

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DCH Receives \$20,000 Comenity Bank Grant to Support Branches to Chances: A Return to Work Program

Wilmington, DE – At the end of June, Comenity Bank awarded DCH \$20,000 to support the ongoing operation and program expansion of our Branches to Chances: A Return to Work Program. Through direct services, Branches to Chances hires and trains unemployed and underemployed individuals, including veterans and recently released non-violent offenders, for entry-level positions in the landscaping and horticulture industries.

Teaching solid landscaping and horticultural skills that translate to employment in the field, the 11-week program exposes trainees to all four of our primary program areas: Community Forestry, Urban Agriculture, Public Landscapes, and Education. The curriculum combines classroom-based sessions, hands-on skills development, and character-building experiences supervised by industry experts. Trainees are matched up with local employers and program partners to continue their training as employees. Upon successful completion of the program, trainees have knowledge, skills, and experience in job readiness, horticulture, and life skills. The 2017 program graduated six trainees, and each finished the program with employment in the industry.

Support through Comenity Bank will help the program develop new tracks for secondary and post-secondary education and entrepreneurial and small business empowerment, in addition to enhanced job placement and employment. The Comenity Bank award will supplement existing funding provided through the State of Delaware's Criminal Justice Council.