

EDWINS

LEADERSHIP & RESTAURANT
Institute

Changing the face of reentry in Cleveland and beyond.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

DEAR FRIENDS,

Cleveland is at the center of everything we do at EDWINS. Our small but mighty team transforms our city by providing hope and a path to better lives for returning citizens. We have become an anchor of the Buckeye-Shaker neighborhood with our restaurants, residential buildings, garden, playground, and investments in our community. Our graduates revamp the culinary industry after they receive elite training and rebuild their lives with the care of our wraparound support. This year, we piloted our Pathways to Ownership accelerator. This program helps minority business owners launch their culinary ventures with our guidance and forgivable loans to invest in their operations. But we can always do more!

That's why we deepen our work on a national level. EDWINS has revolutionized reentry education in the United States becoming the #1 educator in prisons! Through virtual lessons delivered via tablets, EDWINS offers a proven, comprehensive curriculum to incarcerated individuals, mirroring the coursework from our flagship program in Cleveland. With over 300 participants completing the program each day, EDWINS provides hope and career pathways to reduce recidivism. This is exemplified by our in-person program's 1.4% recidivism rate.

Our work has already begun with our virtual graduates as hundreds contact our National Reentry Coordinator weekly.



Continue

Upon completing our curriculum, participants receive:

- Personalized Roadmap to Reentry plans that connect them to local, state, and national resources, including housing, employment, and community support.
- Access to culinary career opportunities through our extensive network of employers in the hospitality industry.
- Follow-up and reentry support from our case management team specific to each individual.

Our roots will always be in Cleveland and while our reach grows on the national level, we remain a committed group of individuals dedicated to providing second chances. The work of our team combined with your support can help us to take on the challenge of preventing reentry both locally and nationally.



Eat Well. Do Good.

Brandon Edwin Chrostowski

Founder, President and CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "B. Chrostowski". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

WHO WE ARE

EDWINS is a tuition-free, six-month program certified by the Ohio State Board of Career Colleges and hospitality industry



while receiving the wraparound support necessary for successful reentry. The 900-hour program includes both classroom and experiential learning in culinary arts and hospitality. Students put what they learn in the classroom to the test working in EDWINS Restaurant-- a fine-dining establishment specializing in French cuisine. Additionally, students are eligible to take the Wine & Spirit Education Trust Level 1 and the American Culinary Federation Certification tests and can take both free of cost. Students also gain experience in bakery and butcher settings as well as at catered events. This provides our students with a more robust and personalized skill set, allowing them to seek a myriad of positions upon graduation.

We offer individualized case management and provide free housing, childcare, and counseling to help with successful reentry. We also assist in many aspects of life from help gaining access to medical care or procurement of valid IDs to finding free legal counsel, applying for government services, and more. All of this not only prevents our graduates from returning to prison but provides them and their families with a higher quality of life.

OUR STUDENTS



"EDWINS has been a life-changing experience. In the dining room, I have learned how to pair a variety of different wines and to take orders properly. In the back of the house, so far I've learned how to make sauces and seafood. I plan on continuing my culinary journey and solidifying my ability to run a successful business."

~Javan

"At EDWINS, I found more than just a culinary education, I found a purpose. The program has helped me develop my personal and professional communication skills. I plan on using what I've learned in the program to open my own soul food restaurant. EDWINS has given me an opportunity to leave a legacy for my family."

~Adrianna



OUR STUDENTS



"EDWINS has taught me that you need to be consistent in the kitchen. I've realized that after the program, I want to continue to be part of EDWINS and utilize the skills I've learned within the organization. My favorite part of the program so far is being in the back of the kitchen. While the kitchen can be stressful, we always have fun."

~Hailey

"EDWINS has inspired me to become a better person. I've learned a lot about baking, and various other skills. I can use the skills I have learned in the program to open up my own family-style restaurant."

~Alexander



OUR STUDENTS



"EDWINS is a second chance. Being here is motivational because every student has different backgrounds and experiences, but we all get an opportunity to have a second chance. EDWINS has impacted every aspect of my life. I plan on taking the curriculum that I'm learning and applying it when I eventually open up my own restaurant and bakery."

~Akia

"EDWINS is an opportunity to bring family together. The program has impacted me in a variety of ways but specifically, it has allowed me to see the beauty in all people. My favorite part so far has been working in the bakery. My goal is to own a bakery that provides baked goods that are created with health-conscious ingredients."

~Arlon



EDWINS ACCELERATOR



Our focus at EDWINS has always been on reimagining culinary education and providing opportunities for those often overlooked. We are excited to share our expertise with potential restaurant owners to revamp Cleveland’s culinary scene through our Pathways to Ownership Accelerator. In partnership with the Browns, this incubator aims to boost restaurant ownership among BIPOC people across Northeast Ohio. The restaurant industry has been proven as a way for minority business owners to succeed. According to data from the National Restaurant Association, minorities own 21% of restaurants in Ohio and just 14% of all businesses in the private sector. Only 8% of Ohio’s restaurants have black owners, compared to Ohio’s black population being around 13%.

The accelerator completed its first cohort in 2024 as 25 participants received instruction from culinary leaders with over 150 years of experience combined. Participants pitched their concepts to industry experts, and five winners received consulting services and seed money in the form of a forgivable loan. EDWINS looks forward to hosting more cohorts for entrepreneurs in 2025 and beyond!

RESULTS

620+

Alumni to date

95%

Employment rate 30
days after graduation

<2%

Recidivism rate
for our graduates.

11

Years of teaching an
in-demand trade in the
culinary arts.

NATIONAL RESULTS

46

States in which our prison tablet education program is available.

1.38M

Courses completed by incarcerated individuals, nationwide.

767K

Hours of learning completed by incarcerated individuals.

110

Incarcerated individuals assisted since August in developing a Post Release Life Plan.

EAT WELL.

DO GOOD.

CONTACT US



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