



workingcities challenge



METRO★HARTFORD ALLIANCE
Working Cities, Thriving Communities
August 8, 2018
Eric S. Rosengren, President & CEO
Federal Reserve Bank of Boston



WHAT IS THE WORKING CITIES CHALLENGE?



KEY FEATURES

- Based on Fed research showing economic resurgence for smaller post-industrial cities possible; key elements: collaboration and leadership on shared economic vision
- Eligible to compete: struggling smaller post-industrial cities
- Proposals must be ambitious and
 - unite public, private, non-profit sectors, and community members
 - focus on improving lives of low-income people and diverse residents
 - create systems change
- **One proposal per city:** must create shared vision and team to carry out effort
- **Merit-based:** Winners chosen by *independent, expert Jury* based on public criteria (Fed not on Jury)
- Three-year efforts supported by extensive *technical assistance* and independent evaluation

WORKING CITIES CHALLENGE IN NEW ENGLAND

- Competition for three-year grant funds. Grants are modest in size (\$400–\$475k) and contributed by private, public and philanthropic partners (no funds from the Federal Reserve)
- Over \$10 million in award funds contributed by 63 funders to date
- State-by-state model. Current states: Massachusetts (2 rounds), Rhode Island, and Connecticut
- Expansion to northern New England states (VT, NH, ME) currently in planning with adaptations for rural areas

		
MASSACHUSETTS	RHODE ISLAND	CONNECTICUT
Round		
1 Lawrence Fitchburg Chelsea Holyoke		Danbury East Hartford Hartford Middletown Waterbury
	Round	
	2 Haverhill Lowell Springfield Pittsfield	
	Cranston Newport Providence	

CLOSER TO HOME

- Connecticut Working Cities Challenge winners—Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Middletown, and Waterbury—each received \$450,000 in 2018
- Initiatives focus on workforce development for lower-income residents
- Cities are addressing difficult issues, including racial equity

DANBURY

‘DanburyWORKS’ is addressing barriers (language and childcare) to help move residents into job and educational training programs to improve economic self-sufficiency

E. HARTFORD

E. Hartford ‘CONNects’ brings together employers, workforce intermediaries, job seekers to create a career development culture that leads to family-sustaining employment

HARTFORD

‘South Hartford Young Adult Employment Zone’ focuses on poverty and the need for an educated workforce to attract and retain employers to the city and region

MIDDLETOWN

‘Middletown Works’ is developing meaningful employment opportunities for single parents and provide them with training and resources to obtain a living wage and career-sustaining work

WATERBURY

‘River Baldwin ASPIRA’ realigning and relocating job training services and revising childcare decision-making policies to be more equitable in the South End neighborhood

WCC AT WORK: LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS

New CEO economic development group: Lawrence Partnership. Lawrence WCC effort and Partnership together tackling city-wide local hiring campaign

- Major **new family support system** created for schools has counseled, referred, and trained nearly 1,000 parents to date.
- Over **250 parents placed in jobs; 25 percent average increase** in wages
- Launched the state's first **Pay-for-Success** immigrant jobs effort outside of Boston
- **New parent engagement model** piloted with 650 parents, now being adopted across school system (9,500 families)
- School turnaround successful so far – significantly moving the needle on graduation rate
- **CEO-to-CEO effort** to improve healthcare and manufacturing hiring involving 7 manufacturing and 6 healthcare employers
- WCC implementation grant **leverages more than \$1.6 million** in direct philanthropic and public-sector funds



COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP & OPPORTUNITY

- Cross-sector collaboration is fundamental ingredient for success.
- Public, private, nonprofit sectors and residents engage and problem solve in new ways
- How can the business community become involved?





working cities
challenge