

**Mayor Daniel Rourke | City of Lowell**

Daniel P. Rourke is the current Mayor of Lowell and City Council representative of District 1, the Pawtucketville area. He began serving as a city councilor in 2013 and, during his tenure, has served as Vice Mayor in 2016 as well as chairperson for the Public Safety, Neighborhood Services, Elections, and Substance Abuse Subcommittees. As Mayor, he has positioned Lowell as part of the First USA Frontrunner City program on Urban Transformation, further showcasing the city's leadership and innovation.

Dan is employed with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Lowell District Court, as an Assistant Chief Probation Officer. He is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts Lowell with a degree in Criminal Justice.

Along with his professional accomplishments, Dan is a life-long resident of the city. He resides in Pawtucketville with his wife, April, and children, Haley and Zachary. He enjoys his favorite pastime activity coaching the city's youth. He has coached for the Lowell Jr. High Football, Centralville Basketball, as well as Pawtucketville Youth Baseball and Softball.

**Dina Scianna | Foundation Fellow, Eastern Bank Foundation**

Dina joined the Foundation in 2024 with the merger of Cambridge Trust and brings 36+ years of experience working with nonprofit organizations, affordable housing agencies, and community development corporations throughout Greater Boston and Southern NH. She spent the past eighteen years at Cambridge Trust, where she created and grew comprehensive CRA and Community Partnership & Development Programs, as well as a Nonprofit Practice (serving over 1,200 clients). She has strong expertise in helping people achieve equitable access to first time home ownership.

As an Eastern Bank Foundation Fellow focused on advancing systems change for safe and affordable housing, Dina continues to work in an "all-in" way that embodies her "Why" -- which she describes as building community bridges and making a difference. Having grown up seeing her parents' challenging journey as immigrants in Boston, Dina brings a deep commitment to social justice and racial equity. She founded Cambridge Trust's LGBTQ+ Pride Alliance; co-chaired the DEI Committee; was heavily involved in their Women's ERG and served as the Vice Chair of the Cambridge Trust Charitable Foundation. She spends most of her free time serving the community, including as the President of Casa Myrna Vasquez's Board of Directors and as a volunteer for ESOL programs and the preparation of immigrants for the U.S. citizenship test.

**Anne Maglia, Ph.D. | Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, University of Massachusetts-Lowell**

Anne Maglia serves as the vice chancellor for Research and Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. In this role, she oversees the university's research portfolio, including managing large-scale infrastructure projects, fostering research innovation and collaboration, growing industry partnerships, and promoting economic development initiatives, such as the Lowell Innovation Network Corridor (LINC). Her leadership aims to drive innovation and sustainability, aligning with UMass Lowell's strategic goals of enhancing faculty and student success while promoting regional economic growth.

Maglia previously served as a program director and science advisor at the US National Science Foundation (NSF). While at NSF, she managed computational biology programs, led the recovery and re-competition of the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON), and managed several large national BIO centers and institutes.

Prior to NSF, she was professor at Missouri University of Science and Technology, where her funded research program focused on developing computational tools to address complex biological problems. She earned her Ph.D. in Biology from the University of Kansas, holds master's certificates in Program and Project Management from the George Washington University School of Business, and is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP).

**Darnell Dunn | Director of Business Recruitment,
Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce**

Darnell Dunn is the Director of Business Recruitment at the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce. As the Director of Business Recruitment, Darnell is responsible for spearheading the implementation of a comprehensive business recruitment strategy aimed at attracting new businesses to the Worcester region, focusing on key industries and sectors aligned with the city's economic development priorities and initiatives aimed at attracting new businesses to Central Massachusetts. Before his position at the Chamber, Darnell was a Commercial Real Estate Advisor at Rubric Commercial. There, he concentrated on landlord and tenant representation for Office and Industrial property in Central Massachusetts.

