

Change The Play Inc. (CTP), an Educational/Charitable 501(c)(3) organization has delivered STEAM Powered Entrepreneurial programming since 2013 in Connecticut and Massachusetts. CTP is contracted to work with students in Lawrence, MA, Meriden, CT, and New Haven, CT public schools; targeting youth identified as socially inept, gang, or drug involved. 71% of program participants improved their attendance while 100% decreased office referrals and suspensions. Through CTP's partnership with The Collaborative for Educational Services in Massachusetts, youth adjudicated delinquents placed in Department of Youth Services residential settings receive targeted programming to: 1) increase awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities in creative arts and music 2) facilitate their development of industry recognized skills and 3) establish positive relationships with entrepreneurs thus creating a network that leads to economic stability once released. Our programming builds on the cultural capital and strengths of this population, is relevant to their current circumstances, and helps them to see the value of education, persistence, and teamwork in attaining their dreams. CTP utilizes interest areas in programming for at-risk individuals focusing on strengthening identity, boosting self-efficacy, and highlighting entrepreneurial paths. We partner with school systems to show the real world application of Common Core State Standards Initiative focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM)- giving participants the power to effectively navigate our increasingly complex and technology-based society as business leaders. CTP will engage formerly incarcerated individuals in Connecticut. Due to CT Gov. Malloy reforms aimed at shrinking prison populations, thousands of incarcerated individuals have and will be released. The lack of small business development combined with the increasing population of formerly incarcerated people displays a need for this programming. CTP Point of Contact **Michael Bennett (203)715-4492 mikebennett@changetheplay.org**

Evelyn Teal is a Retired Educator of 40 years possessing a Double Masters in Reading & Gifted Education.

Jason Teal is a Social Entrepreneur who Chairs the Connecticut NAACP Economic Development Committee and founded Change The Play Inc. Mr. Teal began his career at iHeartMedia in 2003 and played an intricate role in launching the Urban formatted radio station Power 104.1 (WPHH, Hartford). In 2009 he launched his business development company in which he provides marketing, sales, and operational services to small companies. Mr. Teal was an integral part of the organization of the NAACP recidivism program.

Michael Bivins is a Music & Entertainment Mogul with over 30 years of experience in the entertainment industry, Mr. Bivins is a founding member of New Edition & Bel Biv DeVoe (BBD). He is a recipient of the Soul Train Lifetime Achievement Award and has just produced the most watched mini series in the history of television; "The New Edition Story", which documents his successful entertainment life. Mr. Bivins is a mentor, speaking to current and formerly incarcerated individuals.

Chris Harris, Ph.D. is a Tenured Professor of Communication in the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences at Nevada State College. Dr. Harris' research interests include Black American music and culture (particularly rap and neo-soul), the operation and dissemination of discourse in contemporary society, and media portrayals of ethnicity/race. Dr. Harris is a co-author of an article on the portrayal of women of color by reality television published in the International Journal on Women's Studies.

Raymond Guilbault is a Fashion & Entrepreneurship Consultant for over 15 years. In addition to owning several retail stores, he has developed a fashion brand that is sold in 700 retail locations worldwide generating millions. Raymond has worked with top entertainers, brands and companies to develop or enhance their marketing strategies. Mr. Guilbault currently mentors and provides employment opportunities to formerly incarcerated individuals in Miami, Florida.

Our leadership also consists of two active duty Connecticut Corrections officers **Edward Waters** and **Jamel Riddle**.

CTP will partner with the Connecticut NAACP recidivism program, Manson Youth Institute (MYI), as well as local and faith based community organizations to identify and recruit formerly incarcerated individuals and inmates awaiting release. The Connecticut NAACP is the oldest and largest Civil Rights organization in the state with 16 branches in every major urban area. CTP will collaborate with NAACP members who have a successful history of working with individuals who have been incarcerated to identify program candidates statewide. MYI is a level 4 high-security facility that serves as the Connecticut Department of Corrections primary location for housing sentenced inmates under the age of 21. We will partner with MYI to identify newly released and individuals waiting on release who are over the age of 18. CTP will form a coalition consisting of several local and faith based community organizations. Grassroot campaigns will be initiated through this coalition to solicit formerly incarcerated individuals.

Change The Play participants push past their internal boundaries to become leaders and positive agents for change in their communities with the encouragement of mentors, coaches and volunteers who are industry leading professionals.

The Business of Media & Fashion (BMF) teaches students to conceptualize, design and develop their product while leveraging technology and social media to grow their business through innovative marketing and sales strategies. Participants build social, creative, team player and leadership skills through projects requiring them to think critically and utilize technology in real world business situations. Proper preparation and responsibility are stressed. BMF strives to ensure all participants are independent thinkers and confident users of technology who can problem-solve, collaborate, communicate and think critically about ideas; to further their business.

