

REDF

An investment that works.

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Cara

www.carachicago.org | Chicago, IL

At a Glance

Mission

Cara prepares and inspires motivated individuals to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, transform their lives, strengthen our communities, and forge paths to real and lasting success. Cara provides people the opportunity to secure permanent employment through a comprehensive range of training, support, and job placement services.

Social Enterprise

In addition to its highly-regarded workforce development program, Cara also provides paid transitional jobs in neighborhood beautification through its social enterprise, **Cleanslate**, and temporary employment opportunities in the private sector through its contract staffing firm, **Cara Connects**.

Track Record

For over 25 years, Cara has provided its students with the skills and confidence they need to secure and sustain quality jobs, further their education, and find stable housing, while also empowering them to lead lives of personal and professional excellence. Since its founding, Cara has employed over **5,600** people.

REDF - San Francisco

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REDF - Los Angeles

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Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 623-2112

REDF - Chicago

220 North Green Street
Chicago, IL 60607
(312) 585-7629

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www.redf.org

REDF

Portfolio Partner Profile



Founded: 1991 by entrepreneur and philanthropist Tom Owens

Location: Chicago, IL

Social Enterprises:

Cleanslate (neighborhood beautification), Cara Connects (contract staffing firm)

Target Population: adults and youth facing barriers to employment

Joined REDF Portfolio: 2016

Employed Since 1991: 5,600+

REDF Investment & Advisory Services

REDF's **\$400,000** capital investment and advisory services have helped Cara strengthen and grow its social enterprises, increase the number of jobs created, and improve more people's lives.

Highlights of this partnership include:

- Advanced a plan to help Cara improve the quality and impact of employee supports and job development services for Cleanslate employees;
- Identified business development opportunities that resulted in increased earned revenue;
- Developed a long-term growth strategy for Cara Connects and Cleanslate; and
- Provided Cara with one of REDF's Farber Interns—exceptional MBA candidates who apply their skills and passion to delivering on key business projects.

An Investment That Works

SINCE JOINING REDF'S PORTFOLIO IN 2016:

400
PEOPLE EMPLOYED

IN THE PAST YEAR CARA EMPLOYEES HAVE WORKED:

69k+ HOURS
AND EARNED
\$2.4m+ IN WAGES

WITH REDF'S SUPPORT, CARA IS ON TRACK TO EMPLOY:

1.3k
MORE PEOPLE BY 2020

Personal Success Story

Cara Made All the Difference



Oreletta struggled with addiction in her youth. As a single mother of five, and with her youngest just two months old, she took the crucial first steps towards recovery, which eventually led her to Cara. The resources and coaching at Cara helped Oreletta tap into her strength and gifts, giving her the motivation to make the necessary changes and get back on her feet. She earned her GED, got married, and purchased a house in the suburbs. Oreletta then faced a devastating loss when her husband died of cancer. Remembering that she had a lifelong community at Cara, Oreletta returned for support and guidance. "I got the job training and motivation," she explains, "but also the opportunity to talk about personal issues that I had never addressed before... that's what I really needed. That made all the difference." Today, Oreletta works as a breast cancer navigator helping women throughout Chicago fight back, rebuild their lives, and create a brighter future.



I would highly recommend Cara to any prospective employer. Not only will you be working with a professional staff, but also a pool of highly-qualified candidates.

— Linda Chirbas, Regional Recruiting Consultant, Pitney Bowes