

NEWS RELEASE

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Creating Pathways to Life Sciences Careers: Massachusetts Life Sciences Center and Life Science Cares announce funding to support workforce training programs

Greater Boston non-profits Just-A-Start, The Possible Project, and Year Up receive \$5k each through Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, Life Science Cares partnership

Waltham, MA March 29, 2018 - The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) and Life Science Cares announced today \$15,000 in funding to be provided to three non-profits to support their respective programs which train young adults and adults for careers in the life sciences industry. The non-profits Just-A-Start, The Possible Project (TPP), and Year Up will each receive \$5,000 to further support their workforce training initiatives.

"A central piece of our mission is developing a workforce ready to fill key life science jobs in the region," said MLSC President & CEO Travis McCready. "No one entity is responsible for the healthy state of our economy. I applaud the work of these non-profits for their dedication to our collective commitment to creating opportunities for people to contribute to and benefit from our world class ecosystem."

The path to economic opportunity in life sciences has not always been well defined for youth who find multiple barriers to entry. The life sciences ecosystem has grown significantly in Massachusetts, which is home to world-renowned academic and research institutions. Going forward in the future, the MLSC and its partners are committed to developing and maintaining a deliberate, coordinated, and outcomes-driven approach to ensure that Massachusetts students are prepared for career success in this vibrant industry.

"The education and training programs run by Just-A-Start, The Possible Project and Year Up are building a bridge to close the opportunity gap for men and women without access or means to earn higher education," said Life Science Cares Executive Director Sarah MacDonald. "We are thrilled to support their efforts, which help ensure the life science industry and others will have a strong workforce for years to come."

[Just-A-Start's Biomedical Careers Program](#) was launched in 1992 to prepare local low- to moderate-income adults for careers in the biotechnology, life sciences, and medical research industries, and supply local employers with work-ready, diverse employees. This free, nine-month program provides instruction in biology, chemistry, medical terminology, and computer and laboratory skills. The laboratory training is done in partnership with Bunker Hill Community College. In the program, students also receive job readiness training such as preparing a resume, interviewing, and job search, and are introduced to industry professionals through career talks and employer site visits. After graduation, students receive follow up services for up to one year, until they are placed in relevant employment.

"Leadership of the private sector is essential for the development of sustainable careers for low income and immigrant communities. Just-A-Start has been a proud leader in workforce development and job training in and around Cambridge for the past 50 years," according to Deborah Ruhe, Executive Director of Just-A-Start Corporation. "Our Biomedical Careers Program is a shining example of our legacy. We are thrilled to have the support of Life Science Cares and the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center to expand that legacy for our students."

[The Possible Project \(TPP\)](#) was founded in 2010 by entrepreneurs Mark and Becky Levin to address growing youth

unemployment and diminishing opportunities for low income youth to engage in careers that enable self-sufficiency. TPP is inspired by the belief that with an entrepreneurial spirit, all students can realize their full potential. TPP uses entrepreneurship as a vehicle for students to develop social/emotional and job-readiness skills such as teamwork, critical thinking and professionalism additionally; each student acquires practical, technical skills necessary to compete in the knowledge economy. Students enroll in TPP for three years and progress through six levels. Throughout the program, students start planning their college and careers through the Pathways component.

"On behalf of the students, staff and Board, Mark and I thank Life Science Cares and the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center for this generous grant and even more so for their leadership and commitment to the sector," said Becky Levin, Executive Director of The Possible Project.

[Year Up Greater Boston](#) Year Up Greater Boston delivers a rigorous 12-month employment-training program, which combines hands-on technical and professional skill development, stipends, professional internships, and wraparound services. Its students are prepared for entry-level roles at Boston's leading employers, as well as the pursuit of continued higher education. Students earn college credits at Year Up's college-based location and college credit recommendations at the organization's employer-based and downtown locations. Since inception, the program has served 4,000 students. According to Year Up, within four months of graduation, at least 88 percent of students are employed earning an average wage of \$18.00/hour and/or enrolled in postsecondary education.

"At Year Up Greater Boston, our students are jumpstarting their careers while bridging the skills gap for employers across the city," said Bob Dame, Year Up Greater Boston Executive Director. "With support from Massachusetts Life Sciences Center and Life Science Cares, we'll be able to reach more talented and motivated local youth in need of an opportunity—and more companies in need of skilled, motivated talent."

More about the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is an economic development investment agency dedicated to supporting the growth and development of the life sciences in Massachusetts, home to the most verdant and productive life sciences ecosystem in the world. Through public-private funding initiatives, the MLSC supports innovation, research & development, commercialization, and manufacturing activities in the fields of biopharma, medical device, diagnostics, and digital health. Since its creation in 2007, the MLSC has strategically deployed over \$700 million in Massachusetts, through a combination of grants, loans, capital infrastructure investments, tax incentives, and workforce programs. These investments have created thousands of jobs, and propelled the development of new therapies, devices, and scientific advancements that are improving patient health and well-being in Massachusetts and beyond.

More about Life Science Cares

Life Science Cares organization is a collective effort of the Life Science industry to eliminate the impact of poverty on our neighbors in the greater Boston area. Through uniting the human and financial resources of Life Science companies and industry leaders, we support service organizations that do the best work in fighting poverty in our community. Life Science Cares selects investment partners based on a proven track record of success in providing effective and efficient service to people who are impacted by poverty in the greater Boston area.

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