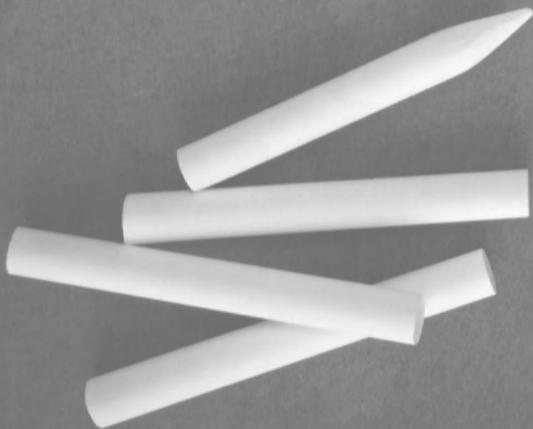


# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRANSFORMATION CASE STUDIES

THREE EXAMPLES OF SYSTEMS  
CHANGE THROUGH COLLABORATIVE  
GATEWAY CITY LEADERSHIP



November 2016

Dear Friends:

It is with great pleasure that we offer three case studies to complement the report *Calling All Leaders: An Action Guide to Workforce Development Transformation*. The action guide outlined the grand dimensions of the challenge by the numbers, and contrasted the need for workforce development services with the limited resources available. These case studies show that Gateway City leaders are undaunted. They rise each day and doggedly search for creative solutions to help workers hone new skills and grow regional economies.

We are grateful to the change-agents who allowed us to capture their efforts. They warmly welcomed us into their world, candidly explained the considerable obstacles they face, and openly offered advice to others on how they might get a start on responding to common challenges. This project benefited tremendously from Jodi Wilinsky Hill, a consultant to MassINC, who travelled the state with us collecting these narratives. Her years of experience delivering workforce development services through small nonprofit organizations gave us invaluable perspective distilling lessons-learned.

In addition to reading these case studies, we strongly encourage you to visit our website to view highlights from our interviews. Llyr Johansen and Aaron Van Leesten expertly captured the conversations and produced compelling videos that bring these stories to life. MassINC's video library is growing faster than our research library. At a time when understanding is limited about how government seeks to respond to the complex challenges we face is limited, this video archive is a trove of documentary evidence that can be mined and shared in many different formats to reveal examples of strong and well-intentioned public leadership.

Watch these videos and you will also see the green shoots of renewal shooting up in Gateway Cities across our Commonwealth. By working collaboratively for "systems change," Gateway City leaders are establishing roots. Our hope is that, in due time, these roots will better support Massachusetts's most vulnerable residents as they mount their pursuits of the American Dream.

One final note: You'll notice these case studies share the same chalkboard style as our action guide report. We stuck with this visual language to imply that the action guide and case studies complement each other. But there's a deeper logic to convey: whereas the action guide's chalk-talk style suggested a briefing at the blackboard, chalk in these pages hints that each of these case-study models remains a work-in-progress. In a sense, these are *prospective* case studies. The leaders driving this work hope to continuously learn and improve upon the models they are developing. By joining them early on in their efforts, perhaps we can help accelerate the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Forman", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Benjamin Forman

*Executive Director*

MassINC Gateway Cities Innovation Institute

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRANSFORMATION CASE STUDIES

THREE EXAMPLES OF  
SYSTEMS CHANGE THROUGH  
COLLABORATIVE GATEWAY  
CITY LEADERSHIP



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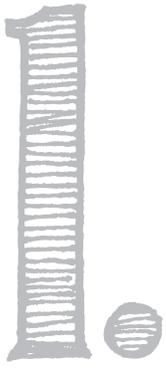
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# THE LAWRENCE PARTNERSHIP TRAINING CONSORTIUM CASE STUDY

## Introduction

Engaging the private sector is a high-stakes challenge for any workforce development system. In a rapidly changing economy, meeting training needs, helping employees navigate career pathways (while balancing work, education, and family), and bolstering both public and private investment in the workforce system all require strong partners in the business community. Although the system has always sought private-sector ties, it has often fallen short.<sup>1</sup>

Too many employers have had limited knowledge of the workforce development system. Moreover, many are skeptical about the services it can provide. This cynicism is compounded in older industrial cities that have been pounded by the cold winds of industrial change. In these communities that most urgently need strong guidance in improving the delivery of workforce development services, civic endeavors are often enveloped by clouds of doubt.<sup>2</sup>

The Lawrence Partnership (“the Partnership”) Training Consortium (“TC”) Case Study is a story of employer engagement in a community where this is not the environment. In recent years, Lawrence has moved past its challenges with collective hope and tireless effort. We begin with this example because it provides universal lessons about the power of collaborative leadership for workforce development transformation.

## Getting Past the Challenges

Lawrence is among the poorest communities in Massachusetts, despite its location in one of the state’s most prosperous regions. Unfortunately, this geographic disconnect is self-reinforcing. The concentration of poverty in a community with limited resources makes it difficult for residents to access the opportunities and experiences they need to succeed in a high-skilled regional

economy. The data demonstrate the depth of the challenge. Lawrence’s high-school graduation rate is well below the state average (69 percent vs. 90 percent), and only 12 percent of residents age 25 and older hold a bachelor’s or higher degree, compared to 40 percent of the Massachusetts population overall.<sup>2</sup> The lack of skill development among the population of this relatively young, heavily Latino city is a real detriment to the regional economy, which is hungry for more skilled labor.

This scenario is not uncommon in Massachusetts, where poverty has increasingly concentrated in Gateway Cities. But Lawrence is fighting back aggressively. When the state placed the Lawrence Public Schools in receivership in 2012, the community, rather than resist, broadly embraced the move as a sign of hope. Jeff Riley, the state-appointed receiver, responded to this warm welcome with a highly collaborative approach.

This spirit of cooperation allowed community leaders to partner with the school system through their entry to the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s “Working Cities Challenge” competition. In January 2014, the Lawrence Working Families Initiative (LWFI) was awarded the competition’s first-place prize. Housed in the Family Resource Center of the Lawrence Public schools, LWFI is a groundbreaking effort to link the families of Lawrence Public School students with resources to access employment and advance economically.<sup>3</sup>

Efforts to foster collaborative leadership gained additional momentum with the mayoral election of Dan Rivera, who entered office just as the Working Cities Challenge award was announced. Although the victory was hard-won, the Rivera administration sent clear signals from the beginning that it would strive to partner with *all* parties seeking a stronger city.

## The Lawrence Partnership is Born

Against this backdrop, the City's civic leaders launched a new initiative to strengthen their engagement in Lawrence's renewal. The nearby mill city of Lowell has long been recognized as a frontrunner in efforts to reposition their city for a brighter future. Much of Lowell's success had been attributed to the Lowell Plan, a private, nonprofit economic development organization that helped the community doggedly pursue long-term objectives. The timing was now right for Lawrence to borrow from Lowell's example.

The replication effort was led by three leaders with the ability to engage, convene, and inspire: Lane Glenn, President of Northern Essex Community College; former State Senator Barry Finegold; and businessman Sal Lupoli, who bought his first property in Lawrence in 2003, and quickly grew that investment to become the City's largest taxpayer.

