Nonprofit career development agency to open new location in Birmingham

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A nonprofit specializing in career development and job training will open a facility in Birmingham later this year.

Strive Birmingham has launched, and classes will begin in the winter.

“Strive's expansion to Birmingham builds upon our deep history of partnerships in cities across the country,” said Strive President and CEO Phil Weinberg. “Together with local partners, we see incredible opportunity for Strive to support the city’s efforts to build an inclusive economy with access to good careers for all residents. We are ready to get to work.”

With the new site in Birmingham, the company increased its national presence to 13 cities. While local partners run programs in
10 of those cities, three are the nonprofit itself. Those locations include New York, Atlanta and now Birmingham.

Locations serve an average of 2,000 students annually. Strive hopes to serve at least 125 new students a year in Birmingham.

"Strive brings to Birmingham over three decades of experience putting citizens on the path to meaningful and lasting employment," said Jared Weinstein, founder of the Overton Project, a social impact investment entity focused on Birmingham. "Strive is a win for both local employers and those in Birmingham looking for a new path forward. I'm excited about the long-term impact and long-lasting partnership between Birmingham and Strive."

Two entities — the Alabama Power Foundation and the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham — supported the launch of Strive Birmingham with investments. The amount was not disclosed.

“We know that Strive has a track record of success in communities across the country,” said Houston Smith, Alabama Power vice president of governmental affairs. “After meeting with Strive leadership earlier this year, we felt confident that their programs would make a difference in our community. We are proud to be among the first to support Strive Birmingham.”

The nonprofit plans to use its five-pillar model of job training and wraparound services to help to address the economic inequality crisis in Alabama. Its services will specifically target communities of color. The program beginning this winter includes a combination of curricula, job readiness training and occupational skills training. The initial pilot program will offer an on-ramp to careers in health care.

Strive said in a release anticipates an 80% program graduation rate, an 80% certifications rate, and a 70% job placement rate.

“Strive Birmingham could not be arriving at a more opportune time,” says Mayor of Birmingham Randall Woodfin. "The pandemic has displaced thousands of local workers, which has further stressed our economy. We need to generate a forward-thinking talent development system that offers multiple entry points to
good jobs with upward mobility so Birmingham families can build their generational wealth."

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