



**REVOLUTION  
WORKSHOP**



# Building Skills, Hope, and Resilience

2020 IMPACT REPORT





**MARCH**

## GRADUATION

In March of 2020, 19 trainees graduated from our program. “These individuals persevered through a very uncertain time,” says Jackie Gallo, RW’s Business Services Manager. “They were full of potential, hungry to learn, and very serious about their work.” Ultimately 14 of the graduates were placed—right as the shutdown began.



Photo by Steven Hoskins

**APRIL**

## COVID-19 RELIEF FUND

RW raised \$80,000 as part of our COVID-19 Emergency Fund in a massive outpouring of support. “We were able to provide housing and basic-needs grants to recently laid-off alumni as a way to help them maintain stability,” says Molly Moriarity, RW’s Program Director. “And what we saw was appreciation and an abundance of love in return.” We’ve distributed more than \$50,000 to graduates so far and have earmarked the remainder to continue providing these life-sustaining grants throughout the coming year.



JULY

## LICENSE TO WORK

RW has been a part of policy conversations that advance equity in our communities since the inception of our organization. We know that we must eliminate the barriers of racism established by society in order to truly achieve our mission. A key victory came in July with the passing of the License to Work Act, which ends the suspension of driver's licenses for numerous issues, like the inability to pay fines and fees from parking and compliance tickets. "This act removes an important barrier to employment for so many of our trainees," notes Manny Rodriguez, RW's Executive Director, who is leading the charge. "The fight to end disproportionate rates of ticketing in our communities isn't over just yet, but we're buoyed by the progress."

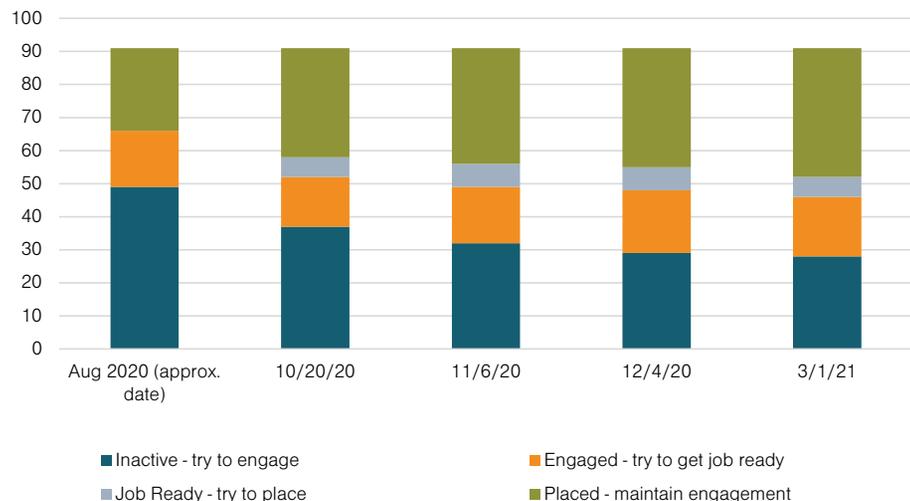


AUGUST

## YOUTH

The economic slow-down of the COVID-19 pandemic deeply impacted young Black and Brown people in our city, with the Pew Research Center noting that young workers make up 24% of employment in the industries at most risk of layoffs. RW recognizes the need for more intensive youth employment services, and so we began laying the groundwork for a youth-centric program geared towards in- and out-of-school youth ages 18 - 24. We will be partnering with community cornerstones in the westside neighborhoods of Humboldt Park and Austin, and planning is well underway for a summer 2021 launch.

## ALUMNI STATUS



SEPTEMBER

NOVEMBER

## ALUMNI SERVICES

Strengthening our relationships with graduates is core to our newest program element—Alumni Services. This effort was an obvious next step in the evolution of our program, but we accelerated this work as we saw so many graduates affected by pandemic-induced layoffs. Our Alumni Services Coordinator, Elvert Berry—a recent alumnus of the program himself—connects with graduates to assess their needs. “If they’re working, I see if they’re trying to level up. If they’re not, I send job leads and arrange trainings to help them get to the point of being actively employed.” What he really works to do, though, is provide support. “I try to be a mentor to them.” The impact of this investment has already been felt. 35% of our alumni who were laid off due to the pandemic are now back on the job.

## RWHEELS CAR LOANS

Lack of reliable transportation is a significant barrier to employment for many of our graduates, so RW launched a car loan program to help alumni get the financing they need to buy a car. “RWheels is that reward that comes after a lot of hard work,” said Financial Capabilities Coordinator Jasmine Thomas. RW will provide the necessary collateral to secure the loans, which will be in the amount of \$5,000-\$10,000. “With support from staff, they’ll have the guidance they need to make the decision that’s best for them.”



## Our Vision

To advance social and economic equity and peaceful communities for ALL people.

## Our Mission

Revolution Workshop is a nonprofit social enterprise that provides construction and woodworking workforce development for unemployed or underemployed people in partnership with area businesses.

We deliver financial independence and careers through **skills, hope, and resilience.**

**We need your support to continue this important work.**



[www.revolutionworkshop.org](http://www.revolutionworkshop.org)

