



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **FOUNDATIONS MAKE LARGE WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS**

***Tow and Trafigura Foundations donate \$700,000 to program supporting nearly 200 high-need youth in paid training and employment program***

Stamford CT / Stamford nonprofit **Domus**, which operates a variety of educational, residential, and community programs for vulnerable youth, today announced a \$500,000, five-year commitment from New Canaan-based Tow Foundation as well as a dollar-for-dollar match, for the first two years, by Geneva-based Trafigura Foundation. This \$200,000 commitment from the Trafigura Foundation supplements their initial program investment, in fall 2010, of \$600,000 over three years.

This funding will support the Trafigura Work & Learn Business Center, a paid training and employment program for disconnected youth, and allows the program to more than double the number of participants and expand to add two new businesses.

The program served 88 youth last year; with this expansion, nearly 200 youth will now be served. Two new businesses will join the existing woodworking, small engine repair, and bike repair businesses. A food production/culinary business will encompass learning about growing conditions, organic farming, nutrition, food preparation and safe food handling, and commercial food production. Construction of the new greenhouse will also engage the youth in the woodworking business. The second new business will teach youth skills needed to work in hair and nail salons, including on-the-job training and practice. Both program elements have been successfully operated in similar program environments elsewhere in the state.

Domus executive director Mike Duggan noted, "A community cannot be economically healthy if we are graduating young people without hope for the future and the skills to get and remain employed. We can turn people who might need government assistance into tax earners instead of tax consumers. These are youth who want to be contributing members of a community—let's give them the opportunity to prove they can do it."

Tow Foundation Executive Director Emily Tow Jackson said of the investment, "This investment will greatly improve job prospects for young people with many barriers to employment—youth involved in or at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system. This successful model is an excellent way to engage youth while providing vital skills to help them find success in today's competitive job market."

Stated Trafigura Foundation Executive Director Vincent Faber: "We helped launch this program just over a year ago, and the results have been outstanding: Vulnerable young people are getting and keeping jobs at a rate far exceeding those without this skills training. The Charity Committee in our Stamford office has been involved every step of the way as the initiative has progressed. The Trafigura Work & Learn Business Center is a clear illustration of our foundation's commitment – and beyond, the commitment of all our Trafigura employees worldwide – to make lasting changes in the fight against poverty and exclusion."

The WorkPlace President and CEO Joe Carbone said of the program, "Work & Learn is an innovative program that captivates 'at-risk' youth, immerses them in learning, and delivers

outstanding results. The program serves as an extended family for at-risk youth and creates a community-based support network that includes positive peers, older youth, and adult role models—key elements that are not typically incorporated into youth programming yet are crucial for success.”

The Trafigura Work & Learn Business Center trains youth in *hard skills* including small engine repair, bike repair, and woodworking, as well as *soft skills* which help people get and keep jobs; these skills include being punctual, shaking hands, accepting feedback, looking and acting professionally, and more.

The Tow Foundation has supported Domus’ work for nearly a decade; the Trafigura Foundation launched the Trafigura Work & Learn Business Center with a three-year seed grant of \$600,000 in 2010. The WorkPlace has worked with Domus on a variety initiatives over the years, with this being the most significant.

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**About Domus:**

Since 1972, Domus has helped thousands of our region’s most vulnerable youth and their families experience success. The love, structure, and support we provide at our charter schools, residential programs, and community programs enable our kids and families to reach their full potential. Children are learning independent living and job skills, improving their academic performance, and developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Our ability to build relationships helps kids and families who may be struggling in school or in life focus on their strengths and make good choices. The result? Happier, healthier human beings who can fully contribute their talents to the communities in which they live and work. *Our vision: No child shall be denied hope, love, or a fair chance in life.* [www.domuskids.org](http://www.domuskids.org)

**About the Trafigura Foundation:**

Launched in November 2007 and based in Geneva, Switzerland, the Trafigura Foundation remains inspired by a desire to pool the charitable and community-oriented actions of Trafigura employees around the world and to encourage, support and develop these activities. Beyond its grant-making purpose, the Trafigura Foundation ambition is therefore to nurture and foster strong connections between the programmes it supports and Trafigura Group employees. The Trafigura Foundation supports projects in the field of Education, Social Inclusion, Health & Disability, Social Entrepreneurship, The Environment and Rural Development. To date, it has disbursed more than US\$20 million in grants on all continents, impacting the lives of thousands of people and helping them find their way out of poverty and exclusion, back to a dignified place in human society.

*More on [www.trafigurafoundation.com](http://www.trafigurafoundation.com)*

**About the Tow Foundation:**

The Tow Foundation supports innovative programming where there are shortages of both public and private funding with the goal of exposing people and institutions to opportunities that may not be readily available and making them possible. Significant investments have been made in areas of groundbreaking medical research, cultural arts, and higher education, as well as vulnerable families and juvenile justice reform. The Foundation’s Juvenile Justice Initiative supports direct service and advocacy for court-involved youth and their families. For more information about Tow Foundation and its strategic grantmaking, visit [www.towfoundation.org](http://www.towfoundation.org).

**About The WorkPlace:**

The WorkPlace conducts comprehensive planning, and coordinates regional workforce development policy and programs to prepare people for careers while strengthening the workforce for employers. As national leader in the field, The WorkPlace regularly shares ideas and best practices with lawmakers, foundations, think tanks and other workforce development organizations around the country. For more information, visit [www.workplace.org](http://www.workplace.org).