

# FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER

## CLIENT PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – FRANK MIKE

Some things in life are serendipitous. For Frank Mike, overhearing a conversation between two strangers literally changed the trajectory of his life.

He exclaims, “Information is power. And if I hadn’t heard them talking about the Fountain Fund, who knows where I would be right now.”

Frank works long days on the Mississippi River, but he also dreamed of starting his own lawn care service for additional income. After several conversations with the Fountain Fund, he was approved for \$4,500 to purchase essential lawn equipment. This was the first time in his life that Frank had secured a loan, and he has already repaid it in full! This instills pride and, he hopes, serves as inspiration for other returning citizens.

Has it been easy? No. Especially when he faced roadblocks securing city contracts. But that only fueled his determination. Today, Frank mows nine lawns for elderly neighbors, many of whom are widows without family.

“When I started this,” he shares, “I extended my heart and my time for free.” He continues, “But you wouldn’t believe the opportunities and doors that have opened since then.” His neighbors have become family, and his community is stronger because of it.

His advice for others who have been justice impacted? “Never give up. I think giving up or losing hope, it never does anybody any good.” He then says with hard-earned wisdom, “And if you give, really give from your heart, you’re always going to receive.”



*In addition to working on the docks, Frank Mike brings lawn care and kindness to his community.*

## NEW ORLEANS FACTS

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

95% “Have hope for the future.”

93% “Improved understanding of financial competency.”

97% “Established trust & felt supported by team.”

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“I was able to remove myself from a toxic situation immediately and maintain my two full-time jobs.”

“They provided me the immediate funds to have a roof over my head in my time of need.”

“By getting my license, I was able to drive myself to work and provide for my family.”

### ACTIVE LOAN PORTFOLIO

As of October 31, 2024, New Orleans’s active loan portfolio included 47 loans valued at nearly \$83,154.



*To visit our website and find out more, scan here!*

## PROGRAM PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – JOB1 RESTORE

When individuals turn to the Fountain Fund in hopes of obtaining a low-interest loan, one of the primary issues taken into consideration is employment. Having a job ensures that Client Partners will be able to steadily improve their credit AND successfully repay their loan.

Therefore, when someone arrives seeking financial support – but without a job – Meagan Jordan, Fountain Fund Economic Opportunity Facilitator, connects them to entities such as JOB1 RESTORE to help them bridge that gap!

According to RESTORE Case Manager James Catchings, their program’s aim is to equip individuals, both pre-release and upon their return home, with the necessary tools to thrive in all aspects of life. This includes hard skills, soft skills, wellness skills, and more.

Programs and connections, such as those listed below, mitigate barriers and support successful reentry:

- Training/Certification
- Work Readiness
- Life Skills Development
- Identification/Legal Assistance
- Resource Connection
- Supportive Services



The relationships that JOB1 RESTORE cultivates with employers and organizations throughout the region opens doors and strengthens opportunities for New Orleans’ returning citizens. We are honored to work in tandem and believe wholeheartedly that our missions go hand in hand.

## NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS – THREE MILLION AND COUNTING!

Taking time to celebrate life’s milestones is an important ingredient to success. It creates an opportunity to pause and reflect, not only upon how far one has traveled but also upon the relationships that have been formed along the way.

In that spirit, the Fountain Fund is excited to mark another major milestone. Earlier this fall, we crossed the threshold of distributing \$3.4M in loans, nearly \$1.6M of which has already been recycled! This includes 736 loans for 607 returning citizens.

Behind every low-interest loan is an inspiring Client Partner who has paid off fines and fees, secured transportation, landed a job, gotten an apartment, enrolled in classes, or maybe even opened a new business. And every time someone repays their loan, those recycled dollars become a window of opportunity for the next person who is rebuilding their life.



*Paul Yates, National Director of Economic Empowerment, meets with a Client Partner to discuss business options and finalize loan documentation.*

## CONTACT US IN NEW ORLEANS



**MEAGAN JORDAN**  
**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FACILITATOR**  
The First 72+  
2915 Perdido St.  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
504.324,8859  
mjordan@fountainfund.org

### EXAMPLES OF LOANS IN NEW ORLEANS

- Business Equipment
- Secure Housing
- Obtain a Driver’s License
- Vehicle Repair
- Tuition
- Court Fines & Fees

### Our Mission

*The Fountain Fund increases economic opportunities for formerly incarcerated people to improve their lives and remain in their communities.*