience in the Pennsylvania criminal justice center that resulted from a substance abuse disorder and now with two college degrees, he is passionate about second chances and dedicated to helping others get through difficulties in life. Active in Somerset County's recovery community and a part of We Will Recover, he has participated in several awareness events to help educate the community on resources available in the county and has traveled to Harrisburg to advocate for the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. He is hosted by Tableland Services, Inc. - The Community Action Agency. <https://tableland.org>.

Krista Henry (Pardon Project of Centre County)



Krista Henry is from State College, PA. Appointed a Pardon Fellow in September 2021 with an ABE grant, she has served as the Pardon Project's Coordinator since it opened its doors in early 2022 and is helping it expand from a clinic at Penn State's law school into a countywide project. In 2020, Krista helped found a faith-based non-profit organization, Go Reentry www.GoReentry.com, where she worked as a re-entry specialist, helping formerly incarcerated individuals find their way out of the cycle of recidivism; and she has worked as a case manager in the local homeless shelter. She is a Certified Recovery Specialist and Certified Family Recovery Specialist and is currently working on becoming a Certified Mental Health Coach through the American Association of Christian Counseling. She co-convenes a re-entry support group meeting in her community and is involved with the local Prison Society chapter as well.