NewBridge
CLEVELAND CENTER FOR ARTS & TECHNOLOGY

CINCINNATI ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Testimony on State Funding for OHIO NCAT CENTERS

Ohio Senate Finance Workforce Subcommittee
Senator Bill Beagle, Chair
Senator Sandra R. Williams, Vice Chair
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John Carmichael, Chief Executive Officer
Robert Horne, Graduate
Cleveland Center for Arts & Technology (NewBridge)

Clara Martin, Chief Executive Officer
William Lecher, Board Member
Cincinnati Arts & Technology Center (CATC)

Chairman Beagle, Vice Chair Williams and members of the Senate Finance Workforce Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today regarding state funding for workforce development programs in the next biennial budget. We, John Carmichael, CEO of NewBridge, and Robert Horne, 2014 Graduate of NewBridge and Pharmacy Technician at Cleveland Clinic, will focus on Cleveland's Center while Clara Martin, CEO of Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center, and William Lecher, RN, Board Member of CATC and Senior Clinical Director at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, will focus on the Cincinnati Center. **Our joint testimony will emphasize the impact of our career training programs.**

Jointly, we seek $1.5 million from the state to leverage private, local dollars to help us continue to offer residents of Cleveland and Cincinnati assistance and training that allows them to break the cycle of generational poverty become economically self-sufficient. As we are successful, so too is the state of Ohio as it realizes the significant savings from more individuals working off various government supports.

Cleveland Center (NewBridge)

NewBridge's workforce development programs train unemployed and underemployed Clevelanders to secure sustainable jobs through employer designed, market-driven training programs that prepare them for careers as Pharmacy Technicians and Phlebotomists.

Launched in 2011 in partnership with Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland Foundation, Kelvin & Eleanor Smith Foundation, Key Bank and University Hospitals, NewBridge provides workforce programs, services and materials at no cost to the students. The result has been to graduate motivated,

skilled individuals who are ready to begin healthcare careers as Pharmacy Technicians and Phlebotomists.

The NewBridge model is simple: partner with major employers in healthcare (e.g., Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth and University Hospitals), design a career training program that meets their needs and open the program to participants who go through the training at no cos. The result is a pipeline from training to jobs.

NewBridge meets students where they are. If an applicant is academically below the level required to complete the training, then we provide academic refresher training on-site to bridge the gap.

Students at NewBridge are also given the opportunity to develop and improve their professional skills, including communication, customer service, problem solving and conflict resolution. With technical and workplace skills firmly in place, NewBridge graduates are far more likely to be successful and thrive in the workplace.

NewBridge also provides wraparound services to remove barriers related to poverty that have historically limited students' and graduates' capacity for long-term success. Wraparound services consider the full range of challenges in economically disadvantaged communities, including a lack of reliable transportation, childcare needs, existing student debt, domestic violence and crime.

We are proud of NewBridge's track record since 2011 which includes:

- **86% of our eligible graduates have been placed in secure jobs;**
- **the average starting salary (before benefits) is over $27,000** (exceeding an annualized minimum wage of $16,000, often without benefits).

These results have not only benefited the students and their families but also the local economy. We estimate that the economic impact of our program on Greater Cleveland is nearly $1.8 million **annually** in wages alone and growing. This figure does not include state savings from employed graduates who move off such public assistance as food stamps, childcare and healthcare. As we ramp up our programs, we project training and placing over 250 Pharmacy Technicians and Phlebotomists over the next 3 years to keep up with market demand.

Senator Beagle, as you have argued, there is an ever growing need for improved healthcare access. An essential part of that is having the staff necessary to provide care. In discussions with our healthcare partners, there is a growing need for nursing assistants to do just that. In fact, our partners estimate that there will be over 1,000 open positions due to expansion and turnover. NewBridge began the design phase of the "Patient Care Technician" program in early March to meet this need. Starting in September, **we plan to begin training and placing 260 Patient Care Technicians over the next three years.**

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Cincinnati Center (CATC)

Bridging the Gap is a workforce development program at the Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center designed for urban teens that begins mid senior year and supports them 18 months, into adulthood. The program helps to fill the costly gap between supports available in high school and the traditional workforce programs designed for adults. Such programs are usually accessed, if at all, only years after people graduate from high school and often after multiple attempts to succeed. This gap in services is particularly devastating to teens from low-income urban neighborhoods, and costly to the community and taxpayers. The program is unique in that it prepares graduates for ready-and-waiting positions offered by employer partners.

