



VERMONT
COMMUNITY ACTION
PARTNERSHIP

VCAP LEADERSHIP



BROC Community Action
 TOM DONAHUE
 tdonahue@broc.org
 802-665-1723
 45 Union Street, Rutland VT 05701
Serving Rutland and Bennington Counties



Capstone Community Action
 ALISON CALDERARA
 acalderara@capstonevt.org
 802-479-1053
 20 Gable Place, Barre, VT 05461
Serving Addison (Granville, Hancock), Washington, Orange, Lamoille, Rutland (Pittsfield) and Windsor (Barnard, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge) Counties



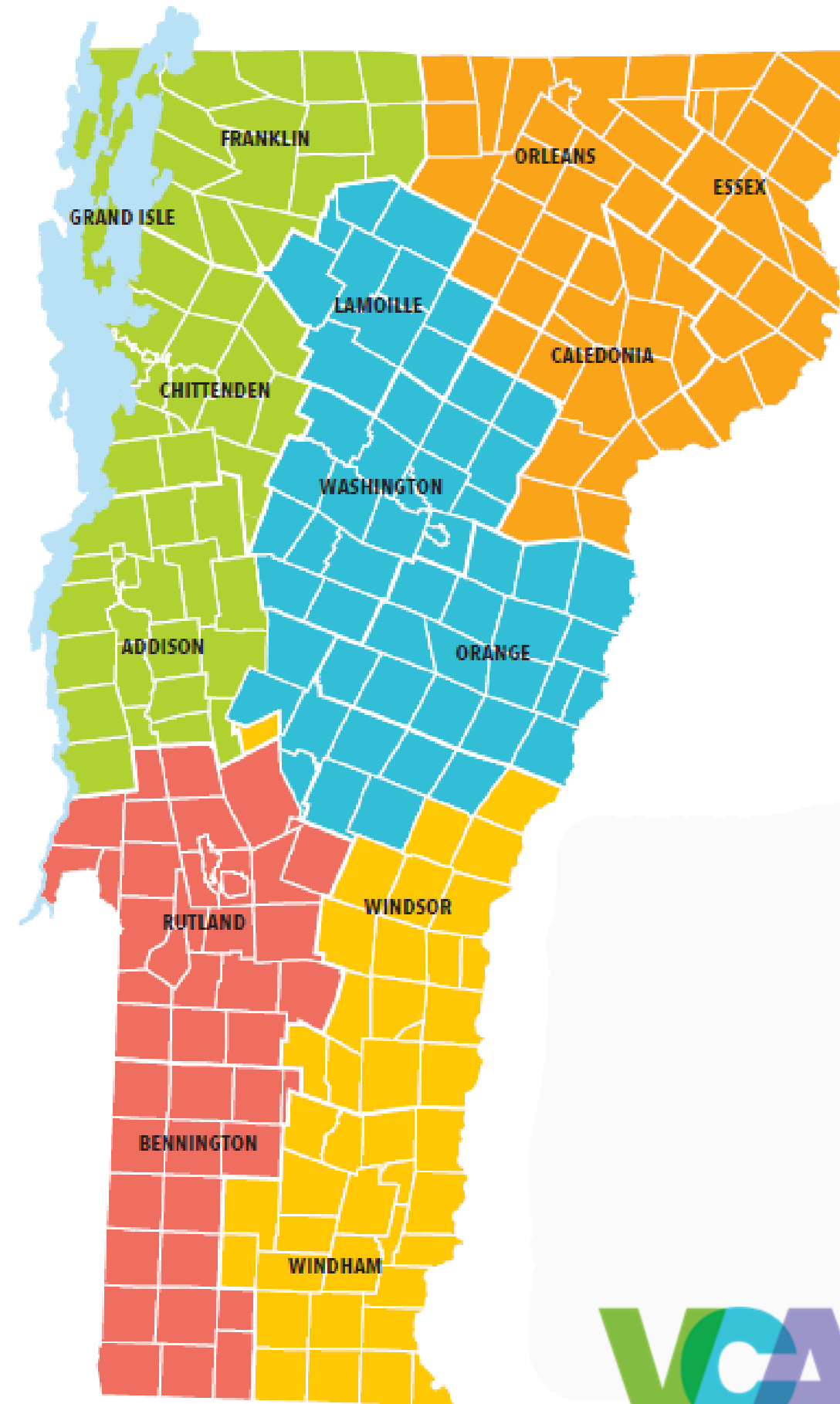
Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
 PAUL DRAGON
 pdragon@cvoeo.org
 802-863-2771 ext. 740
 PO Box 1603, Burlington, VT 05402
Serving Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and Addison Counties (except for Granville and Hancock)



