Cleveland, OH — Today, Olivet Housing and Community Development Corporation (OHCDC) announced it’s working with Google to provide digital skills programs to advance economic opportunity for people impacted by incarceration. In June, Google shared its investing $4 million toward a new fund that aims to expand its justice reform work. Over 500 nonprofit organizations across the country applied to receive support from the fund, and the OHCDC is one of the recipients selected by Google based on its history of helping people who have been impacted by incarceration receive training, career resources, and job placement support.

More than 600,000 Americans leave incarceration each year and face higher jobless rates than the U.S. average. The lack of technology in prison creates further barriers to employment, as digital skills are increasingly essential in the current job market. The OHCDC will use the new funding to integrate Google’s digital skills curriculum into its existing programming, with the goal of helping people impacted by incarceration learn skills for today’s jobs. The OHCDC will conduct a series of digital skills and job readiness training classes and workshops for individuals pending release, after release, currently on probation or parole, and their family members who are justice-impacted to help them create resumes, conduct online job searches, and to complete daily tasks online. We will also host trainings related to financial literacy, business ownership/management, and professional development to help our target audience become better equipped to enter and be successful in the workforce. Trainings will be hosted in person at the OHCDC Community Access Center and at community partner organizations. We will also offer virtual and hybrid trainings.

“As we all know, our community possesses a significant number of justice-impacted individuals ranging in age from 16 and above,” said Rev. Dr. Jawanza K. Colvin, Senior Pastor/Board Chair, Olivet Institutional Baptist Church/OHCDC. “Therefore, our goal is to provide these men and women with access to our free digital skills, job readiness, and workforce development training programs to help them successfully reenter into society, reduce their recidivism rate, and become gainfully employed with a living wage. So, we’re excited to host these training sessions and collaborate with our wonderful community partners to play our part in decreasing the digital divide and removing the employment barriers that justice-impacted communities face daily.”

“As we work to create a more inclusive economy, we’re committed to helping people impacted by incarceration access training for today’s jobs,” said Tia McLaurin, Senior Manager, Grow with Google.
“We’re proud to work with outstanding partners to ensure more people can qualify for great jobs and create a new beginning for themselves and their families.”

The selected organizations will use Google digital skills curriculum that was co-curated with five nonprofits — The Last Mile, Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), Defy Ventures, Fortune Society and The Ladies of Hope Ministries. The program’s training includes five learning paths that Google developed in collaboration with nonprofit partners: (1) Getting Started with the Basics, (2) Job Search, (3) Job Readiness, (4) Online Safety, and (5) “Next Step” Job Readiness Skills. Lessons vary from fundamental digital skills such as how to apply for jobs online and create a resumé, to more advanced topics including entrepreneurship and business budgeting. Partners will integrate this curriculum into their existing programs to help people develop skills that will help them get a job or start a business.

Since launching in April 2021, Grow with Google’s program has helped more than 10,000 people impacted by incarceration obtain digital skills. Out of participants surveyed, 85% said that they felt more prepared for their future, and over 75% reported they had a job or were enrolled as a student by the end of the program. To date, Google has given over $48 million in Google.org grants and committed 50,000 pro bono hours to advance criminal justice reform. Learn more about how Google is expanding access to digital skills training to support individuals who were formerly incarcerated at grow.google/justice-impacted.

About Olivet Housing and Community Development Corporation
Our vision is to enhance the health, education, economic stability, and holistic well-being of the community. We believe that everyone, regardless of their past or socioeconomic status, deserves the chance to shape a stronger future for themselves, their family, and their communities. Therefore, with the help of our partner organizations, we provide access to adult education, job readiness training programs, and access to various supportive services to help manage everyday life and tasks for individuals who are pending release, formerly incarcerated, and justice-impacted and for their families.

To learn more about the OHCDC and our available programming and services, visit olivetcdc.org.

About Grow with Google
Grow with Google was started in 2017 to help Americans grow their skills, careers and businesses. It provides training, tools and expertise to help small business owners, veterans and military families, jobseekers and students, educators, startups and developers. Since Grow with Google’s inception, it has helped more than nine million Americans develop new skills. Grow with Google has a network of more than 8,500 partner organizations like libraries, schools, small business development centers, chambers of commerce and nonprofits to help people coast-to-coast.