

The Bridge to Freedom construction training program and reentry housing initiatives have seen significant progress and impact in 2025. The construction training workshop continues to empower participants as active agents of change, combining hands-on building projects, such as porches and steps, with personal development and life transformation. The program emphasizes skill-building, community engagement, and the restoration of lives, enabling participants to rebuild both their futures and the neighborhoods they serve. As a matter of fact, 5 of the 12 individuals who participated in cohort 1 have joined the church and become followers of Christ.

## **Construction Training Program Update**

### **- Active Learning and Life Skills**

Participants are engaged in practical construction projects, directly benefiting the community and themselves. The workshop is described as a place where individuals are “building porches, steps and lives,” underscoring the dual focus on tangible skill acquisition and holistic personal growth.

### **- Empowerment and Agency**

The program fosters a sense of agency, encouraging participants to become “active agents of change.” This approach not only equips them with technical skills but also instills confidence and purpose as they transition back into society.

### **- Community Impact**

The construction training has a visible impact on local neighborhoods, providing much-needed repairs and improvements while also serving as a platform for participants to demonstrate their value and commitment to their communities.

## **Reentry Housing and Program Update**

### **- Supportive Services**

The reentry housing program continues to provide stable, supportive environments for individuals returning from incarceration. Wraparound services—including mentoring, job readiness, and life skills training—are integrated to address the complex needs of participants as they work toward independence.

### **- Holistic Approach**

The ministry’s approach combines practical assistance (housing, employment support) with spiritual encouragement and personal development, helping participants overcome barriers to successful reentry and long-term stability.

- Ongoing Commitment

The Bridge to Freedom ministry remains committed to walking alongside each participant, offering individualized support and fostering a culture of hope, accountability, and transformation. Our Chicago Soul Coffee Shop is looking to hire 5-7 committed trained workers by the end of September to run the coffee shop.

## Summary Table

Area   2025 Update Highlights
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Construction Training   Hands-on projects, life skills, empowerment, community impact
Reentry Housing & Program   Stable housing, wraparound services, holistic support, spiritual growth
Participant Outcomes   Increased agency, skill development, restored lives and neighborhoods

In summary, so far 2025 has been a year of growth and renewed impact for the Bridge to Freedom construction training and reentry housing programs, marked by active community engagement, skill-building, and the restoration of hope and purpose for participants. God Bless,

Dr. Mica V. Battle

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