A Massachusetts native, Darnell was recently appointed to the Governor's Advisory Council on Competitiveness, which will advise the Governor on issues relating to taxation, business incentives, workforce development, support of innovation, business regulation, and other related factors that affect Massachusetts' economic competitiveness.

Darnell holds a BA in Economics from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He is a member of the Board of the Massachusetts Housing Finance Authority (MassHousing) and a member of the Worcester State University Board of Trustees.



**Representative Carole Fiola | House Chair, Joint Committee on
Economic Development & Emerging Technologies**

Representative Carole Fiola was elected to the House of Representatives for the 6th Bristol District which includes the northern part of Fall River and the Assonet part of Freetown on September 10, 2013. She is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Prior to being elected, Representative Fiola has been a Realtor and also served from 2001 – 2011 as an elected member of the Governor's Council. Representative Fiola was one of 8 council members who provided advice and consent for judicial, clerk magistrate, appellate tax board and other appointees nominated by the Governor.

Representative Fiola serves on the boards of Steppingstone Inc., the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, the Durfee High School Athletic Foundation and has served her community on many boards throughout her career. For the 194th General Court session, Representative Fiola serves as the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies

**Mayor Jon Mitchell | City of New Bedford**

First elected in 2011, Jon Mitchell is New Bedford's thirty-eighth mayor. He has been re-elected five times, and is the City's first mayor to be elected to a four-year term. Jon has worked tirelessly to re-establish New Bedford as one of the leading cities in the Northeast. He has moved aggressively to reform the city's schools, improve public safety, modernize the Port of New Bedford, make city government more efficient, and elevate the quality of life in every neighborhood.

This approach has paid off. Under Jon's leadership, New Bedford has:

- Achieved the highest municipal bond rating in city history.
- Reached the highest high school graduate rate in its history while annually sending students to America's most competitive colleges and universities.
- Lowered violent crime by sixty percent.
- Secured more than \$1 billion in new Port infrastructure investments.
- Maintained its spot as the No. 1 commercial fishing port in the United States.
- Expanded and diversified its maritime economy to take advantage of opportunities surrounding offshore wind, technology and transportation.
- Established itself as an arts and culture hub where the creative economy attracts people to its vibrant Downtown.

Prior to running for office, Jon was an Assistant United States Attorney in Boston, having previously served as a federal prosecutor in Washington, D.C. in the Attorney General's Honor Program. During his career, Jon prosecuted cases of national significance, which included his serving as the lead prosecutor on the task force searching for Boston mob boss James "Whitey" Bulger.

The product of local public schools and the son of public school teachers, Jon graduated from Harvard College and the George Washington Law School. He also served six years in the Army National Guard. He is married to Dr. Ann Partridge, a professor of medicine at the Harvard Medical School and a breast oncologist and Chief Clinical Strategy Officer at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. They are the proud parents of three daughters: Grace, Natalie, and Lauren.

**City Manager Tom Golden | City of Lowell**

Thomas A. Golden, Jr. is the 18th City Manager of the City of Lowell, Massachusetts. On March 30, 2022, the Lowell City Council unanimously selected Golden, who was sworn in on April 28, 2022.

As City Manager, Golden has prioritized quality of life issues in the City as well as economic development, and public safety. Golden has also led the City Council's efforts to implement social justice and equality measures in city government.

Prior to taking office as City Manager, Tom served for 28 years in the State Legislature as State Representative for the 16th Middlesex District. Throughout his career at the State House Tom served on various committees such as Financial Services, Revenue, Healthcare, Energy, Public Safety, Chair of the House Committee on Bills in the Third Reading and Joint Chair of Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. Prior to becoming City Manager, Tom served as a Leader in the House of Representatives for the Speaker of the House.

Tom is a graduate of UMass Lowell (MBA '01, BS '93). As a graduate of Lowell High School, Tom received the Lowell High School Distinguished Alumni Award in 2017. On a community level, Tom has served as the past Chair for the Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau. Tom is a life-long resident of Lowell and resides in Centralville with his wife, Joane and two daughters, Abby and Lilly.