This triumvirate recognized that while the Lawrence Partnership must be led by the private sector, it must also broadly engage leaders from nonprofit organizations. An inclusive model was particularly important in Lawrence, where nonprofits provide critical services and account for many of the City's largest employers. When the Partnership held a public launch party in November 2014, thirty-eight board members had already committed—two-thirds from the private sector and one-third from government and nonprofits.<sup>4</sup>

The organization took up residence at Northern Essex Community College, and with board-raised funds hired Derek Mitchell as its executive director. Mitchell was the perfect first hire: energetic, strategic and collaborative, he shares the vision. As Mitchell stated:

Lawrence has always been the kind of innovative place where people can come without speaking English, without knowing anyone, and yet experience the upward mobility that that is the hallmark of our country. Places like Lawrence need to exist. They need to be as successful as they can be. A key to that success is community members all working together.



Community members gathered for the launch of the Lawrence Partnership.

Mitchell's first task was to lead the Partnership's board through a six-month strategic planning process. The outcome was three clear goals:

1. promoting economic development and quality of life in Lawrence;
2. making Lawrence an attractive place to do business; and
3. lowering the unemployment rate in the city.

Their three guiding strategies were: to connect employers with local talent; to support local business development; and to promote the attributes that makes Lawrence a great place to do business.

In addition, the Partnership laid out a number of operating premises, among them:

- the Partnership will not duplicate efforts, nor engage in efforts, that do not require the capacity of the Partnership;
- the Partnership is a big thinker, with the capacity and commitment to approach issues on a large scale and with long time horizons;
- the Partnership will prioritize projects and strategies that maximize economic opportunities for Lawrencians, recognizing that the diversity of residents is one of the City's greatest assets;
- the Partnership will celebrate and build upon that advantage as it grows its economy; and
- the Partnership will engage regional entities and view them as our partners, recognize them as employers of our workforce, customers of our businesses, and supporters of our success.

## Winning an Early Victory

With its solid footing, the Lawrence Partnership board then honed in on its first big undertaking: establishing a Venture Loan Fund (“VLF”) to serve small, entrepreneurial, and difficult-to-finance businesses.

Derek Mitchell emphasizes that the VLF was established on a shared understanding that “positively impacting your community and also having dividends for your business are not mutually exclusive.”

Because it met a long-recognized need that the City had previously struggled to address, the VLF was a strategic starting point, and provided an early win for the Partnership. By offering capital to small, entrepreneurial, and largely immigrant-owned businesses, the VLF sought to support enterprises that disproportionately hire Lawrence residents and generate economic activity in the city.

The Partnership married this need with the opportunity afforded by having multiple bank and credit-union presidents on the Lawrence Partnership Board, as well as the Mayor and other strategic thinkers. The banking leaders had a vested interest in helping these small businesses gain access to traditional credit and shared a vision to create a lending mechanism to provide an entry point. Four banking institutions, therefore, agreed to contribute \$250,000 each, with an additional \$100,000 loan loss reserve contributed by the City of Lawrence. These funds, along with accompanying technical assistance, would be administered through a strategic partnership with Mill City Community Investments, a strong Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) based in Lawrence.<sup>5</sup>

Within six months of its launch, the VLF had committed half of its capital to seven businesses projected over 100 jobs. With this early success, the Partnership was then able to bring on six new banks and credit unions, raising another \$1.5 million. Mitchell talks about the leadership that made this happen: “It came from those first four financial institutions that stepped into the unknown. They were willing to take a risk. They were willing to work together in a way that they hadn’t before. And they were willing to do it on behalf of a community that has seen a lot of disinvestment. That’s leadership. The Partnership has been able put those individuals at the table so that a shared commitment can be made.”

“I think [The Lawrence Partnership is] unique because it’s not focused on: well how can I help myself...It’s not businesses looking to drum up business; it’s not non-profits looking to drum up support. It’s a group of folks that periodically take off their hats; take off their corporate disguises; and talk about how we can rebuild economically and revitalize a really cool community; and Lawrence, for folks that aren’t really familiar with it, is I think it’s going places. There’s an awful lot of enthusiasm and energy.”

— John Silva, CEO and President at the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center

This creative, simple, straightforward effort gave the Partnership its first high-visibility win, laying the groundwork for the Lawrence Training Consortium, an equally necessary but far more difficult endeavor.

## Launching the Lawrence Partnership Training Consortium

Just as the VLF is elegantly simple, the Training Consortium (“TC”) is hugely complex. Aimed at the region’s larger businesses, it is led by a Working Group (formed in January 2016) that initially included ten Lawrence Partnership Board members: four private-industry CEOs; one elected official; three CEOs of the City’s largest nonprofits; the president of the community college; and the superintendent of the vocational school.

Indisputably, employer involvement in workforce development efforts is seen as one of the most critical ingredients of success.<sup>6</sup> The Partnership’s strong, collaborative, and hopeful leadership provided the right conditions for increasing business engagement in the City’s workforce development system. The TC is co-chaired by Jonathan Isaacson, owner of the GEM Group, and Sal Lupoli. Both are passionate believers in getting jobs for people, giving them the skills and support they need, and retaining and promoting them. When listening to them, it would be hard to

find two business owners more committed to workforce opportunity and training.

As Sal Lupoli has stated, “I like to consider the Lupoli Companies as social-impact entrepreneurship, not just regular entrepreneurship. We go into Gateway Cities, we create jobs, and we make a real difference in people’s lives. That’s what we do.”

Jonathan Isaacson describes “lean manufacturing” as an employee-empowerment system that trains people to see waste and to remove it. “The basic idea is that the company has an obligation to train their associates, and, in return, the associates have the obligation to improve the processes.”

The Working Group began by conducting a survey of large regional employers to identify hiring pain points. They also inventoried all the workforce training programs in the region. With this information in hand, they looked for ways to alleviate the top hiring challenges while simultaneously creating career paths for Lawrence residents. The end goal was to identify strategies that would simultaneously help regional firms become more competitive by addressing their skill needs, as well as generate positive outcomes for local community members by providing pathways to living wage jobs and careers.

### **Learnings from the Employer Survey:**

The TC surveyed large regional employers to collect data on each business’s hiring footprint, practices, challenges, and costs associated with those challenges. The TC delivered this survey in a user-friendly format, which could be completed quickly (in about 10-12 minutes), in order to ensure that busy CEOs and HR directors would participate.

Creating, distributing, and analyzing the data was a four-month process led by a consultant, and the survey was completed in July 2016. Each step along the way was intentionally inclusive, leveraging local talent and connectivity. Guidance and input for the survey design were provided by the TC’s Working Group members, including the director of the local career center and community college staff members charged with serving local employers. This strengthened the connection between the TC and key organizations in the public workforce development system.



Board members engaged in dialogue.

