



## **STEM & Technical Skill Fund Grant Outcomes Report 2021**

### **2021 Recipients**

#### ***Generator***

[Generator](#) was granted \$10,000 in support of expanding its workforce development programs within Burlington City limits, which include their [Digital Modeling & Fabrication Program \(DMF\)](#), Advanced Manufacturing Day conference; and summer fabrication internships at Generator.

***Current Status: Funds Fully Deployed***

#### ***Grant Outcomes***

Generator served 30 total Burlington area students in the Digital Modeling and Fabrication (DMF) program with support from the BTV Ignite Fund in the past year. Education partners for this program included Two Roads Academy, Sara Holbrook Community Center, My Sister's Keeper at Burlington High School, and Vermont Works for Women through their Rosie's Girl Afterschool program. Program activities included training on the laser cutter to fabricate wooden journal covers and phone stands, and training in Adobe software, as well as the vinyl cutter to fabricate and design custom stickers. Since Generator's initial grant proposal, they have redefined DMF to include a broader scope of introductory STEAM courses to create a pipeline of education that leads to more advanced manufacturing training.

Due to COVID-19 safety concerns and less funding than anticipated, Generator was not able to host an expanded Advanced Manufacturing Day at its Burlington facility as intended. Instead a scaled back version of the event was held at the Granite Museum in Barre in partnership with Spaulding High School. However, plans are in motion to hold a larger Advanced Manufacturing Day in Burlington at Generator this April.

This summer, Generator successfully launched its summer fabrication internship program by hosting 2 Middlebury College interns for 8-weeks through the Vermont Innovation Summer Program. The two interns received tool trainings in every technical shop at Generator thanks to funding from BTV Ignite, and used their welding and woodworking training to build a prototype for a mobile computer desk for Generator's dedicated classroom. The interns also helped launch a Member Spotlight newsletter feature, supported summer youth programming, and engaged in community partner outreach to support Generator's fabrication services program.

*“Generator is very grateful to BTV Ignite for providing funding to expand our workforce development STEAM programming here in Burlington. By supporting our pilot programs, you are allowing us to create new pathways to STEAM careers and find where our education services are most needed in our local community.”*

– Meg Hammond, Executive Director, Generator

## **ReSOURCE**

**ReSOURCE** was awarded \$20,000 to support its YouthBuild Program which serves students 16-24 years old who have dropped out of high school and want to earn their diploma while gaining new technical skills in construction and weatherization. The grant also went to support ReSOURCE’s Burlington Workshop Intensives which are open to the public and designed to equip individuals with the skills necessary for entry level job readiness in carpentry, construction, and now weatherization.

***Current Status: Funds Fully Deployed***

### **Grant Outcomes**

To date, ReSOURCE has achieved the following training outcomes:

Measure	Goal	Outcome
# YouthBuild students and Intensive trainees enrolled and trained	30	63
% Graduate/complete training requirements <i>*4 students remain active</i>	75%	92%
% Graduates obtain NCCER Certification <i>*5 had NCCER certification already</i>	100%	96%
% Intensive graduates placed into employment within 3-months with at least \$15/hour average starting wage	88% \$15/hr	90% \$17.19/hr

ReSOURCE has taught construction and weatherization skills to disadvantaged individuals since 2008 through its YouthBuild program, and has greatly expanded the numbers trained since starting its Workshop Intensives six-week training model in 2018. ReSOURCE’s goal is to scale

current programming as it relates to occupational training programs for un- and under-employed Vermonters as well as low-income and other at-risk populations that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Training models build upon ReSOURCE's success and fully integrate the needs of participants with the needs of local employers. ReSOURCE provides targeted training in local industries where we have employer partners who are interested in hiring program graduates knowing they have received the appropriate training and certifications necessary to be successful in their chosen career path.

Further development of these trainings is critical to meet existing needs exacerbated by COVID-19. Vulnerable populations have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. ReSOURCE places graduates on tracks for jobs with higher wages, benefits, and increased earning potential for the future. Now, more than ever, is the time to build on successes with new intensive training that will essentially double the number of low-income individuals and youth training through ReSOURCE while also growing new and existing partnerships with area employers throughout the State in need of a skilled workforce.