Northeast Kingdom Community Action
 JENNA O'FARRELL
 jofarrell@nekcvvt.org
 802-334-7316 / 802-748-6040
 10 Main Street, PO Box 346, Newport, VT 05855
Serving Orleans, Essex and Caledonia Counties



Southeastern Vermont Community Action
 JOSH DAVIS
 jdavis@sevca.org
 802-722-4575
 91 Buck Drive, Westminster, VT 05158
Serving Windham and Windsor Counties (except for Barnard, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge)



Doubling down on FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES

VCAP's Legislative Request

VCAP is seeking **\$1.65M** in base funding in FY26 for the MBDP, VITA Tax and Financial Coaching programs.



MBDP: Requesting \$581,000 for FY26, a \$87,000 increase from FY25

VITA: Requesting \$548,000 for FY26, a \$148,000 increase from FY25

FINANCIAL COACHING: Requesting \$528,000 for FY26, a \$358,000 increase from FY25



MICROBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



MBDP's across the state have helped launch or expand more than **2,100 Vermont businesses**, created thousands of jobs, and helped entrepreneurs leverage more than **\$15 million** in financing.

- **One-to-one business counseling**
- **Business Workshops**
- **Funding Opportunities**

MICROBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN REQUEST	
FY25	FY26
\$493,335	\$581,000
INCREASE FY25 to FY26 \$87,000	

This includes a 7% increase overall, and one additional 0.5 FTE for CVOEO due to scale of service need/opportunity



MICROBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



FY 24 Community Action MBDP by the numbers

694 Vermonters utilized business coaching and workshops

73 businesses started

53 business expansions

687,520 in capital accessed by **65** businesses

60 FTE jobs created

Vermont's Small Business Landscape*

More than 50% of working Vermonters are employed by small businesses (500 or fewer employees)

11% are employed by a Micro Business (fewer than 5 employees)

Vermont had over 20,696 small business establishments employing 147,457 people

10,532 or 51% were Micro Businesses

Micro Businesses employed 16,862 Vermonters in 2021

*12/2023 data from 2021 US Census



MICROBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Jin Li Chan – Asian Homestyle Cooking

“The Micro Business Development Program has been helpful in launching my business, Asian Homestyle Cooking in so many ways. Since 2013, I have utilized MBDP for the EMBRACE grants, general knowledge on the practices of starting a business, and resources/troubleshooting while I worked on reopening my business. I have benefited so much with the help of MBDP that I now feel more equipped to run my business and definitely recommend other small business owners to utilize this program.”



