

VDOL Recruitment Pilot Grant

Grant#2050REL06

Reporting Key Highlights: (4/1/21 - 6/30/21)

Reporting Due Date: 7/15/21

Adapting to a Reopening Vermont

Despite the promise of eased restrictions on travel and commerce, the workforce needs that employers face are as preeminent as ever. As detailed in the Q2 and Q3 reports, BDCC has responded by building out systems for recruiting and retaining a steady stream of newcomers as well as providing direct support for employers.

As Vermont led the nation in vaccination rates during this quarter, BDCC continued facilitating a wide range of online events and began planning for the incorporation of in-person events into existing program structures.

Programs and Services Updates

For a more detailed overview of the programs referenced below, please see the highlights from Q1 reporting.

TERR - Targeted Expertise Recruitment and Retention

In this quarter BDCC conducted a LinkedIn Recruiter employer training to increase awareness about this recruiting resource. The Talent Specialist also worked with four employers on the following high-level initiatives involving developing job descriptions, LinkedIn candidate searching and outreach, and in several cases providing white glove services to new hires.

- Summer Internships - general posting
 - **654** Unique views
- Resident Services Manager - Windham and Windsor Housing Trust
 - **58** Unique views
- Housing Services Coordinator - Windham and Windsor Housing Trust
 - **71** Unique views
 - **1** Candidate clicked through to employer website
- Benefits Administrator - Brattleboro Memorial Hospital
 - **214** Unique views
 - **2** Candidates clicked through to employer website
- Business Services Assistant - New England Center for Circus Arts
 - **110** Unique views
 - **1** Candidate clicked through to employer website
- Maintenance Technician - Windham and Windsor Housing Trust
 - **77** Unique views
 - **1** Candidate clicked through to employer website

- Manager of Education & Community Engagement Programs - Brattleboro Museum & Art Center
 - Provided concierge-level assistance in connecting them to volunteer and leadership opportunities
- Provided 1-on-1 guidance to **3** young professionals in career transition

BDCC's Talent Specialist and workforce team continues to build and expand relationships with hiring managers, meeting with major employers including:

- Brattleboro Food Co-op
- Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
- Commonwealth Dairy
- Brattleboro Retreat
- M&S Development
- Fulflex
- Chroma Technology
- Brattleboro Memorial Hospital

Stay to Stay

BDCC continues to provide virtual information sessions to prospective vermonters, and—with the easing of in-person restrictions—has begun providing high-touch experiences for those making visits to Windham County.

Of those engaged, a significant portion indicated a desire to visit or move to Vermont within the next year. In one notable instance, BDCC's Talent Specialist spoke with a family of five from Puerto Rico who sought better economic prospects than they felt their current home could offer. The father has a Master's Degree, the mother is studying to be a nurse midwife. They received an overview of Southeast Vermont, the job market, and specific resources that could help them plan a move. Emboldened by the direct support, the family acted quickly. They planned a trip to Brattleboro, during which time the Talent Specialist provided "white glove" welcome and support. The husband has secured employment with C&S Wholesale grocers, and they are currently in talks to move into a 3-bedroom home in the Summer.

Update: With the Talent Specialist's assistance, this family has relocated to Brattleboro and has been moved into BDCC's retention pipeline.

Prospective Vermonters Through Stay to Stay

*Outreach to **233** individuals and families*

***6** Small group informational sessions totalling **62** participants*

*Provided 1-on-1 assistance to **5** visitors*

SoVT WWP: Southern Vermont Welcome Wagon Project

Momentum continues to develop, with three monthly newsletters to program participants and further integration into BDCC's recruitment and retention ecosystem. Following the pilot partnership with Out in the Open to provide LGBTQ newcomers with community connections, BDCC's Talent Specialist has been coordinating with other organizations such as United Way of Windham County, Early Education Services, and Susu CommUnity Farm. These partnerships provide young professionals, families and BIPOC newcomers with information about these organizations as well as direct access to the people who run them.

