

SPOTLIGHT on the Corridor

Issue 15 December 2016

By Demetrius O. Williams

OC Communication Consultant

2016: A Year of Opportunities Becoming Reality

With 2016 coming to an end, this is a great time to showcase the progress of the many programs and services that have resulted from Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Opportunity Corridor Project. The Opportunity Corridor is a planned boulevard that will run from East 55th Street at Interstate 490 to East 105th Street in University Circle.

Aside from the transportation benefits it could bring to this part of Cleveland, this effort opens the potential for new economic development, new jobs and a new identity for the community.

What's also exciting about the Opportunity Corridor Project is that it's more than just a road. It's an opportunity for residents residing in the surrounding communities—Wards 4, 5, and 6 to establish attainable goals, learn and grow as individuals. With funding from this project, Ohio Means Jobs has been able to assist residents with furthering their education, growing their business and finding employment opportunities.

The funding from this project has truly impacted many residents in the surrounding communities. Currently, 655 residents have been placed into employment and 346 residents have received assistance for supportive services. One of the most notable stories comes from Ward 6 resident Carla Moody, who prior to receiving supportive services was in the beginning stages of establishing her business and in the process of obtaining the required certifications. Since then, she

was awarded a Federal Government Contract and successfully completed the project.

Another great story comes from Ward 5 resident Alicia Ross. Prior to her receiving supportive services, she was in the process of evaluating her career and in the beginning stages of school. Currently she is finishing up her last semester to obtain her Master's degree from Cleveland State University and working as a case worker. Lastly, but certainly not least, is Ward 4 resident Jeffery Banks, who overcame many obstacles throughout his life from being incarcerated for over a decade and dealing with the trials and tribulations of being a recently released felon. He is now living out his dreams of traveling throughout the country as a truck driver.

Ms. Moody, Ms. Ross and Mr. Bank's success are prime examples of what this community can achieve when given an opportunity. The Opportunity Corridor Project with funding and assistance from ODOT has assisted Ohio Means Jobs in making significant strides to improve our community one individual at a time. With 2016 coming to an end, the next challenge will be to do even more in the year 2017. Happy Holidays!!

For more stories like this one and to find out additional information about the Opportunity Corridor go to <http://opportunitycorridor.transportation.ohio.gov/>.