**Carolyn Kirk | CEO, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative**

Carolyn A. Kirk has served as CEO of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech) since [February 2019](#). Kirk has earned a reputation as a fierce advocate for the state's tech and innovation sector by building strong partnerships across industry, academia and government.

Kirk oversees team of almost 90 employees, more than 60 percent of whom are women. In 2024, Kirk was ranked #72 in the [Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts](#), a list created by The Women's Edge and published in the Women & Power issue of The Boston Globe Magazine and again in 2025 ranked #76.

Under Kirk's leadership, MassTech has spearheaded investments statewide and regionally across several critical industries including advanced manufacturing, bluetech/marinetech, cybersecurity, digital health, fintech, robotics and quantum computing. Notably, in 2023, Kirk steered the agency through a highly competitive process that secured [\\$19.7 million to establish the Northeast Microelectronics Hub \(NEMC\)](#), a regional Department of Defense Microelectronics Commons Hub funded through the federal CHIPS and Science Act. And in 2024, Governor Healey signed the [Mass Leads Act](#), which entrusted Kirk and MassTech with \$100 million to establish the Massachusetts AI Hub.

For more than a decade prior to becoming MassTech CEO, Kirk was a government leader at both the local and state level. She served as the first woman popularly elected as the City of Gloucester's mayor for seven years. After departing the mayor's office, she served as the deputy secretary at the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development.

Prior to roles in public service, Kirk's private professional career spans more than 25 years and includes long-time experience as a management consultant, working with clients that included many of the Top 20 U.S. banks along with Fortune 500 companies.

She was raised in Clinton, N.Y. and moved to Massachusetts to attend college, graduating from Boston College.

In 2025, Kirk was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Public Administration from Merrimack College. In the same year, she also accepted, on behalf of MassTech, the Chancellor's Medal for Outstanding University Support at University of Massachusetts Lowell.

**Roberta Brien | Executive Vice President, Worcester Business Development Corporation**

As the Executive Vice President of the Worcester Business Development Corporation (WBDC), Roberta Brien brings a wealth of experience in real estate, project management, and strategic planning. A key leader within the organization, she collaborates closely with the President and CFO on high-level decision-making, financial oversight, and staff assignments. She also manages all WBDC projects and directs fee-for-service activities. With expertise in real estate, community development, and urban planning, Roberta takes a holistic approach to project management. She oversees the development of WBDC-owned properties, facilitates mixed-use projects, industrial parks, and infrastructure expansions, and leads the acquisition, relocation, and asset management of various properties.

Additionally, she plays a pivotal role in securing project financing through new market tax credits, historic tax credits, conventional loans, and state and federal grants. One of Roberta's most transformative projects was the redevelopment of 20 Franklin Street in downtown Worcester. This ambitious three-year initiative resulted in a vibrant, multi-use hub featuring an entrepreneurial co-working space, a downtown campus for Quinsigamond Community College, modern office spaces, a restaurant, and a black box theater. The project significantly contributed to the revitalization of downtown Worcester, attracting new businesses and organizations to the area.

Before joining WBDC in 2004, Roberta served as a Project Manager in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Office of Real Estate under the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance. Managing a portfolio with an annual revenue of \$1 million, she spearheaded the planning, redevelopment, and strategic reuse of state-owned properties. Her career also includes experience as a licensed commercial real estate agent and site selector for national retail chains, where she identified and negotiated prime development opportunities. Additionally, as a transportation planner for a regional planning agency, she gained deep expertise in accessing state and federal grants, community planning, and development strategies.

**Xiomara DeLobato | Vice President & Chief of Staff, Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council**

Xiomara Albán DeLobato is a dynamic economic development leader with over 15 years of experience spanning the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. As Vice President and Chief of Staff for the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (EDC), she drives strategies that strengthen the region's economy, catalyze industry growth, and expand equitable access to opportunity. Her portfolio includes advancing high-impact initiatives in industry sector development, workforce strategy, entrepreneurship, and business attraction.

