



Minority job-training program developed for Village project

By Repository staff report

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A new work program, aimed at inner-city youth, is a partnership among the city of Canton, Village construction manager Welty Building Co., and the American Center for Economic Equality/Black Contractors Group.

CANTON The Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village construction project will provide an opportunity for minorities to receive skills training and jobs, according to a news release.

A new work program, aimed at inner-city youth, is a partnership among the city of Canton, Village construction manager Welty Building Co., and the American Center for Economic Equality/Black Contractors Group.

The announcement ends threats from the contractors group of a boycott of the Aug. 3 Hall of Fame Game to protest a lack of minority workers on the construction site.

Participants in the work program will come from Cleveland and Canton. They must be 18 or older, have valid drivers' licenses, take a drug test, and have no felony convictions. The program will include two weeks of job-readiness training through the Stark County Community Action Agency,

SUBSCRIBE TODAY the program at a union facility in Richfield, and a week of safety training that will begin Aug. 7.

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with Village contractors to find job placement for the participants, will pay for transportation to Richfield, and will provide the work gear needed.

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The company can be reached at 330-867-2400.

The American Center for Economic Equality/Black Contractors Group earlier this year had announced plans to stage a boycott at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium prior to the kickoff of the Hall of Fame Game. In an April letter addressed to Gov. John Kasich, organization Executive Director Norman Edwards expressed his frustration that he had not seen any black, female or minority contractors or construction workers on site.

“Please be advised that if there is not any immediate remedy to our diversity and inclusion issues we may have no choice but to resort to planning and carrying out a Boycott of the Hall of Fame game on August 3, 2017 and other games that follow throughout the country that will consist of local, state and national demonstrators,” it read.

A spokeswoman for the governor’s office confirmed the letter was received and said office staff alerted Stark County leaders to the complaints.

Then, in June, Edwards wrote an open letter saying he was in “intense negotiations” to mitigate diversity issues related to the Village project.

Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium remains under construction on the Village site, and construction of the four-star Hall of Fame Hotel and attached parking garage is targeted to begin in August.

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