Members learn principles of entrepreneurship through a fashion business model where experience is gained through hands on projects ranging from creative design, to manufacturing, marketing, retail merchandising, e-commerce and wholesale. While experiencing the day to day operations of a successful fashion brand participants will have the opportunity to build relationships with suppliers, manufacturers, buyers, fashion and graphic designers, photographers, and web developers.

In the Business Of Music & Fashion members will create, market, and pitch a product to be sold in EbLens Clothing and Footwear, the largest urban clothing chain in New England. The program culminates with participants curating and promoting a group in-store product launch event at EbLens, where they will see the clothing they design available for sale. Through this partnership they learn merchandising, and other aspects of the retail business. Utilizing learned strategies participants will then write and pitch their own business plan to a CTP panel for the chance to receive seed funding for their venture as well as monthly mentorship from judging panelist to grow their business. ALL participants will leave with the knowledge of how to start and operate their own businesses the best business proposal will receive funding and additional support.

CTP will organize participants into 2 cohorts for 20 sessions over 10 weeks. Participants will have access to a proprietary E-Learning course that supplements in-person sessions. Course curricula will expand on class and reinforce topics to include but not limited to: financial literacy, business plan development, marketing resources, videos from industry experts and a trade directory. CTP has a proven curriculum utilizing interest areas such as music and fashion as a model in teaching At-Risk Special Populations how to start and operate successful business. Using these relatable areas allows program attendees to explore their passions and visualize them as entrepreneurial options.

20 Session Topic Overview (subject to change based on speed/skill level of class):

Session 1: Intro To Program	Session 2: Intro to Business Plan	Session 3: Intro to Branding/Mentoring	Session4: Transitional Services Workshop
Session 5: Product Development Workshop	Session6: Intro to Marketing	Session 7:Financial Literacy Workshop	Session 8: Distribution Channels/Mentoring
Session 9:Grassroots Marketing Workshop	Session 10:Grassroots Marketing Excursion	Session 11:EbLens In Store Event/Mentoring	Session 12: Business Brainstorming
Session 13:Business Entities and Taxes	Session 14:Market Research/Mentoring	Session 15:Sourcing/ Contracting	Session 16: Human Resources Workshop
Session 17: Small Business Financial Literacy	Session 18:Executive Summary/ Mentoring	Session 19:Submit Business Plan	Session 20:Pitch to CTP Panel

Participants business description and vision statement will be formed through written questionnaires, guided discussion and brainstorming session with industry leading professionals. They will be taught an introduction to business and business practices such as choosing and registering a business entity, applying for an EIN, human resources, leadership, and team building. Human Resource Directors and business office executives will lead organizational and management workshops.

CTP will provide workshops taught by successful entrepreneurs, sales and marketing executives covering product launch, social media, grassroots marketing, effective use of various types of media, media planning and buying, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Pay-per-click vs Organic, wholesale vs retail, how to establish relationships and work with buyers, nuances of cold calling, prospecting, etc. Participants will conduct and report on market research in their interest field. Participants will engage in workshops taught by industry professionals on subjects such as product development, manufacturing and service business development. Products to be sold and Services to be rendered will be chosen as a result of guided discussion and brainstorming sessions.

CTP will work with partners such as the CT NAACP Economic Development Committee, Wells Fargo, and the Midstate Chamber of commerce to host workshops on financial literacy, merchant services, business credit, and accounting. The concept of the business plan will be introduced in pieces throughout the program as the skill or lesson that is relevant to that section is taught and the completion of each section of the business plan marks a participant's progress through the program. CTP will provide each participant with a mentor that will maintain a file tracking progress through the program as well as keeps accountability of participation in transitional services.

CTP will partner with Wells Fargo, NAACP Recidivism Initiative, Connecticut Small Business Administration, The Midstate Chamber of Commerce as well as local and faith based organization to host workshops and provide services around health, financial literacy and other transitional service that improve the economic well-being of the returning citizen.

Change The Play will work in partnership with the CT NAACP, CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Julio C. Casiano - Connecticut Deputy District Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration, as well as New Haven and Meriden Economic and Community Development Departments to connect program participants to eligible funding. A "Side Street to Main Street" program will be implemented via the above partners where formerly incarcerated individuals will receive personal support in registering their business, help with networking events, as well as developing and presenting business proposals to potential funders. Upon completion participants will have an opportunity to pitch their business plan to a panel consisting of CTP Board Members, Julio Casiano, and representatives from various Economic and Community Development agencies and department. The top presentation will receive \$10,000 start-up funding from Change The Play, and will be linked to other microlenders utilizing resources from the other panel members. With the initial \$10,000 investment from Change The Play, the guidance from the other panel members regarding securing funding, monthly mentoring sessions, and continued access to E-Course participants will have enough resources to operate their business for the first year. After their business is operational for at least one year, they will be eligible for Connecticut DECD Small Business Express programming. The two targeted DECD programs they will have the ability to receive funding from will be a revolving 4% loan or a matching grant; both in the amount of \$10,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. Through the NAACP partnership with the CT DECD participants will receive 1 on 1 coaching throughout the application process.