The TC’s Working Group partnered extensively to distribute the survey as broadly as possible, utilizing the email lists of the local workforce investment board, the chamber of commerce, and the regional HR association, as well as a personal email outreach from Partnership board members. In the end, it was this hands-on effort that mattered most in getting the surveys completed. The Partnership generated 97 responses to the survey, with about half of participants based in Lawrence. As the survey was focused on the area’s larger firms, total survey respondents represented over 12,000 jobs. They learned that 70 percent of the businesses face hiring challenges. As a result, they increased overtime hours (55 percent), invested more in recruiting (43 percent), left openings unfilled (39 percent), hired temporary workers (34 percent), and increased wages (28 percent).

It was no real surprise to the TC Working Group that the requisite education and training level needed for jobs that the survey revealed as “the most challenging to fill” required less than a four-year college degree, but more than a high school degree. The second hardest-to-fill jobs were those requiring a high-school degree, a GED, or some preparation or experience.

The TC’s survey was able to capture substantial information about the positions that are the most challenging to fill. Seventy-one respondents identified more than 160 job titles or specific skills that were significant challenges for them to find. It is worth noting that the flurry of reporting on this optional question indicated a nerve had been hit, which gave the TC a sense of urgency for meeting these specific needs.

While the Employer Survey was underway, Derek Mitchell ran alongside, connecting with employers and business coalitions, as well as collecting additional information to complement the survey data through one-on-one meetings with employers. Mitchell also convened industry-specific focus groups with manufacturers and health-related businesses.

“We have a large number of first- and second-generation immigrant families that are hard-working and aspirational, but struggle to access the jobs that do exist. I am excited because I think that together we are genuinely digging into how to make a real and strong connection between employers and workers in a community.”

— Jessica Andors, Executive Director,  
Lawrence Community Works

### **Learnings from the TC’s Program Inventory:**

With the Employer Survey in the field, the consultant gathered with the Working Group to lead and convene a Training Landscape advisory group. This group devised a strategy to collect essential information from as many workforce-training providers as possible. The consultant also undertook research on the state’s workforce-development-system-training database.

The outreach revealed over 400 training programs delivered by 45 different providers in the region. About one-third of the regional training is provided for employment in healthcare. All of the other industries were served by a very small number of training programs. The courses ranged from a free, 4-hour entrepreneurship training for small businesses, to a 27-week respiratory-care program (costing \$28,000), where graduates earn \$26/hour. Across all training programs, the average reported wage for graduates was \$16/hour, and the average cost was \$7,200.

Leaders found this information invaluable, and efforts are underway to ensure this resource is current and accessible. The ValleyWorks Career Center (“VWCC”) has agreed to house the inventory on their new website so that employers, training providers, and job seekers can draw from it in the future. Beyond generating survey information, the Training Landscape process initiated new—and strengthened existing—relationships for the Partnership. As noted by Amy Weatherbee, Executive Director of VWCC, “Part of the value in the Career Center’s partnership with the Training Consortium is shining a light on the value of the public workforce system.”

### **Acting Early and Often**

Business-led groups respond to challenges with the ruthlessness of those under constant competitive pressure. The TC is already responding aggressively to identified needs. Some of this effort involves simply lending additional support to existing initiatives, but there are also instances of the Partnership being at the leading edge of new projects.

An example of the Partnership lending a hand is its recent collaboration with the Lawrence Public Schools, the Lawrence Working Families Initiative, and VWCC to create school-year internships for high-school students. The Partnership is providing connections and energy to help existing entities make greater progress than they might not have made otherwise without the Partnership.

The truly transformative pilot projects that the Training Consortium is putting together are rooted in the idea that employers have the most to gain from well-developed and dynamic skills pipelines and, in turn, have real skin in the game in making them happen. One example targets the healthcare industry, where growth in jobs and wages are projected to far outpace all other regional industries over the next decade. The TC’s project—led by John Silva and The Greater Lawrence Family Health Center and with significant participation from a handful of other regional healthcare employers—will create a ladder from entry level employment through basic certification (as a Medical Assistant or a CAN) leading into higher wage positions, such as LPNs or Community Health Workers. This approach will break the traditional “train then hire” paradigm, which for too many residents presents real barriers to upward mobility, and in turn, does not create a robust pipeline for employers.

By committing to higher levels of support and creating incentives for incumbent workers to participate in training, employers will play a vital role making this strategy successful. The willingness of regional training providers to adapt to meet the needs of employed workers is also vital to ensuring that these pathways are available to a broad swath of the community.

The TC is also looking to pilot this same approach with the manufacturing industry in mechatronics, an emerging training field that integrates electrical and mechanical systems and incorporates computer control and information technology. This hybrid

skills directly responds to the identified needs for those hard to fill jobs for more than a dozen area employers. The training pilot will target both incumbent workers and Lawrence residents. To acquire the equipment needed to get the program running, the TC is working with Northern Essex Community College to apply for the state's Workforce Skills Capital Grant.

Other initiatives driven by the TC respond to striking survey findings; for example, one of the surprises was the degree of difficulty businesses had in promoting employees from within. Employers noted that current employees lacked the necessary leadership, supervisory and managerial skills to take on ever greater responsibility, and therefore increased salaries. In July 2016, Northern Essex Community College submitted a grant application to Commonwealth Corporation to become a regional provider for this kind of training. The college recently received these funds, and beginning in early 2017 it will offer services free-of-charge to smaller employers in the region.

Although the TC hasn't responded directly to a concern, there is evidence that the interaction among employers facilitated by the Partnership is producing benefits. For instance, some businesses hire employees who are not fluent English speakers (about one-third), but most do not. This is a great concern in Lawrence; a substantial percentage of the population doesn't speak fluent English. Moreover, high-impact, English-language learning opportunities are in short supply. While no program has yet been designed to address this need, the Partnership's board members are informally exchanging information about models of operating with bilingual staff to promote English-language acquisition.

As one employer noted:

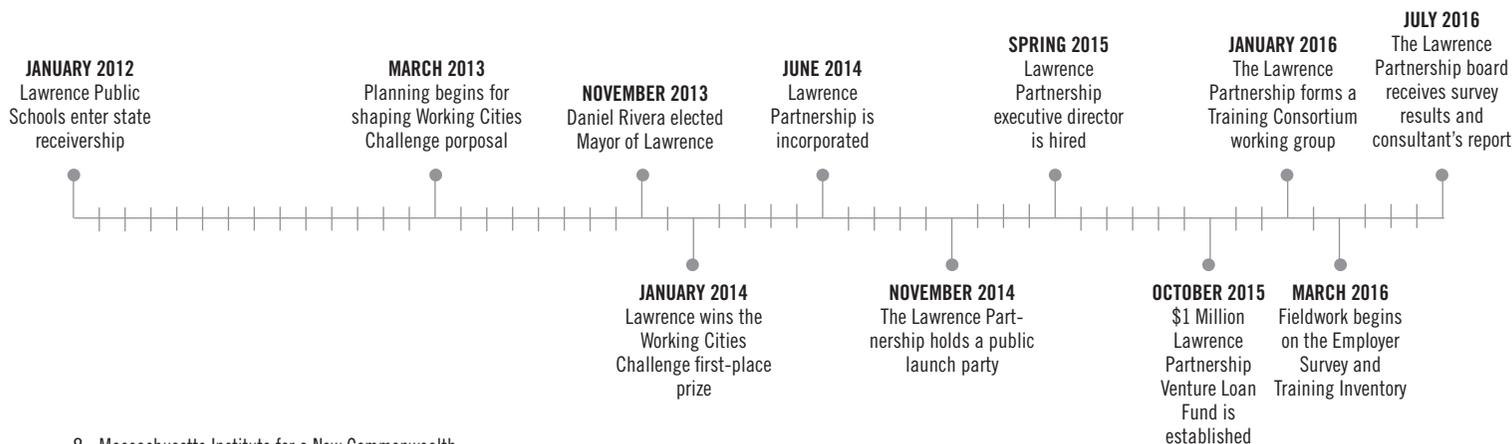
Imagine you walk into a factory and there's people walking all over the factory in white coats, and they're just training and training, talking and talking, whether it's English to Spanish, or Spanish to English. That takes place every single day. And that's fine by me. Now, some people might look and say, 'Oh, my, that person is costing you X number of dollars or X number of man-hours a year, and they really don't perform a task.' But I argue that they do perform a task; they control employee turnover, which is a huge expense.

