

February 2018



Points of Interest

*An E-Newsletter from the
Vermont Community Loan Fund*

2017: Our Best Year Yet!



For the Vermont Community Loan Fund, 2017 may well be remembered as the year of big numbers.

We celebrated our thirtieth anniversary. We surpassed some major impact totals: 6,100 jobs, affordable homes for 4,000 families, quality early care & learning for 4,000 children and their families. And to cap it all off, 2017 saw us hit an all-time high for single-year lending: 34 loans totaling \$7,363,356! [Read more.](#)

Stay Connected!



Make a Gift
Today



Have news
you'd like to share
about a Loan
Fund borrower?

[Email us!](#)

AquaViTea: An Ancient Beverage, a Modern Success



VT Community Loan Fund Lends \$985,000 in Q4 2017

It's said that Genghis Kahn and Japanese samurai sought kombucha for its energizing properties, and that an ancient Chinese emperor credited his longevity to the fermented tea-based beverage. Siberians scoured their native birch forests to source ingredients for it. In recent times, after the rationing of tea and other goods during World War II, it became ever more difficult to procure.

Now, Middlebury-based AquaViTea is meeting the growing demand for kombucha with a great product, expanding distribution, fresh new flavor blends like Peachmint and Watermelon-Habanero, 'adult beverage' line extensions...and, of course, financing from the Vermont Community Loan Fund. [Read more.](#)

Our Opportunity Finance Network Guest Blog: 'Brightening the Corners'



"Our industry's future, the future of our movement, is in people. Folks

like the "Main Street investors" that power the Vermont Community Loan Fund. They're everywhere, and they're ready for us. Are we ready for them?"

In a guest blog post for [Opportunity Finance Network](#) (a national network of Community Development Financial Institutions, or CDFIs, like the Loan Fund), our Director of Investment & Philanthropy Jake Ide looks toward the future. [Read more.](#)

VCLF Partner's Name Change Puts the Focus on Advocacy

V E R M O N T EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

The [Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance](#) announced that in an effort to highlight the organization's primary focus, it has added the word "Advocacy" to its name.

The new name reflects the organization's long-standing history of bringing together advocates from many areas of public policy to realize the promise of every Vermont child. [Read more.](#)

Welcome to the VCLF Family!

Elena Gustavson joined the Loan Fund last August in the new position of Business Advisory Specialist, providing borrowers with support and training in business, marketing and financial strategy, organizational planning, executive skills development and more.

A native Californian and longtime Vermont transplant, Elena brings with her a wealth of experience, having previously served as Executive Director of the Rutland Area Farm & Food Link, Program Director at the [Center for an Agricultural Economy](#), founder and owner of her own restaurant, and consultant to multiple nonprofits, farms and small businesses. Elena serves on the board of [Rural Vermont](#), a small, agriculturally-focused nonprofit, and lives in Montpelier with her three teenagers, Grace, Mason, and Lillian, and their very sweet and well-behaved rescue dog Mi-Na.



Bonnie Smoren, our newest Loan Fund staffer, has held a variety of roles in international and domestic community development nonprofits. As a Loan Coordinator, she works with borrowers, assisting them through the various steps of the lending process.



Bonnie says she enjoys her new role encouraging the development of innovative new businesses in Vermont. She also enjoys English and Scottish country dancing, and catching up with her three adult children (two in Vermont, one in Colorado). She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Trinity College. Originally from Rochester, New York, Bonnie is delighted to make her home in Vermont.

Loan Fund Joins CCTV Panel Discussion on Vermont-Focused Impact Investing



Want to know everything there is to know about Vermont-focused impact investing and social enterprise? Join [VSECU's](#) Simeon Chapin, [Old Spokes Home's](#) Laura Jacoby, [Spectrum Youth and Family Services's](#) Mark Redmond, [CCTV's](#) Lauren-Glenn Davitian and the **Loan Fund's** Jake Ide to find out.

Watch [here](#). Thanks to [CCTV](#) and [Common Good Vermont!](#)



Creating Opportunities Leading to Healthy Communities
and Financial Stability for ALL Vermonters

