

THE J. WARREN & LOIS MCCLURE FOUNDATION

Promoting access to postsecondary and career education for Vermonters

OUR GIVING PHILOSOPHY & AVAILABLE GRANTS

What do 1,500 electricians, nearly 4,000 nurses, and over 700 web developers have in common? These are the kinds and numbers of promising jobs expected to open in Vermont in the next ten years. However, these and other promising Vermont jobs largely require education and/or training after high school. As few as 37 percent of Vermont's low-income high school students pursue such education after graduation. With that gap in mind, we envision a Vermont where all people have abundant opportunities for career education and advancement and where no promising position goes unfilled for lack of a qualified applicant. We believe that as philanthropists, educators, learners, and civic leaders communicate and collaborate to improve and promote educational opportunities within the state, Vermont's most important resource—its people—become more fully empowered.

WHAT WE FUND

The J. Warren and Lois McClure Foundation focuses its funding on efforts that improve equitable access to the postsecondary and career education that leads to Vermont's most promising jobs. The Foundation uses a combination of competitive and invitation-only grant processes to fund a wide range of efforts and programs aligned with its mission.

Its annual **competitive grant program** supports growth-stage efforts and programs seeking funding to pilot a model, demonstrate effectiveness, or expand delivery. These annual grants typically range from \$15,000 to \$60,000. Successful growth-stage grant applicants are often invited to apply for continuation funding.

The Foundation's **invitation-only grant processes** award multi-year sustaining grants to proven programs and to support mission-aligned convenings. These sustaining grants typically range from \$1,500 to \$6,000 annually. [Read more about the Foundation's sustaining grants](#). On occasion, the Foundation also invites proposals for up to \$90,000 grants focused on systems development and/or systemic change.

A core value of the McClure Foundation is working cooperatively with those who are focused on similar objectives. To that end, its funding focus is intentionally aligned with both [the Vermont Community Foundation's commitment to closing the Opportunity Gap](#) and to [Advance Vermont's commitment to increasing the percentage of working-age Vermonters with a postsecondary degree or credential of value](#). It is also committed to learning from and alongside other education equity, postsecondary attainment, and workforce development practitioners and funders.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Over 60 High-Pay, High Demand Vermont Careers Identified by McClure Foundation and VT Department of Labor

(STATEWIDE) Electricians, nurses, and web developers are just some of the 60 plus Vermont careers expected to pay at least \$20/hour and have at least 250 openings over the next decade. Newly updated research from the J. Warren & Lois McClure Foundation and the Vermont Department of Labor makes clear that high-pay, high-demand jobs do exist in the Green Mountain State for people of all interests and backgrounds. While they don't all require a 4-year degree, the data reveals that employers are usually looking for training and education beyond a high school diploma.

The 62 job categories listed in the free easy-to-use brochure include information on median wages, number of projected openings, and minimum education requirements. Most of the jobs require certificates, apprenticeships, associate's degree, bachelor's degrees, or beyond. Yet only 60% of Vermont's high school graduates are enrolling in postsecondary education within 16 months of graduation and for low-income graduates that rate drops to 37%. This "training gap" means a lot of current openings are unfilled due to a lack of qualified candidates.

The accompanying online resource, called *Pathways to Promising Careers* (www.mcclurevt.org/pathways), lists the Vermont-based training and education programs that will put students and jobseekers in the state on the right track to rewarding careers.

For a limited time, the McClure Foundation, a supporting organization of the Vermont Community Foundation, is offering grants for programs that connect Vermonters with these training and education pathways. This grantmaking support dovetails with the Community Foundation's work to [close the opportunity gap](#) — the divide in access to education, jobs, health, and community vitality that keeps many Vermonters from getting ahead in life.

"We envision a Vermont in which everyone has the access to the education they need to succeed in the workforce and that no promising job goes unfilled for lack of a qualified applicant," explains McClure Foundation Senior Philanthropic Advisor Carolyn Weir. "That's why we're thrilled to know that information about these jobs is helping students choose career pathways and helping adults build their credentials or switch career tracks."

Fifty-five thousand of these free updated brochures are being distributed to high schools, colleges, state agencies, counseling organizations, and nonprofits across the state. Since its first edition four years ago, there has been consistent feedback that this simple, concise resource has prompted career changes and helped guide Vermonters' decisions about education and training pathways.

“This resource reflects the enormous diversity of jobs in the state. There are tremendous employment opportunities right here in Vermont for people of all interests and backgrounds. The goal of our work is to promote the skills in demand and dispel some of the myths about our local economy,” says Mathew Barewicz, Economic and Labor Market Information Chief at the Vermont Department of Labor.

The McClure Foundation and the Vermont Department of Labor hope the data will also help colleges, legislators, employers, and career counseling organizations inform programming and strategy. Grant funding from the McClure Foundation is available to support the growth-stage programs of nonprofits, schools, workforce development groups, and others working to build equitable access to career and college education for low-income Vermont learners. Learn more about the application guidelines and funding priorities at www.mcclurevt.org.

For more information or to request copies of the *Pathways* brochure, visit www.mcclurevt.org/pathways or contact Carolyn Weir at cweir@vermontcf.org, 802-388-3355 ext. 239, or through Twitter [@McClureVTFdn](https://twitter.com/McClureVTFdn).

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The McClure Foundation promotes equitable access to college and career education for all Vermonters and has granted out more than \$4 million since 2008 in support of that goal. Through grants and convenings, the foundation continues the family tradition of project-oriented, collaborative philanthropy practiced by its founders, J. Warren and Lois McClure. To learn more about the foundation, which is a supporting organization of the Vermont Community Foundation, visit mcclurevt.org.

The Vermont Department of Labor's mission is to promote Vermont's economic strength by assisting employers with job creation, retention and recruitment; coordinating the education and training of our workforce for Vermont's current and future job opportunities; ensuring that Vermont workers have well-paying jobs in safe work environments; administering economic support and reemployment assistance to workers who suffer a job loss or workplace injury; and providing labor market information and analysis to enable effective planning and decision-making relating to economic, education, labor and employment policies and direction. To learn more about the Department visit www.labor.vermont.gov.

The Vermont Community Foundation inspires giving and brings people and resources together to make a difference in Vermont. A family of hundreds of funds and foundations, we provide the advice, investment vehicles, and back-office expertise that make it easy for the people who care about Vermont to find and fund the causes they love.