## An Adaptable Recipe for other Gateway Cities

The Lawrence TC takes the model of workforce programs engaging with employers and flips it around into an employer-led effort. Key ingredients of this initiative offer an adaptable recipe for other Gateway Cities. To summarize, they are as follows:

### Strong convening leadership.

The Partnership's ability to bring together public and private-sector leaders to explore and respond to workforce-development challenges is woven throughout this story. It is worth mentioning that Lane Glenn believes his role as a community-college president was particularly helpful. He suggests to cities wanting to replicate the Partnership efforts that they also consider a president of a college, a hospital director, or a director of another large nonprofit institution as a champion. These anchor institutions tend to serve broad constituencies. While they do need to garner some kind of support, typically they are not viewed as broadly competitive for either business or grant funding.



“It is great to see the private sector, workforce training providers, nonprofit community, and city government coming together to better understand the training needs in Lawrence. Efforts like the Lawrence Partnership are exactly what we need to ensure that Lawrence residents are well-suited for the jobs of today and tomorrow.”

— Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera

### **Belief, faith and easy wins.**

It is essential to believe that things can be better, and that the greater good ultimately benefits everyone. There is a considerable literature on older industrial cities internalizing the pain of economic change, and feeling that the community itself is to blame for its struggles. Getting over the past and looking ahead to a brighter future is critical to building buy-in and generating engagement around a plan to address shared challenges. To reinforce positive momentum, the Partnership focuses relentlessly on beginning each initiative with early victories so that its board members, working group participants, and the community at large can see and feel successes.

### **A paid staff member assuming a leadership role.**

Lane Glenn also emphasizes the importance of having a paid staff member directing the Partnership:

Even with all of [the Board’s] collective will, influence, and resources, we could not create more time in the day. All of us—including me as chair of the board—have day jobs that require our attention. One of the single most important things the Partnership did was collect contributions from board members to fully fund the salary of an executive director, who would be responsible for day-to-day operations, lead us toward our vision, and becoming the voice of our organization. Hiring Derek Mitchell, an entrepreneurial, bilingual dynamo of an ED (in April 2015) has made all the difference for us.

### **Clear information on specific local challenges and solutions.**

Employment challenges are very specific to the needs of regional businesses and the skills of the regional workforce. Nothing should be assumed. It is essential to seek, at a granular level, an understanding of the jobs that are most challenging to fill and the existing supply of training solutions. Then you must probe deeper, communicating with employers and training providers

to continue filling in information, so that the solutions ultimately implemented actually achieve your goals.

### **Share information generously and frequently.**

In order to have the broadest impact, it is critical that businesses, training entities, other collaborators and potential collaborators, and funders, know what you learn as soon as possible. This allows for additional engagement and much more effective responses and interventions. This cannot be overstated. In order for an effort like the TC to thrive, it must grow and maintain relationships. Sharing out is one simple strategy for sustaining critical connections.

## **Endnotes**

- 1 For more on the role of employers in workforce development efforts, see: Randall Eberts and George Erickcek. “The Role of Partnerships in Economic Development and Labor Markets in the United States.” Upjohn Institute Working Paper No. 02-75 (Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2002).
- 2 For an ethnographic study of how industrial decline affects the psyche of a city, see: Sherry Lee Linkon and John Russo. *Steeltown USA: Work and Memory in Youngstown* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002).
- 3 The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s Working Cities Challenge is a competition whereby an independent jury of experts evaluates teams’ applications against criteria that reflect the core elements of the Working Cities Challenge: leading collaboratively across sectors, engaging community members, using evidence to track progress toward a shared goal, and working to improve the lives of low-income residents by changing systems. For more on the Working Cities challenge see: <https://www.bostonfed.org/workingcities/about/index.htm>
- 4 28 voting board members and 10 ex-officio members (public officials all serve ex-officio).
- 5 CDFIs are specialized government financial institutions offering tailored resources and programs that invest federal dollars alongside private sector capital. For more information on CDFIs see: <https://www.cdfifund.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
- 6 For example: Shayne Spaulding and Ananda Marti-Caughey, “The Goals and Dimensions of Employer Engagement in Workforce Development Programs” (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2015); and Amy Liu. “A Blueprint for More Inclusive Economic Growth” *Harvard Business Review* (March 03, 2016).





# THE PHOENIX-BUNKER HILL PARTNERSHIP CASE STUDY

Gateway Cities play an outsized role in building the Commonwealth's future workforce by educating an increasingly disproportionate share of youth in their regions. With focused federal, state, and local leadership, high-school graduation rates have improved dramatically in recent years. Most Gateway City students now finish high school and head directly to public colleges for the additional training required to land jobs in today's economy. The problem is that the vast majority have great difficulty in college. Four out of five fail to earn the post-secondary degrees they'll need to wield their talent most productively in our workforce. Among the myriad of challenges we face, as much as any, this calls for new thinking and disruptive change.

The Phoenix-Bunker Hill Partnership case study is the story of two Gateway City leaders who believe in the imperative to find creative solutions to eliminate this great loss of potential. Although their joint endeavor is still in its infancy, given the urgent need to remedy this challenge, we wanted to call attention immediately to their model and collaborative spirit that lends it particular promise.

## The Birth of Phoenix Charter Academy

In 2006, Phoenix Charter Academy opened in Chelsea, MA. The public-charter high school was founded by Beth Anderson to provide rigorous academics and relentless support to disadvantaged students struggling in traditional schools. From Teach for America in South Central Los Angeles, to Roca in Chelsea, Anderson's years of experience left her emboldened to fight for bright and talented young people in Chelsea whose needs were being inadequately met, who were given up on and had nowhere to turn.

As she saw it, the problem was how alternative education was structured for students who benefit greatly from untraditional learning environments. Alternative schools either offered a great nurturing

setting that didn't push students hard enough to be ready for jobs in our economy, or they were rigorous environments that did not meet the differentiated needs of kids from poor urban neighborhoods, who faced barriers to academic success.

