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NEBRASKA CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

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**PROJECT  
RESET**



**2023  
PROJECT RESET  
ANNUAL REPORT**

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Welcome to Project Reset, where our passion for positive change fuels a mission dedicated to making a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve. At the heart of our organization is a commitment to fostering a better world, driven by a collective belief in the power of compassion, collaboration, and community. Our **MISSION** is to create a future where your willingness to learn creates your ability to earn, working tirelessly to foster desistance and achieve sustainable careers with our justice-involved citizens.

Our **VISION** is to provide tools and support to redirect an individual's path through education and skill development which will lead to employment in the skilled trades and labor industry.

By uniting diverse perspectives and leveraging the strength of collaboration, we strive to build a more inclusive, equitable, and compassionate society for generations to come.

Project Reset emerged in response to two pressing issues in the State of Nebraska. The primary issue addresses the detrimental effects of a lack of a career path and the inability to earn a living wage on the likelihood of recidivism among individuals entangled in our overburdened criminal justice system. The secondary issue revolves around the existing shortage of skilled trade and labor professionals in our workforce.

Project Reset addresses the convergence of these two critical challenges in the state of Nebraska, recognizing the opportunity for transformative impact. Our initiative not only helps meet the demand for skilled professionals but also contributes to the rehabilitation and successful reintegration of justice-involved individuals into our communities. This innovative approach not only strengthens the state's workforce but also fosters a positive cycle of personal and community growth, creating a more resilient and prosperous Nebraska for all.

Project Reset is dedicated to guiding individuals with justice involvement toward fulfilling careers in the skilled trades and labor industry. Through strategic partnerships with local unions, employers, and federally registered apprenticeship programs, we facilitate access to well-paying skilled trade positions, complete with benefit packages, for participants in the program.

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“ With consistency and all the classes and programs you offer, I kind of figured out my lane. You guys actually look at the people that other people don't want to look at. You guys want to take us and give us the opportunity to win. ”

-M.L



Skilled trades offer several advantages and it can be a rewarding and fulfilling career choice for many individuals. Here at Project Reset we are passionate about the skilled trades for many reasons:

### **High Demand**

Skilled trades are often in high demand, as they involve practical and hands-on skills that are essential in various industries. As long as there is a need for construction, infrastructure development, maintenance, and repairs, skilled tradespeople will remain in demand.

### **Apprenticeship Opportunities**

Skilled trades often provide apprenticeship programs where you can earn while you learn, which allows individuals to learn and gain practical experience under the guidance of experienced professionals while earning a livable wage with benefits.

### **Second Chance Friendly**

Skilled trades are a welcoming field for all individuals. Employers in the skilled trades recognize the potential for personal growth and rehabilitation. Those who may have faced challenges in the past can find opportunities for reintegration into the workforce by pursuing skilled trade professions. This inclusivity contributes to a more diverse and resilient workforce.

### **High Wage**

Skilled trades offer competitive earning potential, especially as individuals gain experience and expertise in their chosen field. These positions include promising career advancement opportunities and can include defined benefit packages including pension accounts.



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Project Reset has a streamlined process to assist individuals enrolling in the program:

### INTAKE PROCESS



A participant will complete an intake form which begins the process of enrollment. These intake forms can be completed at any time including while an individual is in custody awaiting release.



### ORIENTATION

Participants then attend a group orientation. Orientation provides individuals with an introduction and overview of the program, set expectations, and answer questions. Participants then decide if the program is a good fit for their individual goals.

### ONE-ON-ONE CASE MANAGEMENT



Participants are paired with a mentor who will work with them to address their individual barriers and the support needed to be successful in their career pathway.

At Project Reset, we pride ourselves on the quality of service every individual receives. Our mentor's caseload size is designed to allow participants to have the support and resources needed to achieve their goals in a timely and seamless manner. Although, the mentor's primary responsibility is to provide one-on-one career coaching, they also extend their support by offering valuable additional assistance:

- Self Assessment Administered
  - Safety
  - Housing
  - Food/Water
  - Transportation
  - Substance Abuse
  - Mental Health
- Professional Resume Crafted
- Collateral Contact with Support System
- Skill Development
- Supportive Services
- Post Placement Retention Services
- Job Search & Career Exploration
- Transitional & Trade Based Employment Placement
- Personal Documents Obtained
  - State ID/Drivers License
  - Social Security Card
  - Birth Certificate
- Appropriate Community Referrals made

“ I wouldn't be where I'm at without you guys. ”  
-P.W.

