

NoteWorthy

VERMONT COMMUNITY LOAN FUND

Spring/Summer 2013

VCLF and Brattleboro: Partnering for Progress

With its festivals and cultural events, its bustling businesses and community organizations, Brattleboro is hardly a sleepy little town. All that energy and activity may explain how the Vermont Community Loan Fund has come to fund multiple enterprises there. *NoteWorthy* recently stopped in to visit some of our Brattleboro borrowers, past and present...

FOR ART'S SAKE

An Art Deco movie palace replete with columns, constellations, and images of gods and goddesses, Brattleboro's beloved **Latchis Theatre** opened in 1938, featuring a hotel, eateries, retail establishments and more. The Latchis family owned and operated the business for over six decades. In 2003, the Brattleboro Arts Initiative (now Latchis Arts) was looking for a home, and was steered by Paul Bruhn of the Preservation Trust of Vermont to meet with the Latchises, who were ready to sell. When discussions turned to financing, Bruhn suggested the Vermont Community Loan Fund.

Latchis Arts' Managing Director Gail Nunziata recalls the excitement of finding the landmark future home — and the Loan Fund. "VCLF was our knight in shining armor," recalls Nunziata. "The Loan Fund made the purchase of our building possible. It was an amazing collaborative effort."

In 2011, Tropical Storm Irene caused \$650,000 worth of flood damage. The screens went dark and the hotel was shuttered temporarily, but Latchis made it through, reopening in just two months after extensive clean-up and restoration. For 2013, Latchis' 75th anniversary year, a capital campaign is underway to replace aging seats and restore the beautiful zodiac-themed ceiling in the main hall.

Latchis now employs 20 full- and part-time staff, and leases 14 separate spaces in the main building and annex, providing storefronts and homes for a jeweler, a boutique, a hair salon, an attorney, and a handful of artists who rent studio space...including Kay Curtis, owner of Brattleboro's Happy Hands child care (read on for more about Kay!).

Nunziata also notes the vital part that the Latchis plays in supporting the local economy, arts and otherwise. "At Latchis, we host a number of local cultural and arts festivals and events for other local organizations. Whenever possible, we purchase local goods and services. And we bring in all those tourists who eat, shop and celebrate the arts in Brattleboro. Thanks to VCLF, Latchis is a wonderful community resource."



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From the Executive Director

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Dear Friends,

When I talk about the Loan Fund with folks, I usually focus on how widespread our impacts have been. Over the past 26 years, with over \$75 million lent, benefiting hundreds of thousands of Vermonters...you can point to any spot on a Vermont map, and the Loan Fund has been there!

We want to do something different with this issue of *NoteWorthy*. Instead of thinking about how broadly we've touched communities near and far, we want to tell you all the different ways, across all of our programs, we've been able to create opportunities leading to health, wealth and well-being in a single community, for those Vermonters who call it home.

Brattleboro was the obvious choice. We made our first loan there back in the spring of 1988, and we've continued to support small businesses and community-based organizations of all stripes, affordable housing developers and so many more since then. It's been wonderful and immensely gratifying to see the 'ripple' effect created by our investments in Brattleboro. Businesses have started up and grown. Housing stock has been rehabilitated and added to. Children and families have greater access to quality care. Families are thriving and neighborhoods are moving forward. We're proud to be a part of it, and proud to continue our work in this unique and vibrant town.

Will Belongia, *Executive Director*



Will Belongia
Executive Director

“Families are thriving and neighborhoods are moving forward. We're proud to be a part of it.”

Brattleboro Borrowers Since 1988:

- Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust
- Georgette Bieghle Home Daycare
- Green Mountain Optics
- Jen's Home Child Care
- Latchis Theatre/Preservation Trust of VT
- Miranda Tremblay and Nathan Murray – child care
- Tri-park Co-op Housing Corporation
- Westgate Housing Limited Partnership
- Western Avenue Housing Limited Partnership
- Whetstone Housing Limited Partnership
- Windham-Windsor Housing Trust



Small Business Lending

5 loans **\$361,000**

- Bridport Creamery, Bridport
- Resort Ski Shops, Killington (dba The Great Outdoors)
- Walker Motors, Barre
- Webiomass, Rutland
- William Austin's Antiques, Chester

Child Care Lending

2 loans **\$126,600**

- Amalia Chapano-Hammond home child care, Burlington
- Giggles Family Childcare and Preschool, S. Burlington

Housing & Community Facilities Lending

7 loans **\$3,005,706**

- Champlain Housing Trust, Burlington (2 loans)
- Chittenden Housing Corporation, Winooski
- ECHO Housing Ltd. Partnership, Burlington
- Randolph Area Community Development Corp., Randolph
- Rutland County Parent Child Center, Rutland
- Rutland Housing Authority, Rutland

Total Loans

14 loans **\$3,493,306**

VCLF and Brattleboro

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GET HAPPY

Kay Curtis, owner and director of **Happy Hands — A School for Little People**, clearly has a handle on what makes kids happy.