Phoenix was constructed to be both nurturing and rigorous. Students receive individualized instruction. Instead of traditional grades, they are grouped into a category framework and progress at their own pace based on skill acquisition, not seat time. The team provides a high-touch, high-support learning environment to help them overcome problems with childcare, transportation, mental health, and family members, as well as other barriers to educational progress. Despite these challenges, Phoenix will not lower expectations. As Anderson puts it:

Phoenix says we're going to take the toughest students who still can go to a public high school and create a college preparatory environment for them. Does it work for everybody? No, but when you provide loving and nurturing expectations for kids and say we actually think you can do this, they come and they believe. Is it easy for them? No, but they do it.

The model proved to be so sought-after that Phoenix was soon drawn to other communities. First to Lawrence, where Phoenix Academy Lawrence opened in 2012, as part of that system's turnaround plan under state receivership, and then to Springfield, where Phoenix received another public charter. By 2014, the network of three schools was educating over 500 of the state's most difficult-to-serve students.

The Phoenix staff describes its student population as follows. Many of these students dropped out of high school before enrolling in Phoenix. About half are working almost full-time jobs to support themselves and their families. About half are over age



Genevieve de Manio Photography

Phoenix students at work in the classroom.

19 and have few options for high school, aside from Phoenix. One-third are court-involved, and nearly 15 percent are pregnant or parenting. A large portion are undocumented immigrants, nearly half are still learning English, and one in five have significant learning disabilities.

But Phoenix doesn't dwell on these obstacles. They will not lower expectations for their students; to do so would unfairly limit options and waste bright, young talent. The expectation is that all students will complete the rigorous coursework and go on to college.

### Not Nearly Good Enough

Many students have difficulty meeting Phoenix's rigorous academic standards, but the overwhelming majority of those that rise to the challenge enroll at a college. In 2015, nearly 80 percent of Phoenix's graduates immediately went on to post-secondary studies. Further, the one-year college persistence rate (completing two or more semesters of college) for Phoenix graduates who attend college is 75 percent; slightly above the national rate for all students who enroll in college.

While promising, these figures obscure the challenges Phoenix graduates face achieving their college aspirations. Only 12 percent of the students Phoenix sends off to college complete a degree. This is similar to the statewide figure for low-income students earning any type of degree within six years after graduating from

high school. Some might read this as a relatively strong performance, given that all of the students served by Phoenix struggled mightily to make it through high school. For Phoenix, however, it is unacceptable. When their students set out to complete a college degree, the school is dead set on seeing to it that they succeed.

### Forming a Partnership

The majority of Phoenix's Chelsea graduates enroll at Bunker Hill, the neighboring community college. In 2013, Bunker Hill named Pam Eddinger its president. Beth Anderson first met President Eddinger at a Boston Foundation convening. She recalls becoming suddenly rapt by Eddinger's comments at the event. Anderson was especially impressed that Eddinger, rather than offer explanations for the college's low-graduation rate, pledged to improve them. Anderson felt a bond.

For Eddinger, strengthening connections with area high schools would be a central improvement strategy. For the past few years, she has been conscientiously building these relationships, working with high-school leaders to create linkages that give students a firmer footing as they transition to college. Bunker Hill developed especially close ties with Malden High School, dramatically increasing the number of students studying at the college through dual enrollment. (Dual enrollment allows high schoolers to take Bunker Hill classes and earn free college credit, helping them acclimate to the college environment and college-level

coursework.) Bunker Hill recently hired Dana Brown, Malden High's former extremely well-regarded principal, as Executive Director of High School and Community Partnerships.

Eddinger now sees an opportunity to get more deeply immersed in working with Phoenix. On the one hand, she calls it a "convergence of good circumstances"—both schools are looking for new facilities to better accommodate their educational needs and burgeoning student bodies.

But more important, Eddinger and Anderson click. They are both proud tinkerers and rule-breakers. They appreciate that the challenges their students face are highly complex, and understand that solutions and results won't come overnight. But they try, fail, and adapt to improve. They also share a common belief in creating the right environment for student learning. This is what drove Anderson to start Phoenix. And Eddinger has made it a core value for Bunker Hill. As she describes:

Phoenix is creating the right environment for students to learn. And that really is the Bunker Hill philosophy. We believe in something called inclusive excellence. That every student is capable of learning, and we will do everything we can do to shape the environment so that they can learn.

## Co-Creating a New Model

Sharing the same location will enable a much more substantial plan for shared programming. The hope is that this programming will position Phoenix students to move more fluidly and successfully from high school to the community college and then into the workforce. But the only certain thing the two schools know is that it will allow them to test new approaches, to see if they can find a set of effective, post-secondary transition strategies for alternative-education students.

Nuri Chandler-Smith, Dean of Academic Support & College Pathway Programs at Bunker Hill Community College, describes this partnership as first connecting staff so that they are able to collaborate to develop deep, shared understandings, and then chart new strategies to help students succeed. In conversations to date, they have agreed to explore several possibilities, including:

### 1. Modifying and aligning Phoenix curriculum with community-college curriculum and requirements.

Currently, Phoenix curriculum meets the highest standards of the Massachusetts Department of Education, and Phoenix students do well on the MCAS tests required for high-school graduation. But like many students who enter community colleges, most Phoenix graduates need to take developmental courses when they enroll. These developmental courses cost precious money, take precious time, and subtly or overtly deliver a message of failure. Money, time, and feelings of inadequacy are three major reasons why disadvantaged students drop out of college.<sup>1</sup>

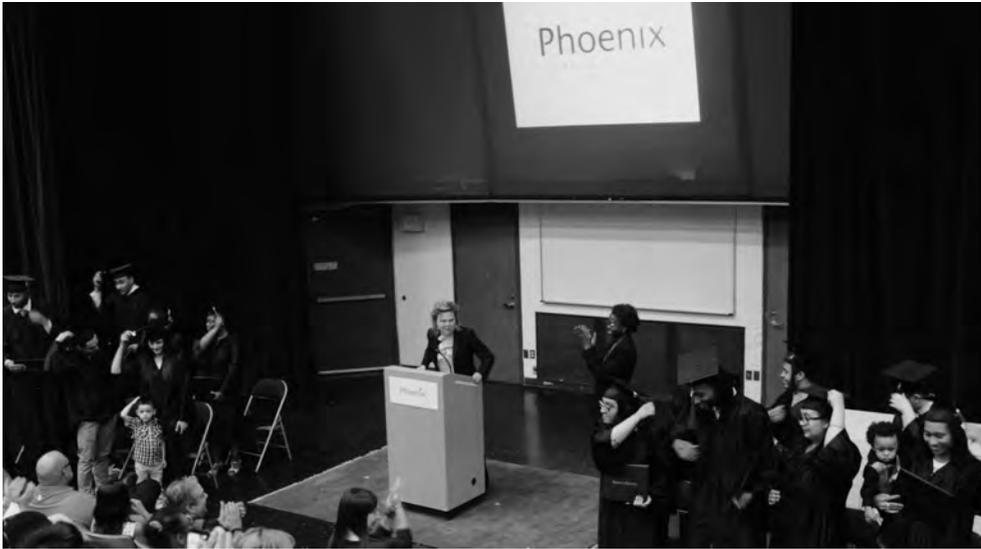
Lack of alignment in curriculum is particularly problematic in math and English. If high-school course content and college expectations differ, students will fail placement tests and require remedial education. According to Chandler-Smith:

When you bring both sets of faculty together to talk through these issues, they have a much better understanding of what students are going through, and this helps them make the transition for students much smoother.

