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Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity Joins Google Program to Offer Digital Skills Training for People Impacted by Incarceration

In June, Google announced an initiative to help people impacted by incarceration gain digital skills through strategic partnerships and programming

Philadelphia, PA — Today, Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity (PLSE), announced it's working with Google to provide digital skills programs to advance economic opportunity for people impacted by incarceration. In June, Google shared it's investing \$4 million toward a [new fund](#) that aims to expand its justice reform work. Over 500 nonprofit organizations across the country applied to receive support from the fund, and PLSE is one of the recipients selected by Google based on its history of helping people who have been impacted by incarceration receive training, career resources, and job placement support.

[More than 600,000 Americans](#) leave incarceration each year and face [higher jobless rates](#) than the U.S. average. The lack of technology in prison creates further barriers to employment, as digital skills are increasingly essential in the current job market. PLSE will use the new funding to integrate Google's digital skills curriculum into its existing programming, with the goal of helping people impacted by incarceration learn skills for today's jobs. PLSE provides expungements and pardons to low-income communities. We hold intake clinics with organizations like the Office of Reentry Partnerships to clear criminal records which create economic and social barriers. And yet the barrier of the digital divide keeps many of our clients from taking advantage of our online services because they do not have the necessary computer skills or do not have access to technology.

"Thanks to the Grow with Google funding, PLSE now has an opportunity to work with our terrific partner, The Office of Reentry Partnership (ORP) to use their state-of-the-art computer lab to provide vital internet training and resources while also providing intake services to potential clients who are seeking expungements or pardons. These are people who have fully served their sentences and "repaid their debt to society", and yet continue to suffer from a long list of post-punishment punishments that keep them, their families, and whole neighborhoods in poverty from generation to generation." **said Renee Chenault Fattah, Executive Director, PLSE.**

"As we work to create a more inclusive economy, we're committed to helping people impacted by incarceration access training for today's jobs," **said Tia McLaurin, Senior Manager, Grow with Google.** "We're proud to work with outstanding partners to ensure more people can qualify for great jobs and create a new beginning for themselves and their families."

The selected organizations will use Google's digital skills curriculum that was co-curated with five nonprofits— [The Last Mile](#), [Center for Employment Opportunities \(CEO\)](#), [Defy Ventures](#), [Fortune Society](#), and [The Ladies of Hope Ministries](#). The program's training includes five [learning paths](#) that Google developed in collaboration with nonprofit partners: (1) Getting Started with the Basics, (2) Job Search, (3) Job Readiness, (4) Online Safety, and (5) "Next Step" Job Readiness Skills. Lessons vary from fundamental digital skills such as how to apply for jobs online and create a resumé, to more advanced topics including entrepreneurship and business budgeting. Partners will integrate this curriculum into their existing programs to help people develop skills that will help them get a job or start a business.

Since launching in April 2021, Grow with Google's program has helped more than 10,000 people impacted by incarceration obtain digital skills. Out of the participants surveyed, 85% said that they felt more prepared for their future, and over 75% reported they had a job or were enrolled as a student by the end of the program. To date, Google has given over \$48 million in Google.org grants and committed 50,000 pro bono hours to advance criminal justice reform. Learn more about how Google is expanding access to digital skills training to support individuals who were formerly incarcerated at grow.google/justice-impacted.

About Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity (PLSE)

PLSE provides free legal advice and representation to low-income Philadelphia residents whose criminal records are holding them back from achieving their social and career potential. PLSE seeks a more equitable social environment for those with criminal records through individual representation, strategic litigation, community education, research, and advocacy. PLSE does this by seeking expungements in criminal court and pardons from the Governor; educating elected, business, and community leaders; empowering and organizing under-resourced communities; and leading legislative, administrative and systemic reform.

About Grow with Google

Grow with Google was started in 2017 to help Americans grow their skills, careers, and businesses. It provides training, tools, and expertise to help small business owners, veterans and military families, job seekers and students, educators, startups, and developers. Since Grow with Google's inception, it has helped more than nine million Americans develop new skills. Grow with Google has a network of more than 8,500 partner organizations like libraries, schools, small business development centers, chambers of commerce, and nonprofits to help people coast-to-coast.

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