“ Thank you so much for being patient with me and being a listening ear. I'm so thankful for you all. ”  
-K.H.

“ Thank you for putting me in the position to be a successful man. ”  
-D.E.

“ Thank you because only you really know my situation and understand how hard it is for me and the barriers that's been put up against me but I won't give up because I know its light at the end of the tunnel. ”  
-J.L.



## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Project Reset offers specific trade based employment services to participants in the program:

Professionally Crafted Resume

Mock Interviews

Employment Placements

Retention Support & Workshops

Trade Exploration

Tape Measure Training

Basic Hand & Power Tool Training

Apprenticeship Aptitude Test Preparation

Industry Recognized

Certifications:

Forklift Operation

Aerial Lift Operation

OSHA 10 Construction

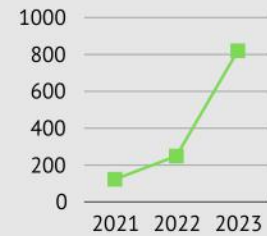
First Aid/AED/CPR

and more...

## OUR GROWTH IN SERVICES

Project Reset continues to expand the range of programming opportunities and supportive services available to participants. As a result, there has been a rise in participant engagement, leading to enhanced outcomes. In 2023, the increased services led to a **229% growth in engagement**. Project Reset had an impressive **820 individuals** attend the numerous programming and certification classes offered.

*One participant may have attended multiple sessions of programming.*



## SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The commitment of Project Reset extends to positively impacting the safety, stability, and security of all aspects of a participant's life:

Transportation Assistance

Tours & Networking Events

Work Supplies

In House Programming:

Parenting

Resiliency

On-Site Pantry

Incentives

Community Based Referrals:

Substance Abuse

Mental Health

Housing

Financial Literacy

Basic Need Assistance

# A YEAR IN REVIEW

Project Reset focuses on mentoring participants into a **High Wage, High Skill, High Demand** careers in the skilled trade and labor industry.

**WE MENTOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS INTO CAREERS IN THE SKILLED TRADE AND LABOR INDUSTRY.**

In 2023, Project Reset achieved success by directly serving and positively impacting the lives of **240** individuals within our community. However, our influence extends beyond these direct engagements, creating ripple effects that reach into the families of those we serve and resonate throughout the fabric of the communities they call home.

**240** Participants Served

Project Reset receives referrals from all **9** of Nebraska Department of Correctional facilities. Prospective participants meet with their reentry specialist who will refer them to the program prior to their release.

- 71% between the ages of 18-34
- 91% male
- 70% minority
- 94% current or former justice involvement



Project Reset also receives referrals from community based sources, including our participants:

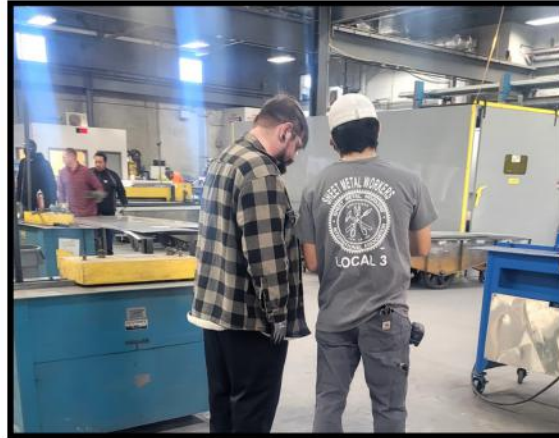
- 28% Current & Former participants
- 27% State Probation
- 13% Community Partners

# TRANSITIONAL 120 EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENTS



“ Thank you all at Project Reset for the partnerships you're developing in the community. These are great employment opportunities for the people we all serve. ”  
-Community Partner

“ I appreciate the heck out of everyone that helps, thinks, or prays over us knowing how hard everyday life can be. Thank you guys so much!!! ”  
-E.G.