### 2. Building college and career readiness.

Both schools want to experiment with models to offer better preparation for post-secondary success. Leveraging dual enrollment is one major area for exploration. For off-track students, dual enrollment is a chance to make up lost time. Phoenix students can get both high-school and college credit for the same class. While dual enrollment can be offered in the high school or at the college, research suggests on-campus course-taking helps with acclimation and provides better outcomes. The shared facility means that Phoenix can offer its wraparound supports to Phoenix students, and they can take dual-enrollment courses alongside more traditional Bunker Hill students, which closely approximates the ideal format.<sup>2</sup>

Kevin Dean, Head of School at Phoenix Chelsea, says that he'd like to see if the final year at Phoenix could essentially become the first year at college. Among the many benefits of that approach would be elimination of the summer gap, an especially vulnerable time for youth who not only face many challenges but who also have internal doubts about whether they can persevere through college.



Beth Anderson  
addressing  
Phoenix graduates  
and their families.

Dean envisions students working half-time in paid internships and the other half being dual-enrolled in courses. He places particular emphasis on the internship component, and how valuable it is for students who haven't had the same opportunities to understand professional occupations. "Think about the difference between what a scholarship provides and what an internship offers," Dean says, pointing out the imbalance between the doors we can open for disadvantaged students in education, and the doors that remain closed when it comes to offering resources for career exploration and exposure.

Chandler-Smith wants Bunker Hill to be a partner working with Phoenix to tackle the career-development side:

I would like to start talking with students as soon as possible so that they can have time to explore and to look at what all the different options are to have experiential learning, an internship, or work with a mentor. Ideally, I would want to be able to present them with some career exploration starting right in their first year at Phoenix.

Beyond career-development partnerships, Dean believes there also needs to be a major focus on improving nascent efforts to nurture students' social-emotional skills. Self-management, social-awareness, and responsible decision-making skills are increasingly recognized as critical to college and career success. "We need to think about what our curriculum looks like to build those skills, how we assess for them, and create interventions to further develop them."<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Adding substantial, strategic supports for Phoenix students at Bunker Hill.

Eddinger describes Phoenix students as "immigrants in their own educational process." Being able to navigate college is a fundamental skill that requires time to hone. Leaders at both Phoenix and Bunker Hill have a shared belief that students need to develop more "self-advocacy," both during their Phoenix years and as they transition into Bunker Hill. While they build this skill, they will need substantial support.

Talking with current Phoenix students and recent graduates makes it readily apparent how much they rely on the support they receive through the school. Many have no other outlet to get the kind of guidance they need. Three of the four students interviewed for this case study felt unprepared to operate without the support and guidance they have experienced at Phoenix. One described the value of the bond with the Phoenix staff. Another spoke about having no one else to guide her. She describes herself as somewhat independent, but recognizes she does better when someone else helps to hold her accountable. She worries about being on her own after Phoenix, and she's unsure if she can manage.

Ellie Villa-Wilson, the College Services Coordinator at Phoenix Chelsea, is looking to find "a good handoff between the coaches at Phoenix and the coaches here." Though many feel leveraging the relationships students have with their secondary school could be important at various times, there's not much research available on how high schools help their alumni succeed beyond graduation. The Phoenix team hopes that by working more closely with Bunker Hill, they'll be able to figure out how to calibrate the right level of support and deliver it accordingly.

Bunker Hill is already experimenting with a variety of approaches that they may be able to draw from to advance these efforts. One example is a technological tool called LifeMap. When combined with personal attention from faculty and staff, it helps with career planning, advising, counseling, financial planning, and accessing on- and off-campus support services.

### Getting Behind the Phoenix-Bunker Hill Learning Lab

- What is the role of a high school with its graduates, once they are in college?
- What does it mean when you have English-language learners starting at a college?
- How do alternative high schools bolster their finishing classes to lay the groundwork for college entry?

These are just a few of the seminal questions we heard leaders of the burgeoning Phoenix-Bunker Hill Partnership ponder as they explained why they were creating a learning lab. This unique effort to innovate collaboratively could produce lessons that are urgently needed: approximately 40,000 Gateway City residents age 16 to 24—about one-in-six youth in the late-teen to young-adult cohort—are currently disconnected from school, and either working in dead-end jobs or not working at all.<sup>4</sup> Before Phoenix-like models can scale and unlock the talent of all of these “Opportunity Youth,” educators must first demonstrate the know-how to prolong the success of high-expectations high-support alternative high schools all the way into the workforce.

President Eddinger cautions that this will take time. “It’s a developmental process. The partnership won’t be blooming tomorrow. It takes a lot of hands.” Phoenix clearly has a team in place with the fortitude to carry on until they find solutions. Head of School Kevin Dean is very animated at the conclusion of our interview, when he tells us that “the team is still working on getting everything right, every minute of every day, but that’s not preventing us from thinking big, pushing the envelope, and doing right by our scholars.” He is eager for others to step up and help this partnership blossom. “Bringing people with considerable power to the table would be a massive game-changer to create opportunities for access,” he says, reiterating the importance of internships. “If you work with our scholars, the stereotypes and misconceptions melt away.”

Finally, Anderson reminds us why we should all be big backers of this endeavor: “Our students, when we get them to succeed here, it changes them, their children, their family for generations down the road. It is transformational in the most basic sense.”

### Endnotes

- 1 Thomas Bailey and others. “Referral, Enrollment, and Completion in Developmental Education Sequences in Community Colleges” *Economics of Education Review* 29.2 (2010).
- 2 Drew Allen and Mina Dadgar. “Does Dual Enrollment Increase Students’ Success in College?” *New Directions for Higher Education* 158 (2012).
- 3 Clive Belfield and others. “The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning” *Journal of Benefit-Cost Analysis* 6.03 (2015).
- 4 This figure is for the combined population of all 26 state-designated Gateway Cities. See: Benjamin Forman. “Calling All Gateway City Leaders: An Action Guide to Workforce Development Transformation in Massachusetts” (Boston, MA: MassINC, 2016).