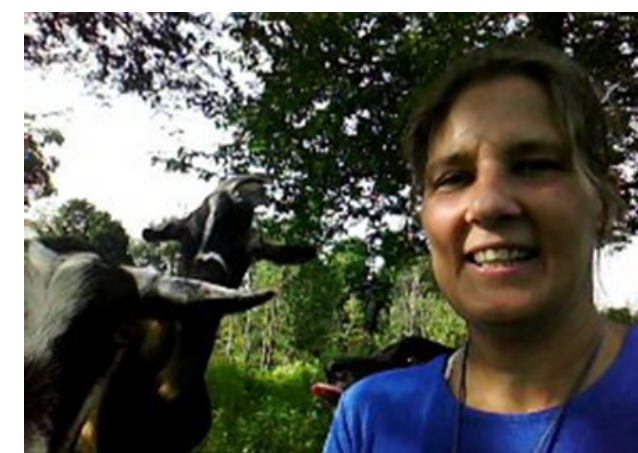
Daria Turkova

Registered Psychotherapist, PhD

Verified by Psychology Today

“I am a clinical psychologist from Ukraine, who is making the transition in a career to start my practice in the USA. Dustin Smith was very helpful in organizing a business plan for my practice and consulting in organizing small businesses in Vermont. I didn't have any problems with reaching out to Dustin. He is a very organized person and provides a high-quality service. As a new person in the US and in the business field, it was easy to work with Mr. Smith and achieve the goals I expected from this partnership.”

Simeon is a very patient and helpful (business coach) who has a lot of knowledge about small businesses. I am hoping to increase my income this coming year to earn 5,000.00 more a year. - 2024 Annual Survey Participant



Teri J. Dluznieski-Fantasy Author- TJ@TJMuir.com

Over the years, TJ has been writing and publishing over 14 books, as an Independent (Indie) Author. Her goal is to continue publishing a minimum of four books every year as she develops her ongoing series. Teri has been working with BROCC Community Action's Micro Business Department for over a year, with ongoing support as she builds her publishing career. They have helped with every step of building a professional business plan and a marketing plan. They have also offered a lot of support in navigating the State's complex web of services and assisted in acquiring grant money that went towards the start-up costs of her business.





VITA TAX

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program helps families or individuals who make \$67,000 or less file.

IRS Certified and Trained volunteers and paid staff help Vermonters file during normal tax season. VITA helps Vermonters each year claim their refunds and credits and help put dollars back into our communities.

In 2024, **\$4,741,180** in tax refunds were returned to the Vermont economy through the VITA Program which includes **\$2,679,418** in tax credits.

VITA REQUEST	
FY25	FY26
\$400,000	\$548,000
INCREASE FY25 to FY26	\$148,000

This includes an increase from ~0.75 FTE to 1.0 FTE per agency, +\$20,000 to CVOEO for statewide administration



VITA TAX

FY 24 Community Action VITA By the Numbers

118 Volunteers averaging 73 hours/volunteer

5032 returns filed in 2024

1067 Earned Income Tax Credits received averaging **\$1112.00**

502 returns with Child Tax Credit averaging **\$1414.00**

454 Small Business/Schedule C Tax returns filed

\$4,741,180 in tax refunds and credits back into the community

“My tax preparer passed away and my friend told me about your tax services. I have been paying \$450 a year to file my simple taxes (social security and a small pension) and my homestead/property tax credit. I’m so excited to get my appointment!”

Sandra P, Barre



FINANCIAL COACHING

Across Vermont, **FINANCIAL COACHES** are supporting Vermonters in making wise financial decisions to increase economic security. Coaches support individuals and families with the following:

- Creating a budgeting and spending plan
- Credit coaching and credit building strategies
- Debt management
- Financial goal setting
- Tips and resources to save on living expenses
- Financial Fraud Education
- Navigating Benefits and Programs
- Monthly financial literacy workshops

The Community Action Network of Financial Coaches are AFCPE® Accredited Financial Counselors®

The Association of Financial Counseling and Planning Education is a national nonprofit organization and the nationally recognized leader in financial counseling, coaching and education



FINANCIAL COACHING REQUEST	
FY25	FY26
\$170,300	\$528,000
INCREASE FY25 to FY26	\$358,000

This includes an increase from ~0.3 FTE to 1.0 FTE per agency





FINANCIAL COACHING

FY 24 Community Action Financial Coaching by the Numbers:

858 Vermonters received 1:1 Financial coaching to build assets and increase personal finance skills

447 Vermonters enrolled in **238** hours of Financial Capability classes

197 New Americans participated in financial coaching, classes and house parties

135 Vermonters increased their savings after working with a coach

93 Vermonters reduced their debt



FINANCIAL COACHING



Mary was the best counselor ever!! She helped me so much through very tough times but she helped me tremendously and I was able to keep my house and am paying the mortgage by myself every month, and I got my credit score up to 750! I never could have gotten to this point if it wasn't for Mary and all of her help.

