



**MEDIA ADVISORY  
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**Contact:** Jessica White, Per Scholas  
(785) 691-6987  
[jwhite@perscholas.org](mailto:jwhite@perscholas.org)

## **Per Scholas Celebrates Grand Opening at CityLink Center**

*National IT Training Program is newest collaborative partner to CityLink's West End campus*

**Cincinnati, OH**— Nationally-recognized IT job training nonprofit Per Scholas is celebrating the opening of its new location in the CityLink Center with a grand opening event open to the public on July 21 at 800 Bank Street. The event will run from 1:30-3:30 PM EDT. Guests will tour the technology training facility, meet graduates and current students, and learn about Per Scholas' high-impact technology job training. Remarks will be made by Vice Mayor David Mann, supporting partners CityLink, United Way of Greater Cincinnati, and Pomeroy, and Per Scholas executives.

CityLink Center and Per Scholas joined forces to support their shared mission of helping Greater Cincinnatians break the cycle of poverty. Per Scholas joins as a resident partner at CityLink providing free professional technology training and job placement services for unemployed adults seeking careers in IT. Its model has been recognized by the White House as an effective solution to assisting the unemployed back to work. CityLink integrates 15 different onsite social service partners offering a wide-range of services and supports delivered in a holistic context to magnify impact. By giving people the skills to gain meaningful employment and provide for themselves and their families, Per Scholas and CityLink are building the foundation for stronger, financially stable communities.

Per Scholas made the move from its former site in Avondale and began classes at the CityLink Center in March. The 8-week intensive technical training course is designed to equip individuals who are committed to beginning a career in IT support with CompTIA A+ and other certifications. In addition to extensive hands-on technical training, programming includes career and personal development as well as ongoing individualized support and coaching for job placement matching graduates directly with local employers like Pomeroy and Time Warner Cable. To date, Per Scholas enrolled 130 residents from Greater Cincinnati, and employed graduates are already earning approximately \$1.8 million dollars collectively.

As a part of the CityLink collaboration, Per Scholas students now have access to on-site childcare during classes, financial counseling through SmartMoney, private transportation through Changing Gears, counseling with Catholic Charities, and more.

"We needed a place where we can expand and grow in Cincinnati, and provide the many wraparound services that ensures our students are able to fully transform their life. CityLink welcoming us into its network allows for all of that. It is wonderful to be joining this community and the impact we will have on our students and alumni will only be greater," said Plinio Ayala, President and CEO of Per Scholas.

CityLink Executive Director, Johnmark Oudersluys, is grateful to have a nationally recognized program join the CityLink collaboration, "*We are extremely excited about the synergies our partnership with Per Scholas presents our clients and how it will further our respective missions. Together we are able to surround these students with supports and services from our other on-site partners to maximize the impact of their time and training.*"

The Cincinnati location of Per Scholas is part of a national network of sites launched by its New York City based

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headquarters. Founded in 1995 as a neighborhood-based effort to increase access to personal computers, Per Scholas was an early pioneer in bridging the digital divide for families and children in the South Bronx. Today, Per Scholas operates the largest and oldest professional IT workforce development program in New York and began expanding nationally in 2012. Other locations include Columbus, Dallas, Washington, D.C., with additional sites to follow.

Per Scholas and CityLink plan to serve up to 80 individuals through the IT career training during the first year, with a goal of not only graduating, but placing a minimum of 80% of students in gainful field-related employment opportunities.

For more information about this partnership, contact Jessica White at Per Scholas [jwhite@perscholas.org](mailto:jwhite@perscholas.org) or Marissa Abernathy at CityLink [marissa.abernathy@citylinkcenter.org](mailto:marissa.abernathy@citylinkcenter.org) or (513) 659-6856. Learn more about Per Scholas and all of CityLink's Partner programming that supports Cincinnati's unemployed and under-employed at [www.citylinkcenter.org](http://www.citylinkcenter.org)

**About Per Scholas:**

Per Scholas is a national nonprofit organization offering free, high quality technology education, job training, placement and career development opportunities to people in underserved communities. Since 1998, nearly 5,000 unemployed and underemployed adults (18+ years old) have enrolled in its job training programs. For more information, visit [perscholas.org](http://perscholas.org), Twitter @PerScholas and Facebook at [facebook.com/PerScholas](https://facebook.com/PerScholas)

**About CityLink Center:**

CityLink Center is a place where Cincinnati's working poor and unemployed can go to one location, get surrounded by one team, and find an integrated, holistic path to help them break free of poverty and get to a place of self-sustainability and hope. By offering a single location for a wide-range of services, the center removes geographic barriers and helps clients achieve their educational, employment, financial and health/wellness goals with one integrated plan. By bringing together some of the city's most effective social service agencies under one roof, individuals benefit from bundled service delivery maximizing their ability to achieve sustained success. Resident partners include Cincinnati Works, Cincinnati Public Schools, Catholic Charities, SmartMoney Community Services, Per Scholas, ChangingGears, Tristate Veterans Community Alliance and the CityLink Health and Wellness Center in partnership with the Cincinnati Health Department. A number of visiting agencies also provide services focused on counseling, parenting skills, spiritual growth, fitness and more. In order to carry out its mission CityLink Center mobilizes hundreds of volunteers each year to engage in support and service delivery throughout the center and its partner organizations. Learn more at [www.citylinkcenter.org](http://www.citylinkcenter.org)

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