

Annual Report on Poverty Reduction

City Council Informal Meeting
Mayor Danny Avula

October 14, 2025



OFFICE OF
**COMMUNITY
WEALTH BUILDING**

Poverty Reduction Goals

Goal 1: Reduce the number of people living in poverty in the city by 40% by 2030.

Goal 2: Reduce the number of children in the city living in poverty by 50% by 2030

Goal 3: Decrease the City's poverty rate to < 15%

Where We Were 10 Years Ago

2015

Number of people
living in poverty:

51,828

Number of children
living in poverty:

15,303

Poverty rate:

25.5%

Where We Stand Today

2015

Number of people living in poverty:
51,828

Number of children living in poverty:
15,303

Poverty rate:
25.5%

2023

Number of people living in poverty:
40,994

Number of children living in poverty:
11,109

Poverty rate:
18.8%

20.9% decrease

27.4% decrease



POLICY

How One City Cut Its Poverty Rate By More Than a Third

Over the past decade, Richmond, Va., has managed to cut its poverty rate by 36 percent. Many things broke right for the city, but a pair of mayors stuck with a longterm plan to make it happen.

Winter 2025 • Christopher Swope



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IN BRIEF

How Richmond, VA is cutting poverty

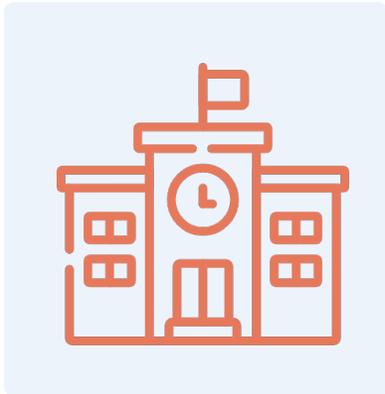
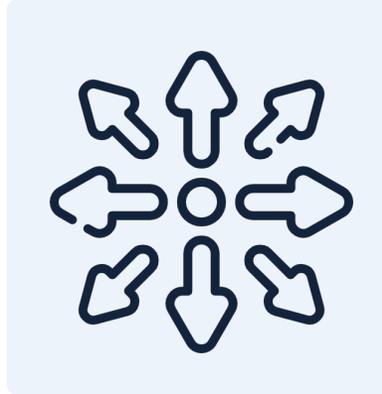
IDEAS WE SHOULD STEAL

"ONE CITY" TO CUT POVERTY

In 2011, Richmond, VA's mayor set an ambitious citywide goal to reduce its dismal poverty rate. Two successors later, the city is showing remarkable success. Can Philly do the same?

BY **COURTNEY DUCHENE** SEP. 05, 2025

How Did We Get Here?



OCWB's Contributions

Since 2014, OCWB programs have been responsible for:

- 2,420 job placements
- Average wages of placements:
 - \$9.95 in FY16
 - \$19.46 in FY25
- 110 individuals supported to receive high school diploma through alternative education
- 379 participants at Richmond Adult Technical Center
- 1,119 individuals trained through the Community College Workforce Alliance



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Program Snapshot

Youth Works RVA

(formerly known as Mayor's Youth Academy)

- **2,160** summer work experiences for young people in Richmond since **2019**
- **703** youth served this summer – the largest in the program's history.
- In **2024**, won a national award for "**Program of the Year**" from the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals

	Richmond	U.S.
2015	12.0% <i>(1,442 youth)</i>	7.6%
2023	5.3% <i>(638 youth)</i>	6.8%

Number and percent of "Opportunity Youth" in Richmond City and U.S. Residents ages 16-19, not in school nor employed.

Participant Story

Davion Washington began her service in 2020 with Youth Engagement Services. She was also a dedicated member of Youth Empowerment, OCWB's youth civic leadership cohort, where she worked on issues of gun violence and was recognized by her peers as a Youth Navigator. Davion later interned with the Mayor's Office and was a featured speaker at the Office of Community Wealth Building's 10th Anniversary celebration. A proud graduate of Richmond Public Schools, Davion also participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program. She received a full scholarship to Howard University, where she is pursuing a pre-med track. Davion is expected to graduate with a bachelor's degree in biology and has her sights set on a promising future in medicine.



OCWB's Programs

Career Services & Business Solutions

Helps Richmond residents get living-wage careers by providing training, removing barriers, and offering 1:1 and small group job supports

Youth Works RVA (formerly Mayor's Youth Academy)

Provides paid summer jobs for youth that help them develop their career aspirations

Youth Engagement Services: Forward

Serves "opportunity youth" (age 18-24, neither employed nor in school), placing them in apprenticeships and developing their soft skills

Youth Councils

Assists Richmond high school students develop their leadership skills

AmeriCorps: RVA Health Corps & RHOPES

Places service members to work in community health, addiction recovery, and environmental remediation, leading to career paths

Wealth Building

Provides resources that help people manage their money and credit. Helps people start nonprofits & business (with OMBD)

Richmond Resilience Initiative

Provides \$500 / month for 2 years to families that make too much money to receive public benefits but too little money to make ends meet.

Social Impact

Leads time-limited projects based on requests received from communities that lack wealth

OCWB's FY25 Outcomes

Career Services & Business Solutions

OCWB placed 90 individuals into new jobs. The average wages of the job placements was \$19.46.

Youth Works RVA (formerly Mayor's Youth Academy)

703 participants worked 85,094 hours at 114 total partner employers, earning \$1,106,225 in wages. 65% of employers would hire their intern.

