

EARLY-STAGE FINALISTS



Roca | www.rocainc.org

101 Park Street, Chelsea, MA 02150 • 617-889-5210

Scaling Initiative: Roca's intervention model is a profound solution to stopping the repeated cycle of early incarceration and recidivism for high-risk young people.

Problem: Mass incarceration in the United States has reached internationally unprecedented rates. Today, with over 2 million people in prisons and jails and an estimated 7 million on probation and parole, we are grasping for alternative solutions to an unsustainable problem. While governments grapple with the overwhelming costs of traditional corrections practices, poor communities of color suffer from the reverberations of perpetual imprisonment, sustained violence, and family instability. Within these communities are a growing number of young people who are disconnected, uneducated, impoverished, and unable to succeed in traditional programming and employment. These are the young men who have fueled the nation's skyrocketing incarceration rate for years. They are also, by and large, the perpetrators and the victims of the violent crimes that occur in our cities every day.

Solution: For 25 years, Roca has averted future incarcerations by reducing recidivism among a population of extremely high-risk young men ages 17 to 24 who, without deliberate intervention, face a reality of jail, prison, or death at the hands of their peers. A history of relentless outreach on the streets and in the homes of our most dangerous urban communities has led Roca to develop and operate a finely tuned, evidence-based model for successful intervention into the lives of young people who are impoverished, uneducated, and, most often, gang-involved — those for whom other programming has failed.

Roca's work is grounded in the notion that incarceration cannot be the only answer for these young adults. Roca's Intervention Model, which includes 2 years of intensive services and 2 additional years of follow-up, starts with intensive outreach to reengage young people and build relationships that support change, offers programming that meets young people where they are, operates transitional employment, and works with the City, several criminal justice partners, and other organizations.

Evidence of Results: In FY12, Roca served 409 very high-risk young men. Despite the fact that Roca works with young men who are unable to participate in traditional work or programming, Roca retained 78% and engaged them in the intervention model throughout the course of the year. Of those who completed the intensive component of the model in FY12, 90% have had no new arrests; 100% have had no new technical violations; and 79% were on track to retain employment for a minimum of 6 months.

Scaling Strategy: Roca is proposing to scale social impact by: 1) implementing the Massachusetts Pay for Success pilot project, expanding services into contiguous communities around Roca's Chelsea and Springfield locations; and 2) expanding the reach of services outside of Massachusetts, including a direct replication starting in FY14, a tightly held franchise opening in FY15, and an additional direct replication and/or tightly held franchise opening in FY16. Roca will develop a long-term plan for scaling and impact to be completed in FY16 and will serve 1,250 young men intensively and 610 less intensively each year by FY 17. Roca will also work to directly affect national systemic change in criminal justice policies and practices.

Capital Required: Roca will increase its budgeted expenditures from \$10,385,644 in FY13 to \$19,455,502 in FY17 in order to pay for programmatic expansions/replications, organizational capacity building, and the research necessary to plan for long-term scale and impact. A fundraising benchmark of \$4 million in operating and \$1.5 million in capital funds must be met before a new site can become operational, and Roca will also ensure that sustainable government funding is available to pay for approximately two-thirds of each new site's annual operating costs.

Capacity: Roca manages an \$8.4 million annual operating budget with no debt. Utilizing a strong performance-based management system, Roca's diverse leadership team comes with more than a century of combined experience in management, finance, high-risk youth work, social work, workforce development and case management, legal representation, corrections and community organizing. Roca is also fortunate to have a strong Board of Directors that bring business, community, and non-profit expertise.