Bridging the Gap has proven that with the right kind of supports for a period of time after graduation, students can be established successfully in a career, with tuition assistance for higher education, health benefits and access to a host of options from there. Thereby, Bridging the Gap provides these values:

Value Proposition:

- ✓ Lifts families from poverty through gainful employment and education.
- ✓ Creates a pipeline of skilled reliable workers in areas of future need.
- ✓ Empowers people through education and mentoring, good wages and benefits.
- ✓ Reduces dependence on welfare, Medicaid and other subsidized programs.
- ✓ With 65 graduates hired, BTG has saved the state significant public assistance dollars.

Program Goals:

- Turn at-risk teens into self-sufficient adults by helping urban teens attain meaningful employment.
- Ensure retention through innovative supports.
- Provide skilled workers in industry sectors where there are shortages, starting with health care, manufacturing and financial services.

Program Components:

- *Workplace competency training*:
  - *Life Skills Program*: This 18 hour Life Skills curriculum helps build foundational skills for workplace success and future professional development
  - *Employment Readiness Workshop*: 1-week job readiness workshop to help prepare students with the pre-employability skills to find, secure and retain employment.
- *Individual Mentoring Program*: BTG assigns participants to trained, qualified and work-specific mentors.
- *Parent/Caring Adult Engagement*: Each BTG participant is encouraged to identify and solicit the support of a caring adult (e.g., a parent, family member, or other adult who is an engaged and supportive advocate of the student's BTG goals and career ambitions).

- *Employer Engagement*: BTG has strong, committed relationships with hiring partners who extend positions to program participants, offer good starting pay, health benefits, tuition reimbursement and provide invaluable insight for future planning.
- *Training and Certification*: BTG students attend and complete customized training for employment positions.
- *Transportation/childcare*: Transportation and childcare provided when needed.

Community Partners:

BTG leverages community relationships with like-minded agencies to form a collaborative partnership that serves teens well into adulthood.

- **Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Christ Hospital,** other health care providers.
- **RN and Associates** provides State Tested Nursing Assistant (STNA) training approved by the Ohio Department of Health, endorsed by the American Nurses and Ohio Nurses Associations. Students gain the skills to assist as nurses' aides, in long-term and assisted-living facilities, home healthcare and hospitals.
- **Tri-State Easter Seals** delivers Manufacturing Skills Standards Certification (MSSC) training and certification for advanced manufacturing positions.
- **Mentoring services:** Partner organization needed.
- **Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates (JCG/CYC)** helps teens develop employability skills through an eighteen hour Life Skills program.
- **Cincinnati Works** provides long-term access to area employers, job readiness training, and other adult based support services.

Results:

The BTG program builds on the CATC model, which begins with coaching at-risk teens in basic success skills such as being on time and maintaining a business-like demeanor. BTG adds practical work experience and professional development for students, who often lack such supports critical for success at school and on the job. BTG has proven its ability to increase the likelihood of achieving several outcomes such as reducing drop-out rates, acquiring critical workplace readiness skills, attaining employment, remaining employed. The summary of the program's impact is provided below:

- Participation in BTG resulted in higher graduation rates compared to non-BTG students with similar demographics and priority (risk) factors. The graduation rate for BTG students was 93%, while the rate was 91% for the CATC and 65% for the Cincinnati Public Schools comparison groups, respectively.
- BTG's 12-month retention rates (87%) exceeded the national average, demonstrating that support through BTG programming ensures sustainable employment.
- Factors related to retention include: Mental Health and Counseling, College Access services, Behavioral Coaching, Transportation, Life Skills Programming, Job Readiness Skills Training, Mentoring, Parent/Caring Adult Engagement, Employer Engagement, and Training and Job Certification Program.

- BTG students are performing above national and state-wide employment trends despite economic and academic priority factors. The current job market did not impede the implementation of the BTG program.

Together, NewBridge and CATC are seeking the legislature's support of a public-private partnership that includes $1.5 million from the private sector and $1.5 million from the state to continue and expand our current healthcare training programs and help us expand to serve greater numbers of students and have a greater impact on Ohio's economy.

NewBridge and CATC would defer to the Senate on how to fund such a public-private partnership, but one potential mechanism may be the Healthier Buckeye Program outlined in the House-passed version of HB 64. As you may know, Speaker Pro Tempore Amstutz and Representative Derickson have also recently introduced HB 196 which continues to build upon the framework included in the budget bill. Together, NewBridge & CATC strongly support the Healthier Buckeye program and believe it could be an effective model for investing in local workforce development programs like ours to ultimately help move people out of poverty into economic self-sufficiency through employment.

On behalf of NewBridge and CATC, we want to thank you again for the opportunity to testify today and would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.