



## Full *STEAM* Ahead

### Community & System Support Request

May 2023

### ***MassHire Holyoke Needs to Move!***

MassHire Holyoke (MHH), founded as CareerPoint in 1996, urgently seeks support for its move to the STEAM building, at 208 Race St. A comprehensive funding strategy is being carried out at the city, regional, state, and soon to be federal levels, none of which have committed funds to date. Time is running out, and substantial funding support is needed now!

MHH has offered award-winning workforce development services to individuals and the business community, with an all-inclusive mission and pro-active, targeted support for people with barriers to employment such as at-risk youth, people with a history of incarceration, people living with disabilities, the working poor, people with limited English skills, climate refugees, and many others.

MHH is seeking approximately \$900,000 from a variety of sources to help cover one time moving, furniture/equipment, and build-out expenses for its relocation to the STEAM building in the heart of Holyoke's downtown canal district. [www.thesteambuilding.com](http://www.thesteambuilding.com).

Preparation for this move, including a comprehensive funding strategy, has been underway for over a year. The building in which we currently occupy at 850 High Street was sold, and our lease was changed to a month-to-month tenancy at will. ***In September, the new landlord gave MHH a 90-day quit premises notice for 50% of its space, which took effect on Dec 28, 2022.***

Suddenly, all our careful planning was thrown into a whirlwind, the tight timeline pushing us into crisis mode, especially financially. Half of our equipment and furnishings now are in storage, and by necessity we are incurring additional costs right now!

**Even though we continue with our funding plan, the timing of these funding decisions will not address our immediate need: most of the funding applications in process will not be decided for months to come and none are a sure thing.**

MHH's multi-tiered funding approach, begun last year, is not yet yielding the results we were hoping for. The current status is as follows:

- **City of Holyoke's ARPA Funds:** an application for \$400,000 was submitted in April, with determinations made in June. Competition for these funds is fierce: 80 applications with budgets totaling 60 million dollars. The city has 20 million dollars available.
- **Mass Development:** a loan application, exact program and budget in process
- **People's Bank:** a short-term line of credit has been granted for \$225,000, but not on the best of terms, and with an interest rate of 6.8%
- **Beveridge Family Foundation Grant:** \$35,000 was awarded for furniture and equipment, funds to be dispersed in May. Note: they discouraged us from applying for construction/build-out costs as being non-competitive.
- **Private Foundations:** support from these resources is a long shot because brick and mortar requests most often don't meet required criteria (as was the case with Beveridge above), and two requests, to the Davis and Peabody Foundations, have already been denied. Research on other opportunities continues.

- **STEAM landlords:** a commitment to help cover final gaps in funding by fronting remaining build out costs and then rolling a monthly pay-back into the rent over 1-3 years
- **Holyoke Gas & Electric:** a municipal utility, has committed to a 75% discount on internet costs

Full budgets, including space and build-out plans, construction, moving, and furniture estimates are available upon request. Despite the high price tag, MHH is approaching the move with true economy, selecting the least expensive build-out options, and reusing all the equipment and furniture we can.

Meanwhile, the fiscal, community, and program benefits of moving to STEAM are as clear and compelling as ever.

Current Location	STEAM Building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently \$18 per square foot, with \$20 to be the price if MHH stays with new lease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$14 per square foot, with a 50% reduction in rent for Jan – March 2023, during the main build-out</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No utilities included</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes most utilities, except high-speed internet and partial electricity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few businesses &amp; limited pedestrian activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located in a vibrant, highly walkable, densely populated neighborhood, with businesses and agencies throughout</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only one bus route in neighborhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transit is abundant: 8 bus routes plus public e-bikes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current configuration not ideal for many program needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of build-out created with input from staff to better meet program needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No room to expand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Room to expand, many flexible options available</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate, hard-wired computer labs with desktops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible, multi-purpose conference rooms set up to handle portable devices</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-entry &amp; Recovery no longer fits in current space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Re-entry &amp; Recovery Space with a separate entrance and dedicated training area</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Center is small and combined with staff desks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Drop-in Youth Center separate from staff working area</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connected programs scattered throughout the center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Counseling area to encompass connected programs including Veteran’s Services, ABE; DUI’s RESEA Program, Disability Services, and the Talent Acquisition Team</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Services in cramped quarters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Services to acquire dedicated space for recruitment events, etc</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current landlord is focused on attracting high-end businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEAM landlord is community-minded and partners with MHH in youth programming</li> </ul>

MHH remains committed to working with all job seekers who seek support, regardless of background or circumstance. A move to the STEAM building will aid in these efforts.

**The Board and staff of MHH continue to advocate for assistance as we can’t stay where we are, and we can’t fund the cost of the move.** The cost savings and multiple customer and community benefits are crystal clear: **Securing funds for this one-time expense is needed right now.**

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