

Subsidized Jobs: Program Spotlight



GROWING HOME



ABOUT

Growing Home is an urban farm that has run a subsidized jobs program in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood since 2005. The program serves individuals who face structural barriers to employment and engages them in **immediate, wage-paid employment** on the farm, combined with classroom training and holistic, wrap-around services to meet individual needs. Participants work on the farm for 12 weeks, after which Growing Home assists them in the search for a **longer-term job** in the competitive labor market.

In 2020, 55 workers completed the subsidized jobs program at Growing Home.

ILLINOIS BY THE NUMBERS

UNEMPLOYMENT & RACIAL DISPARITIES

- **9.5%** overall unemployment rate in 2020.
 - In 2019, Englewood had an **18.1%** unemployment rate compared to Chicago's 8.1% overall unemployment rate.
- **14.4%** Black unemployment rate compared to 8.5% white unemployment rate in 2020.
- **44th** highest overall unemployment rate in the United States in July 2021.

POVERTY & RACIAL DISPARITIES

- **11.5%** overall poverty rate (1,420,542 people) in 2020.
 - In 2019, Englewood had a **40.8%** poverty rate. compared to Chicago's 18.4% overall poverty rate.
- **24.8%** Black poverty rate compared to 9.3% white poverty rate in 2019.
- **25th** highest overall poverty rate in the United States in 2020.

Advances racial and economic justice: Growing Home primarily serves people of color who are experiencing poverty, homelessness, or other structural barriers to economic opportunity including having a record and living in a divested and racially segregated neighborhood. The program works to connect these jobseekers with quality, long-term, and equitable job opportunities.

Mitigates structural barriers to employment: Many of Growing Home's participants have a record. **Permanent punishments** that deny people with records access to employment opportunities are a significant barrier to finding a job. Permanent punishments can block people with records from the labor market long after their involvement with the criminal legal system is over. To help mitigate this barrier, Growing Home partners with **Cabrini Green Legal Aid** to help individuals get their records expunged.

Provides financial security: Subsidized workers know that they can afford the basics for themselves and their families throughout the duration of the program. Alleviating this financial stress helps participants focus their efforts on securing quality, long-term employment.

Improves community health: The urban farm is located in a food desert, which means there is limited access to nutritious food in the area. A large portion of the produce that the participants grow goes back to Englewood, offering the community fresh food options and supporting residents' overall health.

Offers a beneficial work environment: Working outdoors at Growing Home is often a therapeutic experience for participants, especially among a community of their peers. The farm is peaceful and calm, which offers a space for healing from trauma.

IMPACT



Subsidized Jobs: Program Spotlight



GROWING HOME



What can you do to support subsidized jobs?

We are asking that you support the inclusion of an **equity-centered national subsidized jobs program** in recovery legislation.



With robust support from Congress, subsidized jobs programs like Growing Home's would be able to ensure that **more economically marginalized individuals can connect to work** in Chicago and across the state of Illinois.

"Subsidized jobs programs can provide a direct route for individuals to get quality jobs, which everyone is deserving of. We need to invest in these programs, so that they have the infrastructure to provide participants the support they need. If we do this, the whole workforce will benefit from these workers involvement."

- Amelia Nawn, Growing Home



Each year, Growing Home receives many more applications to its subsidized jobs programs than they are able to accept and want to expand their program to address barriers to employment, such as housing instability. Federal investments in subsidized jobs programs can make this happen and **open doors to economic opportunity for economically marginalized jobseekers** across the state.

Investing in subsidized jobs means investing in your community and constituents.