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NEWS

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ICJIA Celebrates Inaugural Institute to Innovate (i2i) Graduation

i2i capacity-building hub for grassroots organizations increases funding eligibility, equitability, and access to address community violence prevention

CHICAGO—The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority today celebrated the first graduates of the Institute to Innovate (i2i), a new capacity-building hub offering 18 months of technical assistance to small community-based and grassroots organizations committed to preventing violence in their communities.

“As Governor of this great state, there is nothing more important to me than keeping Illinoisans safe—and that means investing in the community-based, violence prevention organizations that are doing critical on-the-ground work,” said **Governor JB Pritzker**. “Today, I couldn’t be prouder to applaud the inaugural class of the i2i program—representatives from nine grassroots organizations up and down the state. Graduates: congratulations on this major accomplishment and thank you for your commitment to the safety, health, and wellbeing of Illinoisans everywhere.”

i2i serves organizations seeking violence prevention and Restore, Reinvest, Renew (R3) program grant funding. Eligible participants are not-for-profit, school-based, and other governmental entities that have applied for but haven’t been awarded ICJIA grants. Additionally, grantees who have obtained funding and are experiencing capacity constraints can apply.

“The first-ever graduates of the i2i program have gained the tools to take us further in this work and Illinois is proud to uplift these organizations for the crucial work they do every day. It is up to all of us to play our roles in building safe communities,” said **Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “Today is a testament to how far we can go in repairing the harm and building a brighter future together.”

Graduates include representatives of nine Chicago-based grassroots organizations. These organizations are eligible for and prepared to manage grant-funded violence prevention programs that meet their communities' unique needs.

“Today is a momentous occasion. We are extremely proud of the graduates representing ICJIA’s inaugural Institute to Innovate (i2i) cohort,” said **ICJIA Executive Director Delrice Adams**. “Equity, fairness, and opportunity are central to ICJIA’s work. The i2i program provides under-resourced community-based organizations the training and tools to apply for funding to build programs that address community needs.”

The i2i curriculum includes training on nonprofit management, program development, board development, fiscal accountability, staff support and management, trauma-informed practices, and more. With this curriculum, i2i capacity-building coaches train organizations to strengthen infrastructure, increase sustainability, and address capacity needs. While local organizations are in the best position to identify and address the needs of their communities, many need to be equipped to manage a state grant or meet their program goals.

i2i serves promising, emerging, and current grantee organizations. These include organizations with promising violence intervention programs, limited organizational capacity, and budgets of less than \$2 million are eligible; organizations with emerging violence prevention and intervention programs, limited organizational capacity, and budgets of less than \$750,000; and ICJIA violence prevention and R3 partner organizations that have obtained grants and are experiencing capacity constraints.

i2i participants’ commitment to the shared goal of minimizing violence and improving lives and their valuable contributions to the community make them an integral part of this celebration. Their commitment will inspire others to continue making positive changes in the communities they serve.

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