

Anne Arundel County puts \$273,000 toward kick-starting job training program for recently incarcerated residents

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The county launched its new Turnaround Thursday program, which will provide job training and services for unemployed residents returning from incarceration, on Wednesday night at Anne Arundel Connecting Together’s annual meeting.

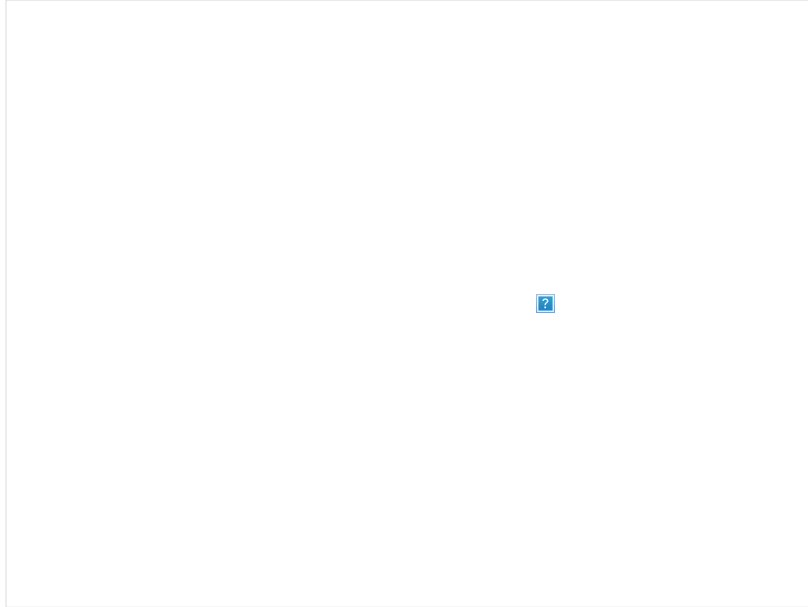
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Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman’s administration has devoted \$273,000 of American Rescue Plan funding toward helping the program get 50 people ready for employment over the next six months. The county plans to add another \$273,000 every six months for two and a half years for future cohorts if the program continues to meet its goals. County spending will total \$1.3 million if

it succeeds. The money will be received by Maryland Reentry Resource Center in partnership with ACT, and funds will be managed by Arundel Community Development Services.

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Turnaround Thursday is modeled after a similar program, [Turnaround Tuesday](#), in Baltimore which operated through Build in Baltimore and is now its own nonprofit.

“We think our program is going to be even better than what they do in Baltimore because we have so many county agencies that are enthusiastic about it,” Pittman said. “And at a time when businesses are struggling to find workers, this is going to be good for our economy as well.”

ACT will host the classes at its Asbury United Methodist Church location in Annapolis. Classes will be led by Maryland Reentry Resource Center Executive Director Vanessa Bright; the Rev. Dr.

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Carletta Allen, ACT Strategy Team member and Asbury United Methodist Church minister; and staff from Build in Baltimore.

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“This grant represents an investment in transformed lives. This is about generational change — individuals whose lives are turned around such that they become positive change leaders in their families and communities,” Allen said, adamant that Turnaround Thursday won’t simply be a program, but a movement.



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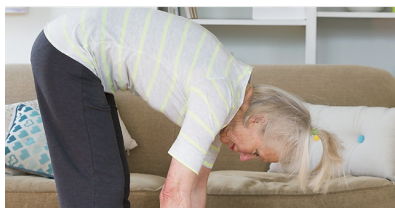
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Raekwon Brandon, a participant in the program in Baltimore, said he felt the program’s staff understood what he needed after being in and out of juvenile detention facilities throughout his teen years.

“Turnaround Tuesday helped me bring out my strengths,” Brandon said.

The Baltimore program has helped 1,167 people get employed with around a 70% retention rate for the individuals in those roles over two years, said Terrell Williams, co-director of Turnaround Tuesday.

Turnaround Thursday aims to serve 100 people a year and work with more than a dozen Anne Arundel County agencies and affiliates who serve this demographic.

Another partner will be Annapolis-based Luminis Health, which will provide work, and subsequently training, for participants.

“It’s going to be worth every penny,” Pittman said.

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