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Portland Receives Additional \$1 Million in JPMorgan Chase's *AdvancingCities* Challenge, Bringing Total Philanthropic Support to \$6 Million

Worksystems, Mt. Hood Community College, Oregon Department of Human Services and Joint Office of Homeless Services partner to help women and people of color access childcare while pursuing occupational training to enter middle-income careers

PORTLAND, January 8, 2021 — JPMorgan Chase today announced a second award in Portland, after announcing this past fall that Portland was one of seven winning cities in its *AdvancingCities* Challenge, part of the firm's \$500 million, five-year initiative to help advance inclusive recovery and promote greater economic opportunity in cities.

The Portland Shared Prosperity Initiative – a partnership between Worksystems, Mt. Hood Community College, Oregon Department of Human Services and Joint Office of Homeless Services – will receive a \$1 million philanthropic investment to bring to scale a successful pilot to align workforce development, housing and social safety net systems to support the childcare needs of women, people of color and low-income households with young children who wish to pursue occupational training and enter middle-income careers.

This is in addition to the \$5 million commitment JPMorgan Chase made in October through another Portland-based collaborative of three organizations – Craft3, Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH) and Community Housing Fund (CHF) – which received a \$5 million, three-year philanthropic investment to address serious affordability challenges in Portland area neighborhoods where long-time residents and small business owners, particularly Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islanders, are threatened by displacement.

This announcement builds on JPMorgan Chase's recent \$30 billion [commitment](#) to help advance racial equity, address key drivers of the racial wealth divide and provide economic opportunity to underserved communities, especially the Black and Latinx communities.

The *AdvancingCities* Challenge supports collaborative and holistic solutions that tackle pressing needs and systemic challenges to help create more access to capital and opportunity. This year, the competition attracted more than 150 proposals from 78 communities across 35 states and territories.

In Multnomah County, a startling 48% of female-headed households with young children live in poverty and 50% of these head of households have a high school diploma or less. Occupational training enables entry into middle-income careers and access to opportunities for families. However, structural barriers such as lack of affordable childcare and housing insecurity can prevent individuals from pursuing training, leading to increased childhood poverty and intergenerational poverty.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit women and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities especially hard. Women and BIPOC workers are overrepresented in the industries hardest hit by the

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pandemic-driven recession, including food services, hospitality, health care, social assistance and retail trade. In the early months of the crisis, women suffered higher rates of job loss and in the months since, they have experienced smaller job gains than their male counterparts. In September, more than 850,000 women left the workforce nationally compared to just over 216,000 men. To help combat these trends, funding from Worksystems will support occupational training and culturally responsive career coaching to support entry into middle-income careers.

“The Portland Shared Prosperity Initiative seeks to ensure that underrepresented populations are systematically afforded access to training leading to increased economic opportunity through the removal of primary barriers such as lack of childcare, said Andrew McGough, Worksystems Executive Director. “We will carefully measure impact to ensure that resources are deployed in alignment with this intent.”

The Portland Shared Prosperity Initiative offers a solution to systemic barriers to opportunity that have burdened low-income parents in our community. In the past, training opportunities were offered for high-growth, middle-income careers without having solved for the lack of access to quality, culturally responsive childcare, which has led to the effect of overlooking people who stand to benefit most from these trainings. Likewise, when systems make subsidies available for early learning without connecting to a dedicated strategy to increase parental income, financial stability remains difficult for many families to achieve. Multiple agencies deploying early learning funds with workforce training funds is at the heart of this initiative. By linking childcare and training for middle-income careers, more families will move out of the cycle of poverty and off public assistance.

Bringing our success to scale will permanently align key public agencies and the funding streams they manage to coordinate services, including housing and social safety net supports, for low-income parents (with a focus on families of color) who want to pursue occupational training and enter middle-income careers. Through Worksystems’ SNAP 50/50 matching grant from the US Department of Agriculture, additional resources will be generated to support childcare for low-income training participants, contributing to the sustainability and momentum of this emerging national model. There is no national precedent for earning federal match on childcare program expenses, so this presents a major opportunity to fund expanded childcare services and create a model that is replicable across all 50 states.

Housing insecurity – from the risk of eviction to the struggle to provide consistent, stable housing – also makes it difficult for parents trying to keep or find a new job. According to the US Census more than 18,000 families in Multnomah county lived below the poverty line between 2012-2017. Families with children under 18 years old were more likely to live below the poverty line. Female-led households with children under the age of five had the highest rate of poverty, where nearly half of those families lived below the poverty line.

To help families overcome that barrier and better focus on their workforce training opportunities, the Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services will provide participants with rent assistance and housing navigation services so they don’t have to worry about not having a roof over their heads.

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“Every family in our community deserves a safe and secure place to live. And when families have that foundation, when they pursue workforce training, we know that they are far more likely to succeed,” said Marc Jolin, Director of the Joint Office. “By working in close alignment with Worksystems, providing rent assistance and other supports, we can ease that burden while also helping families build the tools and skills they’ll need to stay housed.”

The high cost and lack of access to childcare has presented an insurmountable barrier preventing many low-income job seekers from engaging in or completing occupational training. In Oregon, only 16% of families eligible for childcare subsidies receive support, leaving most low-income families without options.