# THE PIONEER VALLEY REGIONAL RE-ENTRY PROGRAM CASE STUDY

## Introduction

Nearly two-thirds of individuals sent to state and county prisons in Massachusetts each year have been incarcerated previously.<sup>1</sup> Preventing the unnecessary victimization and cost attached to this cycling in and out of prison requires a comprehensive approach. One of the most important pieces is a better model for connecting former inmates to rewarding work. Criminal records, resume gaps, skills deficits, and a variety of other barriers common among justice-involved individuals make landing a job and advancing toward more responsibility and higher pay excruciatingly difficult.<sup>2</sup>

This issue hits Gateway Cities hard. Urban communities in Massachusetts absorb the vast majority of those released from state and county prisons. When these individuals struggle, cities shoulder the additional crime and all of the related harm and disruption. Gateway City leaders in Hampden County are nationally-recognized for their forward-thinking approach to solve this problem. With Massachusetts gearing up for a major round of criminal-justice reform in 2017, this case study offers an in-depth look at a homegrown model, now known as the Pioneer Valley Regional Re-Entry Program (PVRRP).<sup>3</sup>

## From Early Beginnings to Impressive Results

The PVRRP is a recent expansion of the Hampden County Regional Re-Entry program. The Hampden County model has been in operation for more than a decade. It was nurtured in a fertile environment created by Hampden County Sheriff Michael Ashe. Since taking over the department in 1974, Ashe has always sought to apply his social-work training to address the underlying needs of individuals who fall into his care. Because connections to stable employment are a key ingredient, Ashe's effort took a major leap forward when he found an entry point to the region's workforce development system.

Rich Devine, Director of the Hampden County Sheriff's Department After-Incarceration Support Systems Program, discovered the opening. Devine began as a correctional officer, but he had a business background. In 1989, the Department asked him to use this experience to help people get jobs. With limited resources, he began assembling a collection of partners. In 1999, he met Dave Gadaire, President and CEO of CareerPoint, the One-Stop Career Center in Holyoke. Gadaire was looking to improve CareerPoint's services for formerly incarcerated individuals, and he was convinced that his One-Stop could better serve this challenging population.

Devine knew he had just the person to help CareerPoint link up more directly with the Sheriff's Department and provide better employment services: Ramona Rivera Reno. Reno grew up in Holyoke not far from CareerPoint's offices. She began her career as a childcare provider. Her families often struggled, and she'd try to solve problems and secure resources for them. When Reno left and took a corporate job in the insurance industry, she felt something was missing. She left her corporate job and joined the New England Farmer Worker's Council, where she discovered her passion; helping find jobs for justice-involved individuals.

She was just finishing a six-year, grant-funded stint when Gadaire approached her about working for CareerPoint. Reno candidly told him that his services for ex-offenders "stink." He agreed wholeheartedly with her, and a match was made.

But first they had to find money to hire her. Divine reflects back:

This is where it's kind of unique...the Sheriff's Department and the Regional Employment Board [REB] partnered to fund Ramona's position. We knew that if we could meld the Sheriff's Department services with the One Stop services, then we'd get a good foundation for folks as they transition out. So from that



A Hampden County house of correction inmate in job training.

point on, we've just been trying to enhance, trying to provide the services jointly.

CareerPoint had some advantages that made it easier for them to form this untraditional partnership. As a private nonprofit, it could operate differently and take more risk. Gadiare explains how this has been helpful:

So when we go into working with young men who are coming out of jail for a violent crime—and that's a population that most of the career centers would just absolutely stay away from (for obvious reasons)—we kind of get into it and say, "Well, that's a population that could really use our services." So that kind of private corporation flexibility is something we've been able to use to our advantage.

Upon this simple foundation of individual talent and lead-organization strength, the Hampden County effort blossomed to include many more partners and provide an increasingly long list of wraparound services and supports. All the while, they operated like a learning organization, reviewing data, identifying needs, and forming new partnerships to improve services.

The outcomes are impressive: employment rates average close to 60 percent, with over 1,000 customers served annually. And the rates climb another 10 percentage points for those receiving receive both in-prison services and after care.<sup>4</sup> While recidivism rates aren't strictly comparable across jurisdictions, individuals released from Hampden County recidivate at significantly lower rates than those exiting other county facilities in Massachusetts.<sup>5</sup>

These impressive results have attracted extensive recognition and attention, both in Massachusetts and beyond. Many would like to adopt the model. A few years ago, Steve Trueman, Vice President of Workforce Development Operations at the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, helped secure a Department of Labor grant to expand the reach of the program into Franklin County, where Sheriff Chris Donelan is eager to provide inmates with strong rehabilitation and re-entry services. Trueman's also been facilitating many conversations about replicating the approach statewide.

## The Model

On the surface, the approach is fairly straightforward: provide individuals with the services they need, beginning the moment they are incarcerated and continuing when they are released. Even after they secure a job, keep offering support so they can develop a solid footing and maintain employment.

With limited resources and many individuals to serve, this model requires a strong web of partnerships, beginning with the region's two sheriffs and two workforce investment boards, and the career centers that they operate (FutureWorks and the Franklin/Hampshire County Career Center). These organizations anchor the effort and draw in hundreds of contributing partners, including housing and human-service agencies, community mental-health providers, area businesses, and the Parole Board and the Department of Probation, who administer supervision and offer additional case-management support.

Watch video of interviews with PVRPP leaders at [massinc.org](http://massinc.org).



An incredible amount of effort has been expended to make these services seamless. For example, as early in their jail stay as possible, all offenders are registered in the One Stop MOSES database system, and oriented to the services of the One Stop. When they show up at the One Stop—and they do—they can get services right away, often seeing the same staff they worked with behind the wall.

To make this work, all staff members are cross-trained. Devine says, “They know our systems and we know their system.”

Behind the wall, the partners spend a lot of time working on each client’s Employment Portfolio, a two-pocket folder pre-formatting and printed with a checklist of employment readiness steps. This portfolio allows clients to visualize and track their progress. Staff provides extensive support with resume preparation and a personalized sample job application.

Reno describes why this portfolio is such a fundamental tool:

These guys lost their identities when they went into jail, so how do we help them re-identify? We develop an employment portfolio. When we do someone’s resume, they say, “Wow, this is me?” They didn’t realize all the skills they have because they didn’t have a formal education.

She also notes the importance of sending her staff behind the walls to help clients begin thinking about job opportunities upon release. This allows clients to gain credibility and form relationships that they couldn’t establish on the outside. Lucius Redd, who spent many years in prison, affirms this point: “When I see people from the outside, it motivates me, because here you have them taking time and coming in. It gave me something to look forward to.”

The Employment Portfolio is also vital for job-matching, which Devine singles out as the “strength of our program.” Relationships with employers are a precious commodity. The last thing they want to do is send an individual to work who lacks the skills to do the job.

Trueman reiterates why it’s so important to begin early: “If you don’t start behind the wall, you can’t start as soon as they get out, because they’re faced with so many obstacles. If you’re not already down the road a ways to helping them gain employment, you’ve put yourself in a really tough position.”

Once they help clients find employment, staff makes certain to provide ongoing support, easing the difficult adjustment to the workplace. Positive communication about employee stressors that may be affecting work is critical, as is advocating for employees who may not be comfortable advocating for themselves. At the same time, the PVRPP staff recognizes the needs of the employers to have employees who show up and do the work. No excuses: just information exchange and problem-solving.