The home-based child care facility occupies a remodeled structure alongside Curtis' Brattleboro home. It's a space filled with light, artwork, books, pet dwellings — homes to one white rat, three birds and several fish. Beyond the big windows, an organic garden serves as a culinary and botanical discovery zone, yielding veggies the children harvest, prepare, eat and even compost.

Happy Hands got its start in 2003 when Curtis noted the need for quality child care in the area. When she was ready to expand and double her enrollment in 2010, she contacted the Loan Fund.

"Hope Campbell (VCLF Director of Child Care Lending) helped me through the entire process, including helping me come up with a five year business plan," recalls Curtis. That led to a stellar 4-STAR rating from the State of Vermont's STARS child care quality rating program.

Curtis now employs three part-time staff, who are paid well above the state average wage for a child care provider. Sixty percent of her students come from low-income families receiving state subsidy. Curtis also has become a strong, respected advocate for child care providers throughout Vermont. "It's another way I feel I contribute to supporting the child care providers in our state," she says.



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Invest in Vermont!

In every corner of our state, VCLF investors strengthen Vermont. They create and preserve jobs, ensure that Vermonters have homes that are both safe and affordable, provide critical community services, preserve our working landscape, and provide quality child care, creating healthy beginnings for Vermont's youngest citizens.

It's easy to help. VCLF offers a variety of investment options to accommodate your social and financial goals. Call Jake Ide at 802-223-4423 for more information about all of the benefits you receive when you invest in VCLF.

Current Investment Rates*

Social Investment Term Account					Social Investment Cash Account
1-2 Years	3-4 Years	5-6 Years	7-9 Years	10+ Years	No Term, Withdrawals on Demand
1.0%	1.5%	2.5%	2.75%	3.0%	0.5%

* Rates as of April 1, 2013. Lower interest rates allow us to keep financing affordable to borrowers, increasing the impact your investment has in Vermont communities. Rates are subject to change.



VCLF and Brattleboro

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HI-TECH SUCCESS

Ask Joanne Patalano about her field — web design — and she'll tell you it's all about staying on top of the ever-advancing technology...which is exactly what brought her to VCLF.

Patalano started her own web design firm, **Eservices of Vermont** in Brattleboro, in the late 1990's. With a growing roster of clients who wanted to incorporate the latest technology into their sites, Patalano sought out learning opportunities from a variety of resources.

Referred by a friend, she heard about the Loan Fund and its administration of Vermont's RBEG (Rural Business Enterprise Grants) grants, funded through a partnership with USDA Rural Development. RBEG grants can be used for business-building technical assistance, such as marketing, research, product development, learning opportunities and more.

Patalano was thrilled to learn she'd been awarded a grant, which she used to enroll in a web development course. "The class improved my skills and caught me up with the current technology," she says. More than a decade later, Patalano has added a multitude of new skills and programs, and commutes to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst where she is a full-time web developer and designer. But she still services clients with her Brattleboro-based business. "I'm grateful for the generous grant I received from VCLF. It was an important part of my career growth and introduced me to new technologies that I still use today."

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HOME TOWN

In the late 1980's, their town facing a housing crisis, a group of Brattleboro residents came together to form the Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust (BACLТ) to purchase, rehab and preserve housing that could become affordable in

perpetuity. And it was then and there that the Vermont Community Loan Fund made its very first loan. In the intervening years, BACLТ has expanded to address housing needs beyond Brattleboro, and into the greater Windham and Windsor county areas. Their larger reach is reflected in their new name — **Windham-Windsor Housing Trust (W-WHT)** — now the third largest community land trust in the country.

From that first collaboration, the Loan Fund and W-WHT have partnered to rehabilitate and build many homes affordable to lower-income Vermonters.

Projects include:

- 13 affordable homes on Western Avenue
- 20 affordable homes in the Whetstone project
- 15 affordable homes via the rehabilitation of three historic properties on Oak Street and Homestead Place
- Multiple affordable homes downtown and near downtown preserved via the Abbott Neighborhood Housing Project, leading to important neighborhood revitalization

