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April 13, 2018

## Ci3 Announces LGBTQ Career Services Project to Provide Job and Education Resources for Marginalized LGBTQ Young People in Chicago

(Chicago) The University of Chicago’s Center for Interdisciplinary Inquiry and Innovation (Ci3) in Sexual and Reproductive Health is proud to announce the launch of its LGBTQ Career Services Project. This Ci3 project, made possible by a generous anonymous gift, is specifically dedicated to helping LGBTQ youth and young adults gain the skills needed to seek, secure, and maintain employment. This initiative will also assist participants with completion of their GED requirements, registering or enrolling in community college or technical schools, and completing financial aid applications.

Recent studies suggest that LGBTQ youth live in poverty and experience high rates of homelessness; have limited access to health care, including HIV prevention and care services; and feel they have fewer economic opportunities. [Ci3 research](#) indicates that these barriers can be difficult to overcome and directly impact a transgender young person’s likelihood of obtaining secure employment, and finding careers with upward trajectories, stable housing, and access to health insurance.

To spearhead this project, Ci3 has hired an LGBTQ Career Services Specialist to lead the program’s recruitment and to serve as an onsite coach for program participants. In this position, Myles Lawter (they/them) will provide job readiness skills, assist in career mapping, and be a resource for education-related resources. Myles will also establish corporate and public sector partnerships to help ensure participant job placements at companies and organizations that value LGBTQ equality, uphold protection policies, and promote inclusivity in the workplace.

The LGBTQ Career Services Project supports Ci3’s [Work2Prevent](#) program, which seeks to demonstrate how employment and job readiness skills can prevent adolescent homelessness, drug use, and migration to other “street economies” associated with increased risk for HIV infection among young transgender women of color and young Black and Latinx men who have sex with men.

“There is an opportunity to both nationally and locally – especially on Chicago’s Southside – increase career services to the LGBTQ community. This project will provide job placement and career readiness programs that may put LGBTQ youth on track for long-term financial stability and better health outcomes,” said Dr. Darnell N. Motley, Ci3 Senior Researcher and the site principal investigator for Work2Prevent. “As we aim to bridge social disparities and support economic stability among those most in need, Myles will be an invaluable advocate, mentor, and outreach leader.”

Toolkits developed by the Work2Prevent study will serve as a resource for other life skills based interventions and can be used by other community organizations.

“Despite decreasing numbers of new HIV infections among other demographic groups, the rates of HIV among young men of color who have sex with men and young transgender women of color continue to increase,” said Dr. Brandon Hill, Ci3’s Executive Director and Principal Investigator for Work2Prevent. “Work2Prevent aims to provide evidence that economic stability for sexual and gender minority youth will ultimately help to prevent HIV high-risk behaviors such as drug use and sex work.”

Work2Prevent is funded by the National Institutes of Health Adolescent Medicine Trials Network (ATN) for HIV/AIDS Interventions. The ATN works collaboratively with researchers from Children’s Hospital

Los Angeles, Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Boston Children's Hospital, and the Illinois University of Chicago (UIC) Department of Psychiatry.

Youth and employers interested in the [LGBTQ Career Services Project](#), click [here](#).

To participate in the Work2Prevent study, please visit: [bit.ly/Work2Prevent](http://bit.ly/Work2Prevent)

To learn more about how you can [donate](#) or support this program with a philanthropic gift, please contact our [Development Office](#) at 773.702.6565.

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*Founded in 2012, Ci3 is an award-winning research center at the University of Chicago. Ci3 envisions a world in which all youth emerge into adulthood with agency over their bodies and futures. As such, we are committed to empowering young people, conducting innovative research, and uncovering opportunities for policy and systemic change. Ci3 houses three labs: the Game Changer Chicago Design Lab, the Transmedia Story Lab, and the Design Thinking Lab. Through these labs, Ci3's interdisciplinary team of medical providers, public health scholars, policy researchers, designers, and artists create games, digital narratives, and interventions with and for youth. Developed with an eye towards scaling, each of our interventions can be implemented in settings across the Chicagoland area and beyond.*

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