



**2020
Impact
Report
LSC CONNECTICUT**

Letter from the Executive Director

This last year has been profoundly challenging, both professionally and personally, for so many of us. And in the communities where LISC works, the COVID-19 pandemic has had disproportionate impacts on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) residents due to structural and institutional racism. Here in Connecticut, Black and brown residents have died from COVID-19 at twice the rate of white residents.

Despite the pandemic, LISC CT continues to work alongside our partners to ensure critical resources reach those communities with the greatest need. Notwithstanding its challenges, 2020 has been LISC's most impactful year by far. We've provided emergency financial support to small businesses, AmeriCorps members to overstretched organizations, financial coaching and support to residents through a new network of Financial Opportunity Centers (FOCs), and operating grants for organizational support and capacity building.

For over 35 years, LISC Connecticut has worked diligently alongside our partners to address, reduce, and mitigate housing, health, education, and economic inequities. Although this last year has proven to be challenging, we have adapted to the new and emerging needs of our communities. As we look ahead, we will continue delivering and improving upon programs such as the FOC Network, AmeriCorps, and Housing Connections, as well as new initiatives such as Project 10X – LISC's newest and most ambitious initiative yet.

Project 10X will invest \$1 billion over the next ten years to address the pervasive racial health, wealth, and opportunity gaps that create significant disparities in Black and brown communities. LISC will invest in community organizations, businesses, and developers working in urban and suburban communities across the US. We invite you to join us in this long-term, comprehensive work, to make real, lasting change.

Sincerely,



Jim Horan
LISC Connecticut Executive Director



Our Mission

LISC Connecticut works with residents and partners to forge resilient and inclusive communities across the state—great places to live, work, visit, do business, and raise families.

What We Do

Empower people to contribute to and take advantage of economic growth

Transform places experiencing distress and underinvestment

Support enterprises in building robust economies and communities

Drive systems change by working to address institutional challenges and injustices

Leverage investments to amplify neighborhood impact

How We Do It

Invest in people and communities that have been underinvested and marginalized

Build organizational and ecosystem capacity to equip local partners to effectively implement community and economic development strategies

Advise residents, organizations, and investors seeking to deliver solutions in their communities

Convene resources and stakeholders across sectors

Advocate for residents by engaging in policy efforts at the national, state, and local levels

About LISC Connecticut

For more than 35 years, LISC Connecticut has worked with residents and community partners to revitalize underinvested neighborhoods across the state to build equitable places of opportunity through affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization, health and housing, and financial stability. Since 1984, LISC has invested over \$81 million in communities across Connecticut to create more than 4,400 units of affordable housing and over 300,000 square feet of commercial space.

Our Impact in 2020



AmeriCorps Placements

6 Organizations Supported

- 7 Members completed over 4,500 hours of service



Small Business Grants

\$127k in grants to 29 businesses

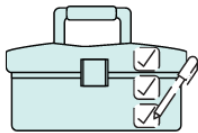
- 86% businesses with 1-5 employees
- 62% female-owned • 72% minority-owned
- 7% Veteran-owned • 7% LGBTQ+-owned



Family Financial Stability

Network of 10 FOC sites launched

- \$435k in organizational grants disseminated



Capacity Building

8 CDCs supported by U.S. H.U.D. Section 4 Grants, totaling \$466k

3 CDCs bolstered by HNDSC operating support grants, totaling \$325k



Lending

\$2.6M in loans supporting:

- 137 affordable housing units
- 3,327 square feet of commercial space



Pictured: A volunteer with Foodshare at the Rentschler Field distribution site.

LISC AmeriCorps

In response to the overwhelming surge in need for critical services, LISC responded by establishing an AmeriCorps summer cohort. Four organizations were selected as placement sites: Hands on Hartford, Journey Home, Foodshare, and Enfield Food Shelf. Individuals selected as AmeriCorps members completed between 300 and 450 hours of service throughout the summer for their host organizations.

LISC recruited and screened all applicants, creating less administrative burden for the host sites. These members provided critical assistance to support these partner organizations in meeting the increased demand for services, such as food and shelter. In addition to our COVID Relief Cohort, LISC also placed AmeriCorps members with several partners as part of the traditional AmeriCorps year.

Visit our website to learn more about the LISC AmeriCorps COVID-19 Response Cohort and its local impact in Connecticut.

Placement Sites

- Enfield Food Shelf
- Foodshare
- Hands on Hartford
- Journey Home
- Neighborhood Housing Services of New Britain
- Urban League of Greater Hartford

AmeriCorps Member Spotlight

Member: Jackie Kasinskas

Placement Site: Hands on Hartford

Hands on Hartford (HOH) works to strengthen the community in Hartford by serving its most economically disadvantaged residents in the areas of food, housing, and health. HOH brought on Jackie Kasinskas to serve as a Community Engagement and Direct Service Coordinator to plan, organize, and implement community engagement projects on site and virtually. Jackie was a recent college graduate looking for an opportunity to participate in service and give back to the community during the pandemic—HOH was the perfect match! In this position, Jackie recruited, trained, and managed volunteers; led community volunteer projects; and connected with community partners. She led multiple park cleanups, organized service projects such as a hygiene-kit packing event, and recruited volunteers for their basic needs programs.

