

OPERATION NEW HOPE

Rebuilding Lives.

Restoring Communities.

Renewing Hope.

1999 – Founded to address poverty, crime, homelessness, property disrepair, and drug addiction in the Historic Springfield Neighborhood in Jacksonville, Florida and successfully brought together a community once lost to blight and neglect

2003 – Our success caught the attention of President Bush and he selected Operation New Hope as the pilot site for Ready4Work – a reentry program designed to providing training and support to people returning from incarceration in order to match them with living-wage wage

2007 – Cited by President Bill Clinton the book "Giving: How Each of Us Can Change the World"

2008 - Invited by President Bush to the White House to witness the signing of the "Second Chance Act"

2008- Collaborated with City Councilman Kevin Hyde to introduce one of the nation's first pieces of legislation that officially began the "Ban the Box" movement that is now across the country.

2014- Launched our first Ready4Work replication in Tampa. R4WHillsborough

2015 - Operation Reform, a national summit on criminal justice reform & reentry hosted with CNN's Van Jones

2016 – CEO Kevin Gay received the Medal of Honor Award from Florida's Bar Foundation, highest honor for non-lawyer

2016 – Instrumental in development of Project Open Door – Jax Chamber's Ban-the-Box initiative to encourage employers to delay criminal background inquiries to the interview process which encouraged other cities around the nation to implement more equal hiring practices for people with a criminal history. It was also one of the firsts, as a chamber that officially endorsed the Ban the Box ideals.

2018 - Invited to the White House on two occasions to discuss reentry and criminal justice reform, including White House Summit on Prisoner reentry

2018 - Worked with legislators to advance the First Step Act – a bill credited as having the potential for the most far-reaching overhaul of the criminal justice system – later signed into law by President Trump. The success of the federal First Step Act, along with additional advocacy from Operation New Hope, paved the way for the passing of the Florida First Step Act, reforming the state's prison and justice systems.

2018 – Visited by Secretary of HUD Ben Carson who said Ready4Work is "the best reentry program seen in all travels around the country"

2019 - Internationally, we have been recognized by the House of Mandela as a model re-entry program for the world. Kevin Gay received the first Nelson Mandela Freedom Award from the Mandela Family.

2019 - Hosted a roundtable discussion regarding jobs, the economy, and reentry that was attended by Vice President Mike Pence, Ivanka Trump, Governor Ron DeSantis and state representatives. Vice President Pence remarked that Ready4Work is a "model program not only in Florida but for the United States." Governor DeSantis added, "When you compare Ready4Work's recidivism rate to the State's overall, it's about 1/3 of what it would be absent this program. That's the type of metrics we want to support."

2020 – Opened Ready4Work program in St. Johns County and formalized Ready4Release program being delivered to 17 prisons across the State