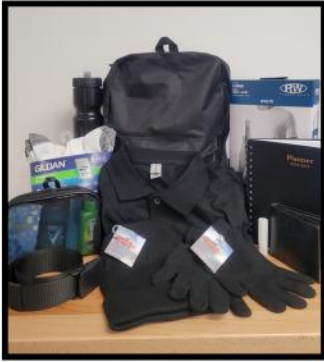
# ENTRY LEVEL TRADE BASED 38 EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENTS



# PRE-APPRENTICE/ APPRENTICE 17 EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENTS







## BACKPACKS 100 DISTRIBUTED

In September 2023, Project Reset initiated a Backpack Program, ensuring that each participant who joins the program receives essential items. Backpacks are filled with a variety of items such as, hygiene kits, a black polo, white t-shirts, a water bottle, a wallet, hat and gloves set, socks, daily planner and more.

“ Your work is so valuable and needed. ”  
-Community Partner

“ I've told guys how much yall help people and how great the program is and a lot of people are interested. ”  
-J.L.

## SKILLED TRADE 126 UNION TOURS

Trade Tours and networking events serve as an inspiring platform for Project Reset participants to discover the diverse opportunities available within these career pathways. They offer an opportunity to network with experts in the field, fostering connections that can lead to mentorship and job opportunities. Our partnerships within the skilled trade community is crucial to our mission and continued success.



“ You are amazing! I sincerely appreciate everything you have done for me. You went over and above to help me and have enriched my life and opportunities I never thought would happen. ”  
-T.H.



“ This program means everything to me, it means good. It's a blessing ”  
-D.H.

## POUNDS OF PANTRY 12,000 ITEMS DISTRIBUTED

Thanks to our supportive community partners, Project Reset is able to provide an onsite pantry that serves as a vital resource for participants, offering convenient access to essential food and household items. By having pantry available, we aim to help alleviate financial burdens and promote the well-being of individuals in our program. The pantry plays a crucial role in promoting overall stability, enabling participants to focus on their personal and program-related goals without the added stress of food insecurity.



## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Community events and partnerships hold immense value for our program as they foster a sense of belonging and collaboration. By engaging in the community, we create opportunities for participants to connect with a broader network of support and resources. Forming partnerships and actively participating in events showcase the positive impact of the program and also highlight the opportunities available to individuals who join. This heightened visibility not only attracts potential participants but also strengthens our ties with the community. Through these connections, it ensures that more individuals are aware of the resources and support the program provides. Here are a few highlights of 2023:

### PROJECT REST + SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE BUILD DAY

One highlight of our year was our partnership with Sleep in Heavenly Peace. **85** volunteers spent the day cutting, sanding, hammering, drilling, staining, branding, assembling, and transforming raw materials into beds filled with love and care. Together we were able to build **40** beds for children in our community. We are so thankful for our **volunteer groups** and **community sponsors**: Nebraska Medicine (Encompass), Steamfitters & Plumbers Local Union 464, Fusion Medical Staffing, Werner Enterprises, La Vista Community Foundation, CNW Alliance, Omaha Tigers Baseball, Midstates Marketing, and Project Reset participants. This event was all about the power of collaboration, compassion, and the joy of giving back.



### LEVEL UP JOB, HOUSING & RESOURCE FAIR

Project Reset was a proud sponsor of the Level Up Job, Housing and Resource Fair for the second year in a row. Participating in the Level Up event has been an incredibly rewarding experience. We've had the privilege of **directly impacting** people's lives by offering guidance, resources, and support. It's not just about representing our organization, it's about making a **tangible difference in the community**. This event allowed us to connect with those in need and **foster a sense of unity** within Omaha.