Welcome Wagon Engagement

15 New Participants

22 New Hosts

3 Newsletters

11 Connections Made

BDCC continues to be a leader in developing systems and best practices for staffing the Vermont Welcome Wagon Project, providing guidance to other regions interested in joining. BDCC has agreed to provide fiscal sponsorship to VWWP to increase this volunteer organization's capacity to respond to growing demand, better manage volunteer networks and expand to more regions.

SoVTYPs: Southern Vermont Young Professionals

Under the leadership of its **12** volunteer Steering Committee members, SoVTYPs continues to develop meaningful social and professional opportunities for Southern Vermont's young professionals. Yps during this quarter have put special attention to broadening the kinds of events and activities offered in order to appeal to a wider range of the young workforce.

In addition, SoVTYPs continues to provide a platform to connect with state officials through events like the Southern Vermont Economy Summit's YP Town Hall event. BDCC's Talent Specialist also met with Representative Welch's staff to discuss future events and ensure that young professionals in the region have a voice at the federal level.

Young Professional Network (192 Members)

4 events with 127 participants

Paid Internship Program

BDCC continues to maintain relationships with educational institutions such as the Community College of Vermont, University of Vermont, and Franklin Pierce University. These connections along with posting employment opportunities to the Handshake platform on behalf of employers will ensure that Southeast Vermont will be visible to students in and around the region.

Additionally, BDCC is leveraging its experience facilitating internship opportunities in its Windham Summer Internships program. The Talent Specialist provided key support in employer outreach and program marketing. See the relevant excerpt from that program's report below (full report attached):

Internship Positions

BDCC reached out to **over 40 local employers** to create positions for summer interns. As of early July, based on general outreach to businesses with an emphasis on those that have successfully hosted interns in the past, and 12-15 have indicated an interest in hosting an intern (<https://brattleborodevelopment.com/windham-internships-press/> and <https://brattleborodevelopment.com/windham-summer-internships/>). In addition, BDCC makes inquiries to specific businesses based on the skills and interests of interns (see below).

Outreach

Having finalized the tools and processes for administering the program, BDCC was able to launch the Windham Summer Internships program with a dedicated web page, inclusion in BDCC's newsletter, and a press release to local outlets.

This broad promotion was followed up with a round of direct outreach to employers. As a result, the following positions were offered by employers.

- Customer Service and Event Management
- Arts Education
- Information Technology
- Graphic Design, Social Media and Digital Marketing
- Sound & Lighting for Stage
- Human Resources
- Nonprofit Funding Development
- Safety Engineering/Industrial/Process Engineering
- Accounting/Finance

With a robust offering of quality opportunities, BDCC was able to pursue a targeted digital marketing strategy through paid advertisements on Facebook and Front Porch Forum. Through these paid ad placements, the program had **18,299 online impressions** and **195 link clicks**.

BDCC received **31 inquiries** about the program through the linked Cognito form submission platform.

SoVermont Summit

One of the programmatic goals of the recruitment pilot is to engage more people in welcoming newcomers, and to increase understanding of the role newcomers play in our communities and economy. The annual Southern Vermont Economy Summit took place in mid-May over three

days. BDCC organized the Summit in partnership with BCRC/BCIC as part of a long term strategy to increase the economic vibrancy of the Southern Vermont Economic Zone.

Each day featured a New to Vermont lunch, each with a different theme and panelists specific to the theme. The high level of attendance and engagement during these panels indicates an increasing awareness of the importance of welcoming new Vermonters.

- Covid Newcomer - Here to Stay? - **94 participants**
- New American to New Vermonter - **59 participants**
- How New People Generate New Opportunities - **60 participants**

Partners in these sessions included local Chambers and Downtown organizations, the Community Asylum Seekers Project, NextStage. Speakers included asylees, remote workers, people recruited to local jobs, “returners” and other new Vermonters.