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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REDF Awards \$3 Million to 10 Growth-Stage Employment Social Enterprises to Expand Fair-Chance Hiring Opportunities and Impact Across the U.S.

Shaped by grantee perspective and an equity lens, REDF's Growth Portfolio provides three years of unrestricted funding, tailored capacity-building support, and hands-on coaching and partnership to social enterprises advancing economic inclusion and mobility.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (January 5, 2022) – As today's challenges demand responsive investment in proximate leaders and solutions, REDF (the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund) is pleased to announce \$3 million in grants to 10 high-impact employment social enterprises through our Growth Portfolio program.

As employment social enterprises (ESEs), all grantees are purpose-driven businesses that provide paying jobs, training, and supportive services to people overcoming workforce barriers, including opportunity youth, refugees, and people who have experienced homelessness, incarceration, domestic violence, substance abuse disorders, and/or mental illness.

REDF, a leading venture philanthropy, is proud to invest in these ESEs as proven levers for advancing economic inclusion and mobility among people who have strong talents to contribute to their communities but have faced barriers to employment and are excluded from all the benefits that a stable job provides.

"As policymakers, business leaders, and everyday Americans navigate the economic recovery and a rapidly changing job market, this is a pivotal moment to reimagine and rebuild an economy that works for everyone," said Karen Chern, Growth Portfolio Director at REDF. "The purpose-driven work and proven outcomes of employment social enterprises offer a shining example of how inclusive hiring and workforce development practices are good for people and good for business. We are honored to partner with and invest in the social enterprises that are leading this work and showing other employers what can and should be done to create opportunities for all."

Informed by the feedback of the ESEs we partner with, past program outcomes, and our commitment to DEI, the Growth Portfolio is designed and continuously refined [to support](#) equitable and inclusive recruitment, selection, and support of grantee partners. This includes offering a transparent, streamlined, and supportive application process to enhance accessibility and reduce applicant burden, and awarding unrestricted funding to support sustainability and invest with trust.

Forming the second cohort of our Growth Portfolio, each of the 10 ESEs will receive three years of unrestricted grant funding totaling \$300,000, along with three years of customized capacity-building support and advisory services designed to grow their reach, sustainability, and impact as vital centers for equitable workforce development.

Together, these 10 revenue-generating, social-purpose businesses provide quality jobs and career opportunities across a range of industries, from construction and maintenance to food service, technology, staffing, and more, supporting communities throughout the Northeast, South, Midwest, and across California:

- [Coalfield Development](#) (Wayne, WV)
- [Community Kitchen Pittsburgh](#) (Pittsburgh, PA)
- [Crossroads Campus](#) (Nashville, TN)
- [Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse](#) (Evanston, IL)
- [Farming Hope](#) (San Francisco, CA)
- [First Step Staffing](#) (Atlanta, GA)
- [InnerCity Weightlifting](#) (Boston, MA)
- [Peralta Service Corporation](#) (Oakland, CA)
- [The Doe Fund](#) (New York, NY)
- [The Knowledge House](#) (New York, NY)

In year one of the three-year partnership, all members of the Growth Portfolio will complete a comprehensive Baseline Assessment, which REDF will use to tailor capacity-building supports in areas of business planning, program design, operations, human capital, and fundraising. Grantees will also receive one-on-one coaching with the goal of helping them leverage their strengths to expand employment opportunities, increase organizational revenue and sustainability, and continue to enhance long-term outcomes for employees and their communities.

“REDF is the best partnership Farming Hope has found in our five years of operation. REDF's support and dedicated staff and unparalleled network of social enterprise peers allows us to not go it alone,” shared Jamie Stark, Executive Director of Farming Hope. “Having access to others in the same fight through REDF catalyzes our impact and our wellbeing—for our students, our staff, and our nonprofit. REDF is truly advancing a national employment social enterprise movement, and we are thrilled to be part of it.”

“This partnership is really important to the economic future of Appalachian people who face barriers to employment,” said Brandon Dennison, CEO of Coalfield Development. “REDF is the leading voice on employment social enterprises, which we view as the most important strategy to meet our people where they are and cultivate real opportunity. We are so excited to learn all we can from the REDF community.”

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ABOUT REDF

REDF (the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund) is a pioneering venture philanthropy accelerating a national movement of employment social enterprises – mission-driven, revenue-generating businesses that invest the money they make into helping people striving to overcome employment barriers get jobs, keep jobs, and build a better life. Independent research

shows this approach works. It leads to greater economic security and mobility and a significant rate of return to society—\$2.23 in benefits for every \$1 invested.

For more information, visit www.redf.org.