

## **CITY LEADERS GET UPDATE ON INAUGURAL SIX-MONTH CAREER READINESS AND MENTORING PROGRAM FOR CLEVELAND'S AT-RISK YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS**

### ***PATHWAY TO RESILIENCE PROGRAM SHOWS PROGRESS IN FIRST MONTHS***

**CLEVELAND, August 2, 2017** – Ambus Shephard, age 23, and Zishoun Melvin, age 18, had spent parts of their young lives incarcerated and, without skills or experience, faced bleak futures. Already fathers, they wanted more – for themselves and for their children. Both signed up for Pathway to Resilience, the new job-training pilot program launched by Cleveland-based private equity firm Resilience Capital Partners and Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland in December 2016 and now supported by more than a dozen Cleveland-area businesses and organizations.

Shephard and Melvin are part of the inaugural class of Pathway to Resilience's intensive, six-month career readiness and mentoring program. Combining practical job skills training and literacy instruction with extracurricular activities such as sports and music, Pathway to Resilience is turning around the lives of young adults aged 18-24 who are at risk of involvement in gang activity or have been incarcerated.

At an event for the program's sponsors and volunteers held yesterday at Key Center, Shephard and Melvin shared with attendees how their lives have been changed in just the four months that they have been enrolled in the program.

The young people participating in the program agree. Zishoun Melvin said, "The street life, I know now, it's not worth it. It's not worth my freedom. You could end up doing it for the rest of your life. That's not what I want. I want to have a future. Pathway to Resilience is making me become a man. It's giving me responsibility."

Ambus Shephard, the father of four sons, said, "I am not proud of some of the things I have done in the past. But, if I stick with this program and reach my goal, it will change my life for the better."

"Poverty and violence are facts of life for too many of our young people. We need to create new facts and that is why we started the Pathway to Resilience program," said Steven H. Rosen, co-chief executive officer of Resilience Capital Partners. "This program is about opening doors for a group of young people who will now have a new path, a different path, a better path to make a difference in the world. Seeing young people make this commitment to themselves and their families gives us all hope for the future."

Added Bassem Mansour, co-chief executive officer of Resilience Capital Partners, "Cleveland is America's second-poorest city and has the third-lowest high school graduation rate among the nation's biggest cities. Look at our poorest neighborhoods, and you'll understand that this program is good for our young men, better for our companies and essential for our city." Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland President and CEO Ron Soeder, who helped develop Pathway to Resilience, said, "We are proud of Ambus, Zishoun and the other young people who have made

the decision to join Pathway to Resilience. It's not easy to change your life, but they are working hard to acquire the skills they need for good jobs and full, rich futures.”

Additional support for Pathway to Resilience is being provided by the [Cleveland Foundation](#); James Vaughn, III; Timothy P. Ryan; [Key Bank](#); [McDonald Hopkins](#); The [Cavaliers Youth Fund](#); [Meaden and Moore](#); [ParkOhio](#); [City of Cleveland](#); [Cintas](#); and [American Greetings](#).

### **About Pathway to Resilience**

Pathway is an intensive six-month career readiness and mentoring program that combines job skills and literacy instruction with extracurricular activities. It is based on innovative research on gang intervention conducted by the late Dr. Irving Spergel and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that showed that the most effective intervention strategies combine policing, mentoring and social services. Those who complete the Pathway training will be eligible for employment with sponsors of the program, which includes large and small Cleveland-area employers.

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland**

Founded in 1954, Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland serves more than 7,000 youth annually at 16 locations in Cleveland, Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland. The Clubs provide a safe place for children to learn and grow, to develop ongoing relationships with caring adult professionals, to engage in life-enhancing programs and to create a culture of hope and opportunity. For more information, visit us at [www.clevekids.org](http://www.clevekids.org).

### **About Resilience Capital Partners**

Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, Resilience invests in niche-oriented manufacturing, value added distribution and business service companies with sustainable market positions and a clear path to cash flow improvement. Resilience targets platform businesses with \$25 million to \$250 million in revenues across a broad range of industries where it can improve a company's operations, competitive positioning and profitability. Resilience manages in excess of \$625 million for its global investor base which includes pension funds, insurance companies, foundations and endowments, fund of funds and family offices. For more information, please visit [www.resiliencecapital.com](http://www.resiliencecapital.com).

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