



POWER Inspires Progress

A United Way Agency Partner



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The year 2015 proved to be one of Power Inspires Progress's (P.I.P.) most successful. The job placement rate for Trainees completing the program is up more than 40% in two years (as tracked within the context of the recent affiliation with United Way of Greater Cincinnati). As we welcome a new spring, the organization is enthusiastically engaged in another year of growth and further development of both the program model and the social enterprises that help to financially support our mission.

Towards that end . . .

There are continuous efforts to improve the quality of each of the meals served and our logo and corporate identity have both been refreshed.

Additionally, good things continue to be realized by the hard working men and women that comprise the P.I.P team. As example, **Eugene Smith** first approached Venice on Vine in the spring of 2012. He arrived wanting to work and hopeful for a fresh start. Eugene took full advantage of the opportunities offered. He was clearly invested in his future success – as were all of us at Power Inspires Progress. As many of you may know, Eugene was eventually hired by Venice to function as its salaried assistant manager. He continues to make extraordinary contributions and has most recently been asked to join Sister Judy Tensing in coordinating the organization's catering business.



Our founders were educators, each in their own right. The program continues to have a strong commitment to education and long-term learning. Both the *process* utilized and the *classroom* in which learning may occur are bit unique. Learning takes place around the prep tables in the catering kitchen, while catering at different venues in the community, while seated shoulder to shoulder at the side of one of the volunteer Tutors who so generously share their expertise, and/or while interacting with restaurant guests at Venice. Regardless of the venue, PIP remains committed to the belief that the realization of success and long-term stabilization of Trainees demands the mastery of new skill sets.

For many of the Trainees securing a GED is an important personal and professional goal. However, over the past two years the GED testing has dramatically changed and success is proving far more challenging to realize. Statistically, the number of individuals securing a passing mark on the current test has plummeted by nearly 85% in some communities.

Within that context we are thrilled to share that **Shonda**, a Trainee who has been with the program for nearly a year and has worked tirelessly to accomplish her personal educational goal, secured her GED in late March.

Another brag-worthy accomplishment is the securing of the ServSafe Manager Certification, an industry recognized professional credential. To maintain their licenses, all commercial kitchens are required to have a ServSafe trained individual on the floor at all times. **Carlyn**, another Trainee currently within the PIP program

has recently secured this widely recognized industry credential. Having done so, she has significantly increased the likelihood of employment for herself.

Having demonstrated such levels of commitment to their own success, both Carlyn and Shonda have been propelled into a management training track within our program. Consequently, they will begin to take larger roles in the daily operations of the restaurant, including: inventory, the ordering of products and supplies, and helping to track the bottom line of the organization's thriving social enterprises (Venice on Vine and Venice Catering).

We have recently been joined by **Tom Broe** who is the newest member of the corps of volunteers who so generously make themselves available to the Trainees as they tackle and master their individual challenges. Tom, a faculty member of Saint Xavier High School, learned of PIP through his role at Saint X and was eventually vetted by our Board President, Bill Schlater.

Thank you for taking the time to catch up on these individual successes. Without your continued interest, involvement, and investments, none of this would be possible. I am so grateful to you for your faithful presence, joining all of us at 13th and Vine as we move forward.

Regards,

Mark Shannon, Executive Director