Devine cautions that this takes patience:

We want to work with them forever—as long as they need our services, we want to be there for them. It’s not a case of what we call ‘place and pray,’ where we place somebody and pray they make it. That’s not our intention. Our intention is to do the work and facilitate a successful re-entry for every client, as well as make a successful employee for the employer.

## Special Ingredients for Success

The partners, the services, and the funding for the PVRPP can all be replicated—with hard work. But underlying this infrastructure is a set of values and attitudes that are really what makes the PVRPP so successful. Three key ingredients surfaced in our conversations with those involved in the program:

### #1 Positive attitudes and beliefs about clients.

Foremost, they are building a culture that treats clients as individuals. Reno says: “We look at them as returning citizens who are part of our community and need a chance to better their lives.” Respecting the clients in this manner is the only way to serve them effectively. Reno adds, “It’s really important that we spend more time listening to their needs. We’ve gotten better at that. We still have a long way to go.”

Believing in clients also helps the clients believe in themselves. In Reno’s eyes, “They’re just men and women; really good people that just need a second chance. Because I think they can, they think they can.”

### #2 A total commitment to the partnership.

The PVRPP partnerships function like high-level, successful, interpersonal relationships. There are deep connections, commit-



Hampden  
County inmates  
building  
culinary skills.

ment, and respect. There is generosity, support, and teamwork. And there is an unwavering belief in the greater good. Nobody talks about boundaries or job descriptions or fair share or MOUs. Everyone talks about giving more than what is formally their part of the PVRRP program. The platform for these partnerships is the key leadership and their leadership teams at each partner organization. All are of the same mind.

When asked for customer success stories, Reno offers a number of vivid client vignettes, but it's particularly telling how she prizes the partnership: "I think the biggest success is all the partners who stayed at the table when there was no money on the table, and believed that this program worked enough to keep it moving forward, to offer the services that our men and women needed so badly."

Trueman exemplifies the commitment to the work, despite the fact that it is not mirrored by the funding available: "I spend probably 15 percent of my time on this project, whereas the re-entry program itself is probably about two percent of [our] funding. There's a lot of dedication to making this partnership work."

The total buy-in for the partnership allows them to adapt to challenges that otherwise might not be so easily remedied. Reno illustrates:

Transportation's a big issue. Clients may have to go to Probation, go to work, and pick up their kids, all by bus. It could be a 15-hour day. We've had people who couldn't report into Probation before 5pm, when the building closed. So now Probation comes to Career Point and does late check.

### #3 Mission-driven staff.

This [almost] goes without saying, but all of the above is possible because PVRRP staff believes in this effort and have made it their

life's work. They are available 24/7, in perpetuity. This is recognized and honored at every level. Gadaire says that the seven staff "live and bleed" the program. For Reno, "It really comes down to passion. I can't teach somebody passion. I have to hire people with passion."

In part, they also do this by employing people who understand the experience of returning from prison; six CareerPoint staff members have themselves navigated the path home.

## Overcoming the Budgeting Challenge in the Pioneer Valley and Beyond

The most generalizable takeaway from examining the PVVRP model is how much we struggle to embrace funding for re-entry services. Just sustaining this successful project is extremely challenging. While there has been solid evidence showing impact for many years, and considerable interest in replicating the approach, we haven't been able to bring it to scale.

More than anything, the people who have overcome so many barriers and personally given so much to demonstrate the potential of the approach lament this reality.

Partners contribute funding to the initiative almost entirely through grants. Currently, seven or eight grants are in play simultaneously, creating instability and a puzzle of data-management and reports. As one grant expires, another must come in, or else funding is short and staff will need to be laid off. Staff training is expensive, money is wasted, and time and morale are lost in the yo-yo effect of bringing staff on, training them, laying them off and hiring/re-hiring them when funding is again procured. When this happens, fewer staff struggles to do the same work, with more wear and tear as their caseloads grow.

Although the leaders all regret this funding challenge, each is resolute and optimistic that they will keep figuring it out. They all believe that the State should commit funding to this program so they can become less reliant on grants. The Baker Administration clearly recognizes this need. The Governor's FY 2017 budget proposal had allocated \$1 million to support and expand the PVRRP through a new line item. Unfortunately, the legislature reduced the line item to \$250,000, and there is concern that revenue shortfalls may further reduce the funding.

Reno cautions that the line-item approach is not necessarily a panacea:

I've seen a lot of great programs out there, but the problem is they all come as line items. When you start getting some continuity of services, you start building that network, and then Boom! The money's gone. You lay off all the staff. It's really doing a disservice. It works against what we're trying to do.

For Trueman, lack of traction on funding is aggravating because their model actually works. It doesn't make sense for government to discount an approach that so clearly saves money. "Resourcing this properly takes some money, but I think the research certainly has shown that in the aggregate it saves a lot of money. Working with clients to get them gainful employment and reducing recidivism more than pays for itself."

There are signs of hope. In the State Workforce Development Plan, the Baker Administration has pledged to form an Inter-Agency Workgroup on Ex-Offender Employment that will support successful "behind the wall" transitional planning and employment efforts. Drawing on the PVRRP model, the group will explore efforts to use the workforce system to expand geographically and build formal regional connections between public safety, education, health and human services, and workforce systems.

Trueman is cautiously optimistic: "The problem is that you have money in different pots. I think the Baker Administration is looking to remove some of those silos and really understand how those can work together when you have departments that don't always think that way."

Reno wants to see a clearer departure from past practice, providing small doses of intervention to lots of people with severe barriers to employment. "Nobody is cured and nobody is 100 percent after 6 weeks of programming. My most successful people are those who we've worked with over time. They keep coming back for support, even though they haven't been re-incarcerated. Often they just want to check in and let us know how they're doing."

## Endnotes

- 1 Jonathan Jones and Benjamin Forman. "Reducing Recidivism in Massachusetts with a Comprehensive Re-Entry Strategy" (Boston, Massachusetts: MassINC, 2016).
- 2 Research shows that getting a "good job" reduces the likelihood of reoffending, while those who enter low-wage, intermittent work are just as likely to commit new crimes as those who are unemployed. See: Sarah Lageson and Christopher Uggen. "How Work Affects Crime—and Crime Affects Work—Over the Life Course" *Handbook of Life-Course Criminology* (New York, NY: Springer, 2013); Kevin Schnepel. "Good Jobs and Recidivism." University of Sydney Working Paper No. 2014-10 (2014).
- 3 Massachusetts is currently involved in Justice Reinvestment, a federally-funded endeavor to examine data and uncover strategies to operate our criminal justice system in a more cost-effective manner, redirecting the savings toward models that decrease crime and strengthen neighborhoods. This process is expected to conclude in January 2017 with the filing of comprehensive reform legislation.
- 4 This figure represents service levels under the Hampden County Regional Re-Entry Program only. Growth and expansion has more than doubled the number of individuals served annually.
- 5 Martha Lyman and Michael Lupo. "House of Correction Recidivism Report, 2014 & 2012 Releases" (Springfield, MA: Hampden County Sheriff's Department, 2016).

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