This project will bring to scale a highly successful pilot project, the Occupational Training & Child Care Project, implemented by collaborative partners to address this longstanding structural barrier. By linking childcare and workforce training to prepare people for middle-income careers, we can move families out of the cycle of poverty.

Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) is the local expert on early learning systems across Multnomah County. By collaborating with community partners and leveraging professional development opportunities, CCR&R recruits, trains and promotes the retention of a high-quality, diverse early learning workforce.

The AdvancingCities grant will assist CCR&R in continuing this work, including covering the cost of childcare while parents participate in workforce training opportunities. CCR&R will accomplish this by partnering with parents to help them find childcare programs where vacancies exist using the Find Child Care Oregon Database for Multnomah County. The organization maintains updated records of local childcare programs within the database, including vacancy information. This will help ensure that these parents are finding childcare options that best meet their needs and ensure that placement within these programs is successful.

“The high cost and low availability of childcare in Multnomah County continues to present an insurmountable barrier to many in our communities. We are proud to be part of the effort to address this issue by making workforce training a more viable option for parents who want to transform the lives of their families,” said MHCC President Dr. Lisa Skari.

“The Oregon Department of Human Services is excited to contribute to this important project,” said Sherrelle Jackson, District Manager for ODHS Self-Sufficiency and Child Welfare in Portland. “It is an honor to collaborate with our partners on this innovative approach to helping women and BIPOC communities get the training they need to enter middle-income careers.”

“Businesses have a responsibility to help solve major challenges that their customers and communities face,” said JPMorgan Chase Market Executive, Michael Hurley. “We support the work being done by The Portland Shared Prosperity Initiative and commend the progress they are making in the community by investing in an innovative systems-based approach. Collaboration among business, nonprofits, civic

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and community leaders is the key to creating an economy that develops and sustains opportunity for all people.”

About *AdvancingCities*

AdvancingCities is a \$500 million initiative that combines the firm’s lending capital, philanthropic capital and expertise to invest in cities. The program consists of two key features, the *AdvancingCities* Challenge and large-scale investments in cities.

AdvancingCities Challenge proposals were required to focus on the strategic drivers of inclusive growth within JPMorgan Chase’s [Model for Impact](#): jobs and skills, small business, neighborhood development and financial health, and build on the firm’s [7 Traits for *AdvancingCities*](#).

The 2020 *AdvancingCities* Challenge leveraged lessons learned from six years of hosting the PRO Neighborhoods competition and the first year of the *AdvancingCities* Challenge, continuing to emphasize the importance of collaboration, strong leadership, and bold and innovative approaches to help ensure that access to capital and opportunity is more widely shared by diverse communities. This year’s combined challenge sourced solutions that embodied three key factors:

- A powerful vision for the future shaped by deep community engagement and a shared understanding of goals and priorities to ensure alignment across partners;
- Strong leadership and collaboration among a diverse set of actors with unique authority and resources to drive sustainable change; and
- Innovative approaches that are data-driven and evidence-based and that move beyond “business as usual” to change the trajectory of communities that are currently being left behind.

The winning *AdvancingCities* Challenge initiatives will have access to a wide array of JPMorgan Chase resources, including data and research, employee expertise, and global network.

To learn more about *AdvancingCities* visit www.jpmorganchase.com/advancingcities.

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About Worksystems

[Worksystems](#) is an award-winning workforce development agency that accelerates economic growth in the City of Portland, Multnomah and Washington counties by pursuing and investing resources to improve the quality of the workforce. We design and coordinate workforce development programs and services delivered through a network of local partners to help people get the skills, training and education they need to go to work or to advance in their careers. Our partners include employers, labor groups, government, community colleges, high schools, community-based and economic development organizations.

About Mt. Hood Community College

Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) is one of 17 community colleges in Oregon. The college serves approximately 26,634 credit and non-credit students annually representing its ongoing commitment to its mission of transforming lives and building communities. Established in 1966, MHCC has grown from humble beginnings into one of the largest community colleges in the state, with locations in Gresham, Maywood Park, the Bruning Center for Allied Health Education, as well as public schools within its district. In total, MHCC students enroll in more than 100 career and technical programs complimenting the college's numerous transfer track degrees in career fields such as natural resources technology, dental hygiene, automotive technology, medical billing and many more.

About Oregon Department of Human Services

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) is the principle human services agency of the government of the U.S. state of Oregon. ODHS services and benefits available to people include: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), that includes a wide array of SNAP Employment and Training (STEP) program services, cash assistance, that includes training and education, and support services, Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), child care assistance for employed parents, and Temporary Assistance to Domestic Violence Survivors, to assist those fleeing domestic violence situations with what is needed to help them achieve safety.

About Joint Office of Homeless Services

The Joint Office of Homeless Services was established in 2016 to oversee the delivery of services to people experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County and Portland. The Joint Office works with community partners to provide rent assistance and/or support services for 12,000 people supported in housing on any given night, while also operating 1,400 year-round housing-focused shelter beds, street outreach and other services such as workforce training. Learn more at ahomeforeveryone.net.