Youth Engagement Services: Forward

Supported 64 opportunity youth; 19 transitioned into further employment or training.

Youth Councils

62 students served, 38 graduates. Students reported 4.7/5 post-program on their confidence in "advocating for your causes and/or concerns".

AmeriCorps: RVA Health Corps & RHOPES

39 corps members served at 17 partner agencies. 19,846 encounters for health services; 7,120 encounters for chronic condition management

Wealth Building

Financial empowerment: 123 ppl.
Homeownership education: 262 ppl.
Entrepreneurship class: 20 ppl.

Richmond Resilience Initiative

Negotiated contract to serve 42 new families. Secured \$60,300 in matching funds.

Social Impact

394 residents engaged at their doors. Participated in 45 community events. Created 19 temporary jobs & placed 14 people into full-time employment.

The Future

Richmond is Changing

GROWING POPULATION



CHANGES IN LABOR MARKET



INCREASING HOUSING COST



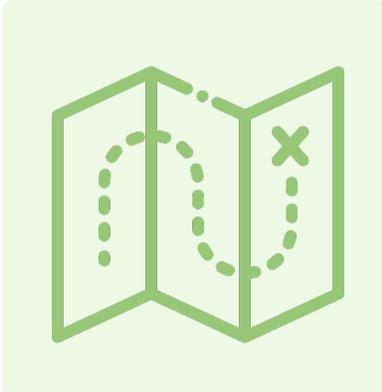
CHANGES IN FEDERAL FUNDING



CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS



The Path Forward



Systems Change

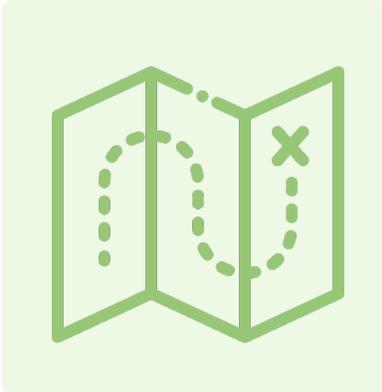
Comprehensive Policy Audit

Example: Zoning for economic inclusion and reduced displacement

Example: Community voice in city processes

Example: Procurement policies that support community re-investment

The Path Forward



Building Community Wealth As A City-wide Effort

Human Services			Economic & Community Dev.		Other City
Office of Community Wealth Building	Department of Neighborhood and Community Svcs	Richmond Public Library	Department of Economic Development; EDA	Dept of Housing & Community Development	Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility
Department of Justice Services		Dept of Parks, Recreation, & Community Fac.	Office of Minority Business Development	Office of Sustainability	Police Department
Office of Gun Violence Prevention	Department of Social Services				Office of the City Treasurer
Non-Departmental Programs					
Family Crisis Fund	Eviction Diversion Fund	Help1RVA	Health Equity Trust Fund	(Individual non-departmental grants)	
Right to Counsel	Positive Youth Development	Early Childhood Trust Fund	Trauma Healing Response Network		

Coordination

City departments
hosting
apprenticeships

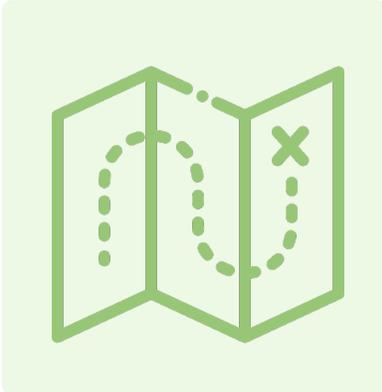
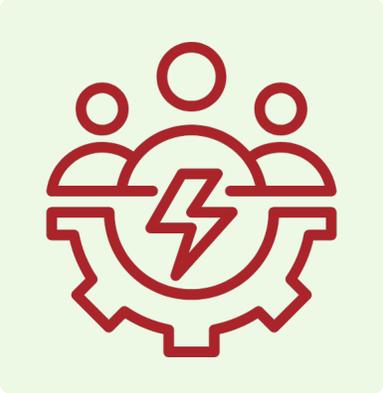
Inter-agency teams on
community wealth
building strategies

Shared data for action

External collaboration on
economic mobility
(*e.g. RVA Rising*)



The Path Forward



Programs

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>OCWB staff cultivate summer job placements; provide full or partial wages; recruit, select and pair youth into specific job placements; and provide coaching and oversight during the summer</p>	<p>Youth have a meaningful summer work experience that provides wages and prepares them for a job</p>	<p>Youth develop a clearer plan for their post-graduation pathway and become more employable</p>	<p>Youth pursue living-wage careers aligned with their interests and skills</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of employer partners • Number of job placements identified • Number of youth applications received • Measures of whether youth who apply are representative of RPS (demographics, geography, race, high school, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Output: Number of youth who are paid during the summer • Program attrition and completion • Total hours worked and wages paid to youth (by City and by employers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Outcome: Number of employers who say they would hire their intern • Youth pre vs post self-report re: whether they have a clearer sense of their career plan • Stories from youth and employer participants 	<p># of opportunity youth in City (Census) KPI 3D2 from Mayor's Action Plan</p>



CONSTRUCTION CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

West Virginia Appalachian Laborers' District Council

LiUNA!



LiUNA!
MID-ATLANTIC REGION



Our Commitment to Richmond



MISSION.
VISION.
PILLARS.



Questions?



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