A recognized change agent, Xiomara has led transformative efforts at institutions including the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Elms College, Springfield College, and the University of New Hampshire, as well as in the offices of Mayor Domenic Sarno and Congressman Richard Neal. She is known for her ability to convene cross-sector partners, secure strategic investments, and build coalitions that deliver measurable results for communities.

Xiomara serves on numerous boards and committees, including New England Public Media, Veritas Prep Charter School, the Town of Wilbraham Finance Committee, and as a Governor-appointed member of both the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA), serving as the Vice Chair of the MCCA, and the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) Board.

**Ben Lamb | Vice President of Economic Development, 1Berkshire**

Dr. Ben Lamb is Vice President of Economic Development at 1Berkshire, where he works to strengthen the Berkshire region's dynamic "inspiration economy" through data informed practice, advocacy, creativity, collaboration, and inclusion. His work centers on building the connective tissue of a thriving ecosystem, one that values quality of life just as much as economic growth, and intentionally uplifts underrepresented and underappreciated voices.

A passionate advocate for curtailing rural brain drain, Ben's research and community involvement lean into helping people see a future for themselves in the places they love. He lives in North Adams with his wife, two children, and golden retriever.

Yvette Dyson | Executive Director, Worcester Common Ground

Yvette joined us in April of 2001; her work here has been described by our funders as among the best in the state. She handles construction management, project development and everything involved in getting our projects from conception to completion. After graduation from Simmons College, she continued her training as an architect at the Boston Architectural Center and as a licensed construction

manager. Her attention to detail and broad understanding of construction and financing has resulted in the outstanding projects we have completed and are planning. Yvette was the Director of Development until becoming Worcester Common Ground's Interim Executive Director in 2012. She was formally appointed Executive Director in July 2013.

**Sarah Meier-Zimblar, Director of Development, Holyoke Housing Authority**

Sarah Meier-Zimblar is the Director of Development at the Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA). She has worked in Holyoke for over 8 years, first in the City's Office of Planning and Economic

Development where she managed the project that became the South Holyoke Homes, a multi-phased rental and homeownership project on vacant municipal land. After the City selected the HHA as the developer of the project in 2018, Sarah joined the HHA where she has overseen three phases of development in South Holyoke. Prior to her work in Holyoke, she was the Manager of Affordable Housing Initiatives at The Actors Fund where she focused on developing artist housing in New York City. She holds a Masters in Urban Planning from Hunter College and B.A. from Wesleyan University. Sarah lives in downtown Holyoke with her family.



Carolyn Read | Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts

Carolyn Read is the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts. She has a deep understanding of the need for affordable housing and passionate commitment to Habitat for Humanity North

Central Massachusetts which stems from an active role on the Board of Directors for three years prior to her role as the Executive Director which began in January 2015. She holds a BS and MBA from Bentley University. She previously worked in the technology industry in business and marketing before volunteering, teaching at the college level and consulting for several years.

**Aaron Vega | Director of Planning & Economic Development,
City of Holyoke**

Aaron Vega is currently the director at the Office of Planning and Economic Development for the city of Holyoke. Aaron served four terms as Holyoke's State Representative and before that, two terms as an At-Large City Councilor. Prior to his life in the public sector Aaron was a documentary film editor for nearly 15 years, working for HBO, TLC, PBS and most notably being part of Ken Burns editorial team for Jazz.

Aaron is the current Board Chair for Mass Humanities and a board member for NEPM and the Community Foundation of Western MA.

Aaron lives in Holyoke with his wife Debra, who is a former radio City Rockette and current dance and yoga teacher. They have a son named Odin who has also taken to the stage and dance between practicing guitar and playing Minecraft.

