

# FUNDING UPDATES

Dear Friends,

I am still energized by the enthusiasm displayed from all who attended the kickoff of the Impact Essex County Alpha Project: Empowering Economic Opportunity on Feb. 26. It was a gathering of more than 200 community leaders who care deeply about the well-being of Essex County, and just the right group to help us launch this ambitious effort.

The energy has continued into action and each initiative of the Alpha Project is buzzing with activity. I'm thrilled to share with you our progress. Moving forward together, we can create a brighter economic future for the thousands of people in Essex County living below the living wage.

Stratton Lloyd | COO and Vice President for Community Leadership  
Essex County Community Foundation

## Credit for Prior Learning:

Building on the nationally renowned North Shore Community College program, this initiative enables adult learners to translate their specialized skills and experience into college credits, resulting in reduced costs and time to graduate.

A recent kickoff meeting led by North Shore Community College engaged partners in conversation about how to make Credit for Prior Learning more streamlined and seamless, to benefit thousands of new students.



CPL Partner Meeting | April 30

Next steps include a baseline needs assessment, the creation of a common strategy, and an outreach campaign so more people can participate in the program countywide.

Learn more about the Credit for Prior Learning program at [eccf.org/news](http://eccf.org/news).

**Credit for Prior Learning collective:** North Shore Community College, Northeast Consortium of Colleges and Universities, the North Shore Workforce Investment Board, Wellspring and Action, Inc.

## Financial Coaching and Literacy:

This program unites Essex County's five Community Action agencies in a coalition to educate and engage residents living below the living wage and focuses on a financial empowerment model integrated into existing adult programming.

In April, the coalition - in partnership with the United Way - held a four-day Financial Coaching Training and Certification course for more than 15 financial coaches who will deliver this program.

The coalition's next steps include convening leaders; building detailed program schedules and comprehensive site plans; and coordinating workshops and resources. A full program schedule and implementation plan is slated for July.



Financial Coaching Training & Certification Course | April

Learn more about the Financial Coaching and Literacy program at [eccf.org/news](http://eccf.org/news).

**Financial Coaching and Literacy coalition:** Action Inc., Community Action, Inc., Lynn Economic Opportunity, Inc., Greater Lawrence Community Action Council and North Shore Community Action Program

# Thank you for your support.

## Small Business Resiliency and Venture Fund:

The Small Business Resiliency and Venture Fund builds on the longstanding work of Mill Cities Community Investments (MCCI) to provide permanent commercial lending programs and supplemental technical assistance for non-bankable businesses in Essex County.

This work was accelerated by the Merrimack Valley gas disaster in September 2018 when nearly 1,000 small businesses were forced to close or struggled to stay afloat amidst the crisis. Through the extensive outreach, technical support and emergency loan distribution of the collective over the last eight months, 70% of impacted businesses are back to their pre-crisis operational levels. Still, there is much more work to be done.

The work continues towards our long-term vision of a countywide venture collaborative and systems approach to business resiliency and support. And today, our first step of extending the loan fund permanently to Andover and North Andover is in process.

Learn more about the Small Business Resiliency and Venture Fund at [eccf.org/EEO](http://eccf.org/EEO).

**Small Business Resiliency and Venture Fund collective:** Mill Cities Community Investments, Lawrence Partnership, EForAll/EparaTodos, municipal leaders and agencies

## Essex County Think Labs:

Through this initiative, ECCF will use its ability to convene key stakeholders and attract experts around special areas of focus to inspire creative thinking that can impact the future economic landscape.

This work is beginning to take shape through data gathering and conversations with community leaders - our intention is to announce the first Think Lab event this fall.

Learn more about Essex County Think Labs at [eccf.org/EEO](http://eccf.org/EEO).

**Essex County Think Labs collective:** Essex County Community Foundation, municipal and government leaders, employers, community leaders and funders

## Did you know? | IMPACTESSEXCOUNTY.ORG

- 15% of students in Essex County are chronically absent, with some districts near or above 20%
- Over 22% of land in Essex County is protected, higher than comparable communities
- 39% of adults in Essex County have 4 or more chronic diseases, higher than the state and nation

Find out more about these stats and why they are important at [IMPACTESSEXCOUNTY.ORG](http://IMPACTESSEXCOUNTY.ORG)

## GET INVOLVED!

**VOLUNTEER.** We need people in all capacities, such as educators, business thinkers, financial literacy coaches and more.

**PARTNER.** Reach out to the backbone leaders of this work, engage with suggestions and ideas and pull up a seat at the table.

**FUNDRAISING.** Reach out to ECCF with fundraising leads we should explore, whether that be foundations, individuals or corporations.

**DONATE.** Help us reach our \$1.3 million goal by the end of 2019.

We look forward to realizing our vision for Essex County - together.

## NEWS AND MEDIA

[Tackling Income Inequality](#)

*North of Boston Business Magazine, Spring 2019*

[Essex County Uses Data to Take Action on Income Inequality](#)

*The CGR Blog, March 18, 2019*

[ECCF Tackles Income Inequality](#)

*The Salem News, Feb. 26, 2019*

[Video: Empowering Economic Opportunity](#)

*GraVoc, Peabody*

[Video: Empowering Economic Opportunity Launch Event](#)

*North Shore Communications Group*

