



JANUARY 2024

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A NOTE FROM BWI

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Shawn,

I hope this update finds you well and that you enjoy the exciting updates we have to share!

2024 has started off strong for BWI, with all eight of our programs launching new training cycles in January and February.

In this newsletter, we share an update about our program expansion **of Red Hook on the Road**, look at **an exciting Brooklyn Woods training cycle**, experience **AfroTech 2023** through the lens of some of BWI's staff, and **meet KindWork graduate Amanda**.

Over the next few months, the BWI team will also be planning our **annual spring event set for Thursday, June 13th**. Be on the lookout for our Save the Date email and mark your calendars for an evening of celebrating some of BWI's Heroes and Innovators.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Shiffman', written in a cursive style.

Aaron Shiffman
Executive Director

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

Celebrating Amanda

Amanda was working in retail and taking college classes, but was worried about the debt she would incur. Her job was not well paying and her family couldn't help her with tuition. When friends told her about **BWI's KindWork Customer Experience Fellowship**, she took another look at her options. The program, designed to train young adults for customer support roles in tech, offered a more accessible path to building a strong career. While in training, Amanda learned new software and developed her communications skills, preparing for her future career.



Not only did she secure an exciting position in tech, she landed the job offer a week before she graduated from the program. ***"The difference is the personalized coaching. KindWork provided me with mentorship and prepared me to launch a life changing career."***

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Red Hook on the Road Expands to The Bronx!

In 2023, BWI expanded bridge programming for its Red Hook on the Road program in the Bronx. **This expansion marks our first physical program presence in this historically underserved borough.** Activities include in-person permit preparation sessions and virtual CDL classroom instruction for Bronx residents. The first training took place in October, with additional monthly sessions planned through the Spring of 2024. BWI is excited to bring its CDL training program closer to jobseekers in the Bronx.



BREAKING IT DOWN

Brooklyn Woods Reentry Training Cycle

BWI has a history of **servicing jobseekers impacted by the criminal justice system** and we recognize the unique challenges that come with entering the workforce after incarceration. In response, this winter Brooklyn Woods **offered a specialized training program, in partnership with the Port Authority of NY and NJ**. Open only to formerly incarcerated individuals, participants engaged in a combination of paid skills training and on-the-job experience in order to produce **12 custom built, outdoor wooden benches for installation at the Oculus, located at the One World Trade**. Program participants will also receive job placement assistance and ongoing support after graduation.

Installation began today with the placement of four of the benches! The remaining eight will be put in place over the next month.



BWI Goes to AFROTECH 2023

Three BWI staff attended **AFROTECH** for the first time last year, representing the organization at the most prominent tech convention for Black professionals in the U.S. Tasia, BWI's Database and Evaluation Coordinator, and Shay and Sam from BWI's tech training fellowship, KindWork, enjoyed networking and sharing knowledge with over 20,000 other Black tech professionals.

"The power of black excellence was on full display," says Sam Pink, KindWork's Lead Instructor. "We attended sessions, did some interviews for other organizations and spread the word about BWI and KindWork."



Tasia, Shay and Sam arrive at AFROTECH!



Sam gives an interview outside the convention.

Follow us on social media to get the most up to date information on our programming!



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