### NEW YEAR, NEW CAREER JOB FAIR

Project Reset is a part of the **Omaha Reentry Network** whose primary focus is empowering the justice-impacted community in Omaha. The New Year, New Career Job Fair was organized in **collaboration** with **40** partners involved in the initiative. This **re-entry specific job fair** allowed our justice-involved community to connect with background friendly employers, participate in on-site interviews, and obtain information on re-entry resources available in our community.

## NDCS INNER CIRCLE + PROJECT RESET

Project Reset is a Vocational Life Skills partner with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS). NDCS has established Inner Circles within its facilities, comprising of incarcerated **ambassadors with lived experiences**. This team assists their **peers** with questions regarding reentry plans and navigating resources available in the community.

In 2023, Project Reset staff had the opportunity to meet and engage with members of Inner Circles. The staff dedicated time to explaining the program, providing materials for enrollment, and answering questions. The **insights** and **support** provided by the Inner Circles are **invaluable** in disseminating information about Project Reset to **prospective participants**.

### MOCK INTERVIEWS

During our Mock Interview workshops, our participants left a lasting impression on our group of interviewers. Engaging in **three rounds** of interviews, which included a challenging **5-person panel** interview, they showcased their skills, experiences, and future aspirations.



Our group of volunteers included board members, community representatives, and industry professionals. They provided **invaluable feedback** aimed at uplifting the participants and sharpening their skills for their next career opportunity.



### BACK-2-SCHOOL AND HOLIDAY GIVEAWAY

Thanks to the generosity of our dedicated donors, Project Reset was able to continue to support participants in the program who are **parents**. With the invaluable contributions received, program participants were able to shop for essential **back to school supplies** and heartwarming **holiday gifts** for their children. The impact of these donations extended far beyond the

material goods themselves. By alleviating the financial burden associated with purchasing school supplies and holiday gifts, we **empowered** parents to focus on other critical aspects of their families' well-being. Participants expressed their gratitude and **sense of pride** in being able to contribute to these significant milestones. The support received not only met tangible needs but also conveyed a powerful message of care and compassion and made a lasting impact on the lives of our families.



# PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHT

## Mayson's Story

Mayson distinguished himself in the program by demonstrating a commitment to focusing on his future and leveraging opportunities available to him. Referred to the program by a community partner, Mayson had a history of substance abuse that led to involvement in the criminal justice system. He had successfully completed Young Adult Court, resulting in the dismissal and sealing of his felony charge, however Mayson still faced a lack of overall stability and a clear path forward. Mayson was experiencing homelessness, had no involvement in his son's life, and did not have a valid driver's license. Acting on the advice of his former probation officer, he enrolled in the Heart Ministries Fresh Start program, where he honed essential job and life skills, obtained his driver's license, and was able to reestablish a relationship with his son. As the program neared its conclusion, his case manager submitted a referral to Project Reset for co-enrollment:

**DAY 1** Attended Orientation  
Paired with Mentor

**DAY 2** Completed Elevate Training  
*Basic Hand & Power Tools and How to read a Tape Measure*

**DAY 7** Completed OSHA 10 Certification  
*2 Day, 10 hour safety course*

**DAY 19** Attended a tour of the Ironworkers Local  
21 Union Hall and met with representatives

Mayson worked with his mentor to identify his skilled trade career goal with exposure and exploration into different fields. He attended program workshops including Evolve and Resiliency. Evolve helps participants focus on employment readiness skills and understanding the unwritten rules of the workplace. Resiliency helps participants tap into their mental strength and challenges them to develop healthy responses to adversity. Mayson identified Ironwork as his career pathway and he worked with his mentor to prepare himself to apply for their apprenticeship. The first step in the process was to apply for a pre-apprentice position and obtain his transcripts and proof of his GED.

**DAY 25** Applied for a Pre-Apprentice  
Position with Ironworkers Local 21

**DAY 29** Selected for the Pre-Apprentice  
Position with Ironworkers Local 21

Project Reset provided tools, work boots, and gear he needed to be successful on his first day of work. Mayson created a transportation plan with his mentor which included transportation assistance. He continued to attend workshops and engage in supportive services.



“  
You have helped me very much and I want to tell you thank you for supporting and believing in me.