Since the completion of the AmeriCorps summer cohort, Jackie has been hired as a full-time employee at Hands On Hartford! Congratulations, Jackie, and thank you for your service!



Pictured: Jackie (left) and HOH colleague.



Photo © Elm City Games (New Haven), a LISC CT/TD Bank Small Business Grantee

Nonprofit

Capacity Building

LISC Connecticut provides capacity-building to the community development sector in the form of technical assistance and financial investments. These investments come in the forms of U.S. Dept. Housing and Urban Development Section 4 grant dollars, project investment grants, and loans. **Last year, LISC granted \$466,102 in Section 4 funds to eight Community Development Corporations (CDCs) across Connecticut.** To ensure each organization has the tools and resources needed to move projects across the finish line, LISC staff provide 1:1 and group technical assistance, designed to address current challenges in the community development sector.

The **Hartford Neighborhood Development Support Collaborative (HNDSC)** promotes neighborhood revitalization by providing organizational development services and operating support to CDCs working in strategically selected Hartford neighborhoods. HNDSC seeks to build strong, healthy neighborhoods across the city by strengthening Hartford-based CDCs' capacity to create quality affordable housing, expand economic opportunity, and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods through community partnerships and strategies.

In January 2020, the HNDSC provided \$325,000 in operating support grants to three Hartford-based CDCs: Mutual Housing Association of Greater Hartford, Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance, and Sheldon Oak Central. These grants provide critical resources to support the continued operation of nearly 1,000 units of affordable housing, as well as a development pipeline of nearly 200 units of affordable housing.

Small Business

Grants

State-mandated business closures to slow the spread of COVID-19 heavily impacted small businesses – especially those in historically under-resourced Black and brown communities. To respond to this unprecedented crisis, LISC CT teamed up with Citizens Bank and TD Bank to provide critical financial support to small businesses across the state—including largely minority- and women-owned businesses, which often face the greatest difficulty accessing government resources.

Through LISC's Small Business Recovery Grant program, \$127,000 was donated to small businesses in need. These grants, up to \$5,000 each, provided financial support to 29 small businesses across Connecticut - 25 of these businesses had only 1-5 employees. Grant funds were used to support payroll for employee retention, facility upgrades or expansions, inventory purchases, and outstanding obligations such as rent or utility payments.

In Connecticut's BIPOC communities, these small businesses provide critical goods and services, as well as jobs for local residents. Twenty-one of the 29 business supported identify as minority-owned. Visit our website to learn more about how individual small businesses in Connecticut were impacted by the Citizens Bank and TD Bank Small Business Grants.



Photo © Building Neighborhoods Together

Creating Opportunities for Affordable Housing

LISC believes that the preservation and creation of affordable housing is vital in fostering racial justice and closing housing instability gaps. LISC CT works with community partners to: develop and preserve affordable, safe, and sustainable housing; protect residents from displacement; and advocate for equitable policies and resources to promote the community development sector. We offer project investment in the form of **predevelopment grants and project financing**, including acquisition loans, bridge financing, and construction loans. In addition, through LISC's affiliate, **New Markets Support Company**, we help CDCs and other developers tap into New Markets Tax Credits to support development activities that create opportunities for affordable housing and fuel economic development.

Loans Committed in 2020
\$2,600,608

Housing Units Supported
137

Commercial Space
3,327 sq ft

Housing Spotlight: The Lofts at Spencers Corner

In late 2019, LISC provided an acquisition loan to the HOPE Partnership for \$808,763 that closed in the first quarter of 2020. This allowed HOPE to take title to 17 commercial condominiums of the Spencer's Corner commercial complex in Essex. The condominiums are being converted to one, two, and three-bedroom townhouse-style units - all available to residents earning up to 80% Area Median Income. Units feature unique floor plan designs, on-site laundry facilities, central air, and parking. The first floor of the complex will remain as commercial use. Construction is nearly complete and the property management company has already started accepting applications for residency in early 2021.



Photos © HOPE Partnership

Housing Connections

Since 2007, Housing Connections has worked in rural and suburban places across Connecticut, helping residents address the affordable housing needs in their communities. In partnership with the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, Housing Connections offers a variety of services and resources, ranging from policy and planning, all the way through construction of affordable housing developments. Housing Connections works with a variety of local partners in suburban and rural communities, including nonprofits, community organizations, resident groups, local governments, housing authorities, and small for-profit developers.

Although this year has proven to be challenging, Housing Connections was able to continue supporting community groups across the state using virtual meeting platforms.

To date, Housing Connections has helped generate nearly \$130M in development investment across Connecticut communities.

