



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 26, 2022

L&I Secretary Commends YWCA Lancaster, PA Women Work for Empowering Women in the Workforce Through New Choices Career Development Program

Lancaster, PA – Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Secretary Jennifer Berrier today joined community leaders at the YWCA Lancaster for a tour of their newly renovated facility and a roundtable discussion, where she highlighted the YWCA Lancaster New Choices Career Development program. New Choices, funded by the Pennsylvania Women Work organization through L&I's New Choices New Options grant, is a program that offers opportunities for Pennsylvanians, to achieve economic self-sufficiency through personal development, career guidance and job training.

"By empowering individuals with job search and interview skills, opportunities to build their confidence and support to achieve professional goals, New Choices programs are helping Pennsylvanians negotiating the labor market to find lasting employment that pays a family-sustaining wage and improves their overall quality of life," said Secretary Berrier. "This critical program would not be possible without the perseverance of the Pennsylvania Women Work organization and organizations like the YWCA Lancaster who offer the New Choices program."

New Choices Career Development Program

The New Choices Career Development programs are available throughout Pennsylvania and designed to help single parents, Pennsylvanians just entering or reentering the workforce and individuals going through life transitions by giving them skills, resources and other knowledge they need to stand out to potential employers. The New Choices program is open to any Pennsylvania resident and is specifically geared towards individuals entering the labor market over the age of 18.

The New Choices program classes cover topics such as:

- Career assessment
- Career counseling
- Résumé preparation
- Interview instruction and practice
- Skills identification
- Referrals and connections to community resources
- Exploration of education and training resources
- Salary negotiation

Lancaster YWCA New Choices Career Development Program

Founded in 1985 through a collaborative effort by the YWCA Lancaster, the Junior League of Lancaster and the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center, the YWCA Lancaster New Choices program has assisted individuals in Lancaster, York and Chester counties for more

than 30 years and has assisted thousands of women to find economic and emotional independence.

“Our mission of eliminating racism and empowering women is more important than ever, as the pandemic did not affect all people equally. For all women in our community to be able to thrive, we need vital programs like New Choices to support our community members in transition, re-entering the workforce, or seeking new opportunities,” said YWCA Lancaster Chief Executive Officer Stacie Blake. “We’re proud to have the support of Secretary Berrier, as well as so many important community partners who help make this work possible.”

For more information and how to register, please visit the [YWCA Lancaster New Choices program website](#).

Pennsylvania Women Work

With funding from L&I’s New Choices New Options grant, Pennsylvania Women Work helps economically disadvantaged adults pursue family-sustaining careers through employment and/or continued education. They accomplish this by enhancing a participant’s work readiness through career skills development, while reducing a participant’s personal barriers to obtaining and retaining employment.

Since its founding, Pennsylvania Women Work has helped more than 70,000 women in career transition overcome the economic, educational and emotional obstacles to achieving meaningful employment. Currently, Pennsylvania Women Work supports 13 New Choices sites, offering classes to residents in 48 counties across the commonwealth. In fiscal year 2021-22, Pennsylvania Women Work supported 1,300 clients and has historically maintained an 82% placement rate into jobs, trainings and educational opportunities.

“Through group workshops and one-on-one career coaching, New Choices provides life-changing support to job-seekers across the state. For three decades, PA Women Work has joined other Pennsylvania organizations to provide this critical career-building service that leads to family-sustaining employment and careers where our clients can grow and thrive,” said PA Women Work Executive Director Kristin Ioannou.

For more information on programs and services, visit [Pennsylvania Women Work](#).

MEDIA CONTACT: Trevor Monk, dlipress@pa.gov

###