Benefits of Financial Coaching

- Creating a budgeting and spending plan
- Credit coaching and credit building strategies
- Debt management
- Financial goal setting
- Tips and resources to save on living expenses
- Financial Fraud prevention
- Navigating Benefits and Programs
- Monthly financial literacy workshops



FINANCIAL COACHING



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Financial Wellness Survey Respondents:

“Counseling with Capstone greatly helped to identify steps to make to improve my financial situation. By having a plan, I was less anxious and am working gradually to graduate from college in order to find a job with higher salary and benefits. She also helped me to set priorities, such as my Roth (Retirement) account”

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“I feel so grateful I was able to utilize so many resources through the CVOEO financial futures program between the end of 2022 and the beginning of 2024. Today I have improved my credit score, paid off a huge percentage of debt, and am actually finally going to start working full time next week! I try to share the budget and skills I've learned with friends because even with an extremely low income I rarely had to struggle or need anything.”



**Callie Brink
Gilman, VT**

“Meeting regularly with NEKCA’s Financial Coach, Nate, has helped me build financial confidence and feel less overwhelmed by debt and monthly expenses. He worked with me to reduce my monthly expenses by \$160, and showed me how to redirect that money toward savings and debt payoff. He has attended meetings at local banks and credit unions with me to explore options. Nate discovered that I’m entitled to my late husband’s unclaimed checking account, and guided me on how to file a petition to open a small estate. I plan to use those funds to pay off credit card debt. I’m starting to feel hopeful again and am thankful for his financial coaching.”

Shelley Faris

25+ year Financial Coach, BROC Community Action:

“I met Jackie and her service dog, Axel at the beginning of June 2024. She is a single mother and legally blind receiving disability. She expressed her desire to purchase a home for herself and daughter to have a stable home in Rutland. She is getting a sizeable one-time payment from Social Security and wants to invest it in a permanent home. We began by looking at her Trans Union Credit Report and she had excellent credit, so we proceeded to fill out the USDA Rural Development Home Mortgage application. This was a daunting process for her, so I broke it down to small tasks to do each week until we gathered all the supporting documents necessary. We were able to send in the application with more than 12 supporting documents at the beginning of August. On September 19th Jackie received her USDA approval letter for \$119,730 loan. She was also applying with Rutland Habitat for Humanity for a home currently being built. Jackie heard in October that she had been selected to purchase the Habitat House. The house should be finished in February for Jackie, her daughter and her service dog Axel to move in.”

MICRO BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Business Plan Development
1-3 Year Cashflow Analysis
Access to Capital
Marketing
Social Media

VITA

Free Tax Prep and Filing
Tax Support Throughout the Year
Past Years' Tax Prep and Filing
Working with the IRS
Property Tax and Renters' Credits

SE Tax Prep
deductions
Sched C
SE Taxes
SS Impacts

Financial Capabilities

Money Management
Personal Finances
Access to Credit
SS Impacts

W4 Navigation
Tax Credits
Refund saving and
planning

Household budgeting
General Savings
Retirement Savings
Debt Management
Credit Buidling

FINANCIAL COACHING

As my business coach/financial advisor, Rosie has taught me an entirely new skill set that I can bring to the table! Because of Rosie's expert advice, I now have a solid foundational understanding of developing my own small business. I came to the class with an idea, and Rosie used her professional knowledge of business development to craft my idea into a reality...I am now a licensed business owner in Vermont... and I can still attend classes and get my taxes filed, too!

~business owner, J



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Thank you