LENDING HOPE

Bama Works Provides $1 Million to The Fountain Fund

The Fountain Fund has received a transformative $1 million multi-year investment from the Bama Works Fund of Dave Matthews Band, supporting its mission to expand economic opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals in the Charlottesville area.

"Bama Works has already improved the lives of countless people," says Erika Viccellio, the Fund's executive director. "We are grateful for this investment, which creates opportunities that will strengthen our community for many years to come."

Since its founding in 2017, the Fountain Fund made more than $5 million in low-interest loans to more than 1,000 Client Partners rebuild their lives. Of that total, $2.4 million has been recycled into new loans. The Fund also help Client Partners establish a strong credit score and achieve their self-determined goals.

Based in Charlottesville, the Fund has expanded to Richmond, Boston, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. A recent survey found that 97% of participants have not been reincarcerated during their loan term.

"The Fountain Fund started with a simple mission: help returning citizens achieve their full potential by providing them access to capital," says Tim Heaphy, founder of the Fountain Fund. "Being given a loan and engaging in our process often changes how our Client Partners see themselves, which is truly inspirational."

SEEING THE INVISIBLE

UVA RESEARCHERS TARGET HIDDEN BRAIN INJURIES IN SOLDIERS

A research team at the University of Virginia School of Medicine has received a $2.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to explore whether an advanced MRI scanner can reveal brain injuries in soldiers exposed to blasts—injuries that currently go undetected by standard imaging.

Led by Dr. James R. Stone, a UVA Health radiologist, the study builds on previous findings suggesting that blast exposure may cause unique brain scarring involving astrocytes. Until now, these changes have only been visible after death. The new MRI scanner at Fontaine Research Park could make such injuries visible in living patients. "Our ultimate goal is to speed up diagnosis and ensure service members get the care and protection they deserve," says Stone.

Over the next three years, researchers will scan 60 service members in collaboration with the Naval Medical Research Command, advancing UVA's mission to transform care through innovation at the Paul and Diane Manning Institute of Biotechnology.