*“The BTV Ignite STEM & Technical Skill Grant has allowed ReSOURCE to continue operating its YouthBuild and Workshop Intensive programs by providing leveraged funding to our existing mix of program funders. For each program, ReSOURCE relies on a mix of federal, state, local, and foundation funding support to fund trainee tuition and training services. BTV Ignite funds allow these programs not only to cover direct costs, but also to grow our programming.”*

- Tom Longstreth, Executive Director, ReSOURCE

### **Center for Women and Enterprise**

[The Center for Women & Enterprise Vermont \(CWEVT\)](#) was awarded a \$20,000 one-year grant to continue supporting a specialized business planning program for Burlington women in the Reach Up program to start home-based businesses. The program helps eligible mothers gain financial capability and business skills so they can support their minor, dependent children through entrepreneurship. Intended beneficiaries are approximately 20 Burlington women in the Reach Up program, and indirectly, their minor, dependent children, and employees hired by the new businesses.

**Current Status:** Funds Fully Deployed

### **Grant Outcomes**

17 women enrolled in the Reach Up program completed CWEVT's 10-class Business Planning program. The program was offered in two different iterations to meet the needs and requests of

students. The traditional program, with a schedule of one class per week for 10 weeks, as well as an accelerated program, with a schedule of two classes per week for 5 weeks.

The makeup of the student cohort who completed this program included 2 who had an active business, 1 who was disabled, and all of them were extremely low-income; this is expected, as all students are on the Reach Up program. The average household size was 2 – a mother and child. 71% of the cohort completed High School as their highest educational attainment, 18% have an Associate's Degree, 11% have a Bachelor's Degree.

The classes themselves featured guest speakers and opportunities for the class to deeply connect with each other individually. Classes included:

- **Session 1 – Knowing Yourself**  
Assumptions, Working Styles, Team Building, Obstacles
- **Session 2 – Knowing Your Customer**  
Customer, Problems, Alternatives, Idea Testing
- **Session 3 – Finding the right solution**  
Solution, Benefit, Advantages, Starting Small, Brand Identity
- **Session 4 – Getting the Relationship Right**  
Marketing & Message; Getting, Keeping & Growing Customers
- **Session 5 – Building Blocks**  
Distribution, Revenue, Typical Offering, Price
- **Session 6 – Structures and Systems**  
Legal and Accounting Considerations
- **Session 7 – Discovering the Bottom Line**  
Startup & Ongoing Needs, Fixed & Variable Costs, Break-Even Point
- **Session 8 – Financial Modeling**  
Break-Even Point, Sales Projections, Cash Flow, Raising Capital
- **Session 9 – Planning for growth**  
Growth Plans, Goal Setting, Preparing for Celebration Night
- **Session 10 – Celebration Night**

Additional outcomes reported by CWEVT include:

- Something heard in all the cohorts was that the class and experience lead to an increase of self confidence in the abilities of our participants.
- We have participants list out possible barriers to starting a business in the start of class and there is a higher rate of “self-doubt” listed as a barrier to starting than in any other cohort we run.

- We mostly look at the business planning cohorts as an opportunity to teach folks about business and business planning, but not usually as a tool for confidence building, but this cohort tends to trend a lot more into a feeling of personal success for participants.
- Participants come to us with a dream of a business but it feels out of reach because they don't believe they are capable of it, but leave the cohort with a feeling of "this is possible" and "I can do this."
- One participant has even been brought on to contract with CWE on our Reach Up Business Planning program as a TA for the cohort.

*"Organizationally, as a direct result of the BTV Ignite-funded Reach Up Business Planning program's success, Senator Bernie Sanders's office recognized the value of investing in this program. CWE Vermont was awarded a Congressional Earmark to continue supporting this program and to fund ongoing support for Historically-Underserved Groups through entrepreneurial training. We were able to leverage the BTV Ignite funds as a signal of community trust.*

*Programmatically, this grant was very helpful in allowing us to provide deep supports to the Reach Up participants, which otherwise would not have been possible. One of those supports includes hiring a TA to support the instructor and the class. The TA was a student in the first Reach Up class and her services allow the class to run more smoothly. The BTV Ignite grant allowed for us to provide a small stipend for this immense support, thus also contributing to the student's own business!"*

- Gwen Pokalo Hart, Senior Director, Center for Women & Enterprise Vermont

##