By the Numbers

35 Community partners received technical assistance in 2020

54 New units of affordable housing built in 2020

100 Community partners served since 2007

639 Units of affordable housing built since 2007

550 Units of affordable housing currently in the production pipeline

Participating Communities - Since 2007

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Avon | Chester | Fairfield | Manchester | North Stonington | Sharon | Wallingford |
| Barkhamsted | Clinton | Franklin | Mansfield | Old Lyme | Sherman | Warren |
| Beacon Falls | Cornwall | Goshen | Middlefield | Old Saybrook | Simsbury | Washington |
| Berlin | Coventry | Greenwich | Milford | Oxford | South Windsor | Waterford |
| Bethany | Darien | Griswold | Monroe | Plainfield | Southbury | Watertown |
| Bloomfield | Deep River | Haddam | Morris | Plainville | Sprague | West Hartford |
| Branford | Durham | Hebron | New Fairfield | Plymouth | Stafford | Weston |
| Bristol | East Hampton | Kent | New Hartford | Preston | Stonington | Westport |
| Brookfield | East Hartford | Killingly | New Milford | Putnam | Stratford | Wilton |
| Brooklyn | East Lyme | Ledyard | Newington | Redding | Suffield | Winchester |
| Canaan | Easton | Lisbon | Newtown | Ridgefield | Thompson | Windsor |
| Chaplin | Ellington | Litchfield | Norfolk | Salisbury | Tolland | Wolcott |
| Cheshire | Essex | Madison | North Haven | Seymour | Vernon | Woodbury |



Photo © The Village for Families and Children

Family Financial Stability

On October 1st, LISC launched its first Financial Opportunity Center (FOC) Network in Connecticut.

Financial Opportunity Centers (FOCs) are career and financial coaching service centers that focus on the financial bottom line for individuals earning low-to-moderate wages. LISC has a network of more than 110 FOCs across the country, embedded in community-based organizations that are known for their history of providing quality services and convenient to where people live and seek out services.

FOCs provide employment and career counseling, one-on-one financial coaching and education, and low-cost financial products that help build credit, savings and assets. They also connect clients with income supports such as SNAP benefits, utilities assistance, and affordable health insurance. These services are provided in an integrated model, with a long-term commitment to helping clients reach their goals. Research shows that FOC clients who take advantage of combined services, rather than stand-alone employment services, are **50% more likely to land a well-paying job**.

Here in Connecticut, the network features ten program locations in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Norwalk, and Waterbury and is expected to **serve more than 2,000 residents in its first year**.

FOC Site Partners

- Building Neighborhoods Together (Bridgeport)*
- Capital Community College (Hartford)*
- Career Resources, Inc. (Bridgeport)
- Community Action Agency of New Haven*
- Human Resources Agency of New Britain*
- Naugatuck Valley Community College*
- New Opportunities, Inc. (Waterbury)
- Open Door Shelter (Norwalk)*
- The Village for Families & Children (Hartford)
- Urban League of Greater Hartford*

**supporting-level FOC*

Since 1984, LISC has deployed over \$87 million across Connecticut, leveraging over \$800 million in transformative development.

Thank you to our 2020 supporters

Organizations

American Savings Foundation
 Bank of America Charitable Foundation
 Berkshire Bank Foundation
 Building Neighborhoods Together
 Citi
 Citizens
 The Community Preservation Corporation
 ConnCORP
 Connecticut Community Foundation
 Connecticut Covid Charity Connection (4-CT)
 The Ensworth Charitable Foundation
 Fairfield County's Community Foundation

Farmington Bank Community Foundation
 Harold Webster Smith Foundation
 Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
 Ion Bank Foundation
 J. Walton Bissell Foundation, Inc.
 KeyBank Foundation
 Liberty Bank Foundation
 Lincoln Financial Foundation
 Manchester Interfaith Social Action
 Committee
 Mutual Housing Association of
 Greater Hartford

People's United Community Foundation
 Prudential Foundation
 Santander Bank, N.A.
 Signature Bank, N.A.
 TD Charitable Foundation
 The M&T Charitable Foundation
 UIL Holdings Corporation
 United Way of Central & Northeastern CT
 United Way of Greater Waterbury
 Urban League of Greater Hartford
 Webster Bank
 Wells Fargo Foundation

Government

Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
 Corporation for National and Community
 Service
 CT Department of Economic and Community
 Development
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
 Development

Individuals

Margaret Cooley
 Diane Smith
 Chris Traczyk

Local Advisory Committee

Co-Chairs

Diane Smith, Way Finders, Inc.
 Christine Traczyk, Farmington Bank Community Foundation

Dean Andrews, Bank of America, N.A.
 Sarah Anthony, J. Walton Bissell Foundation, Inc.
 Liz Buczynski, United Way of Central & Northeastern CT
 Art Casavant, People's United Bank
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LaKisha Jordan, KeyBank
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 Michael Schwartz, Signature Bank
 Mary Thompson, Bank of America, N.A.
 I. Vanessa Toledo-Vickers, Citizens Bank
 Jonathan Vazcones, M & T Bank

About

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