-Mayson

**DAY 36** Started 1st Day of Work  
\$24.98/hr + Benefits

**DAY 56** Focused on Financial Health  
Bought 1st vehicle

**DAY 61** Graduated from Heart  
Ministries Fresh Start

**DAY 115** Applied for the Ironworkers  
Apprenticeship Program

**DAY 127** Completed Panel  
Interview

**DAY 134** Accepted into  
Apprenticeship

**DAY 176** Started his first day of work as a first year Ironworker Apprentice with Local 21 and is now a Peer Mentor for the program. He helped start the first support and recovery meeting at the Ironworker Union hall and most importantly he is a full time father.

# HIREE IIII FROM US OOOO

## WE WOULD LOVE TO COLLABORATE WITH YOU

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Project Reset is dedicated to fostering robust relationships with employers in transitional and trade sectors. Our goal is to address workforce demands while providing participants the added advantage of ongoing support and positive retention outcomes.

More inclusive hiring is a powerful way to break the cycle of economic hardship, poverty, and incarceration that characterizes many communities. By giving second chance candidates an opportunity, individuals and families strengthen their financial health and communities stabilize. That means a better local economy which boosts the business climate for all companies. Companies thrive when the communities around them also thrive. Second chance employment is one way that companies can ensure the communities where they operate are flourishing.

Second chance employment not only benefits individuals and companies, it strengthens our communities and society.



## SERVICES PROVIDED AT NO COST TO EMPLOYERS AND PARTICIPANTS



CAREER  
MENTOR



TRANSPORTATION  
ASSISTANCE



WORK  
SUPPLIES



SUPPORTIVE  
SERVICES



POST-HIRE  
RETENTION  
SUPPORT



POST-HIRE  
BARRIERS  
ADDRESSED

## CONTACT US



SCAN ME

LET US HELP YOU FILL  
YOUR WORKFORCE  
NEEDS.  
FILL OUT OUR  
ONLINE FORM NOW!

📞 531.225.4347

✉ [info@nebraskaworkforce.org](mailto:info@nebraskaworkforce.org)

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

01

## Increased Engagement

Year over year, Project Reset has witnessed a notable increase in participant involvement. This achievement can be credited to two key factors: the escalating awareness and demand for the program and the increase of employment and supportive services extended to program participants. Looking ahead to 2024, Project Reset aims to sustain this momentum by further enhancing the array of offerings available, aiming to foster continued growth in participant engagement.

## Women in Trades

In 2024, Project Reset is actively working towards increasing the number of female participants in the program. The importance of women in trades cannot be overstated as it contributes to diversity, innovation, and economic advancement. The inclusion of women brings a diverse perspective, fostering creativity and problem-solving skills. Additionally, it addresses the persistent gender wage gap by providing women with opportunities for well-paying and stable careers. Project Reset is committed to exploring avenues for expanded educational outreach and awareness initiatives, promoting an environment where individuals of all genders feel empowered to pursue and thrive in the trades.

02

03

### Capacity Funding

Project Reset will explore funding opportunities to facilitate the expansion of the program, addressing the growing demands from prospective participants in the community. Throughout 2023, the program faced high demand, leading to extended waitlists and limitations on inviting all participants to available programming opportunities. Due to space constraints imposed by our current location, the inability to hire additional staff has hindered the program's capacity to accommodate more participants. Project Reset will need to secure additional funding to acquire the space to meet staffing and program growth demands in 2024.

### Desistance vs. Recidivism

Traditionally, the effectiveness of reentry programs has been measured by participants' rates of recidivism, or their return to criminal activity. However, considering any return to crime as a failure overlooks the nuanced nature of ceasing criminal behavior and fails to acknowledge positive progress. This progress includes indicators like longer periods between crimes or a decrease in the severity of offenses, defined as desistance. Desistance centers on transformative shifts in life circumstance, self-perception, and cultivation of hope, leading to a gradual reduction in criminal involvement over time and eventually resulting in the cessation of criminal behavior. In 2024, Project Reset will implement data collection processes aimed at capturing and emphasizing participants' desistance as a key measure of success.

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