**Anabelle Rondon | Director of Transformative Development,
MassDevelopment**

Anabelle Rondon is the Director of the Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) at MassDevelopment, a statewide program that drives inclusive economic growth and revitalization in Massachusetts' Gateway Cities. Through TDI, Anabelle leads place-based partnerships that leverage public, private, and community investment to unlock the potential of urban neighborhoods.

TDI has deepened its commitment to the Creative Economy through the Creative Cities Initiative, a targeted investment in Springfield, Lynn, and Fitchburg that strengthens creative infrastructure, supports local artists and entrepreneurs, and integrates arts and culture into broader economic development strategies.

With more than two decades of experience in community development and public-private partnerships, Anabelle is known for advancing people-centered, network-driven approaches that build local capacity and trust. Her work reflects a belief that creativity, collaboration, and social capital are essential to neighborhood transformation and long-term prosperity.



**Allison (Ali) Carter | Director of Economic Development,
City of Lowell**

Allison Carter, AICP is the Director of Economic Development for the City of Lowell. With experience in the private sector and municipal government, Ali has developed a keen sense of the interplay between public and private sectors in achieving downtown revitalization, especially in urban communities. Believing that nothing is accomplished without partnership, Ali strives to work across sectors by leveraging the strengths of private, nonprofit, and municipal entities to achieve community goals.



**Elizabeth Wurfbain | Executive Director, Hyannis Main Street
Business Improvement District**

Since 2010, Elizabeth Wurfbain has led the Hyannis Main Street Business Improvement District (BID) with a mission to make Hyannis a great place to live, work, shop, and play. Under her leadership, the BID has enhanced downtown through maintenance, security, marketing, and events such as the Christmas Stroll, Safe Trick or Treat, Singer-Songwriter Series, Hyannis Open Streets, The Long Table and Hyannis Blooms.

Elizabeth continues to guide new initiatives to strengthen Hyannis's cultural and economic vitality, including exploring an Ocean Side Arts Center, a Hyannis Children's Museum, a Hyannis Welcome Center, and expanding market-rate housing downtown. She collaborates with partners like Cape Cod Healthcare, local municipalities, and key nonprofits to keep Hyannis vibrant and welcoming.

A Centerville resident, Elizabeth serves as Vice Chair of the Cape Cod Children's Museum, sits on the Hyannis International Film Festival Board, mentors students through Barnstable High School, and is active in the Hyannis Rotary Club and International Downtown Association.



**Secretary Eric Paley | Executive Office of Economic
Development**

Eric Paley is the Secretary of the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED). He has worked to shape the innovation economy for more than 25 years as both a successful entrepreneur and a leading venture capitalist. As co-founder and Managing Partner of Founder Collective, Paley helped build one of the world's highest-performing seed-stage venture capital funds, with an investment portfolio that included groundbreaking technology companies across diverse sectors such as transportation, media, healthcare, consumer, advanced manufacturing and enterprise software, including Uber, The Trade Desk, Omada Health, Cruise Automation, Whoop, Formlabs and Airtable. Before Founder Collective, Paley founded and led Brontes Technologies, a hard-tech startup that commercialized novel 3D imaging technology from MIT to enable advanced manufacturing in dentistry. Paley continued to lead the company after its acquisition by 3M in 2006. Paley holds an MBA from Harvard Business School and a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College. He lives in Cambridge with his wife and two children.

**Jon Chesto | Reporter, The Boston Globe**

Jon Chesto covers the leaders who shape Boston's business community. He has been reporting on business and politics in New England for the past two decades. Before joining the Globe, he was managing editor at the Boston Business Journal. Prior to that role, he was the business editor at The Patriot Ledger in Quincy. His weekly Ledger column, "Mass. Market," won several national awards with the Society of

American Business Editors and Writers. A graduate of Wesleyan University and Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, he has also worked as a business reporter at the Boston Herald and as a political reporter with Ottaway Newspapers.