

Points of Interest

An E-Newsletter from the
Vermont Community Loan Fund

August 2024

Dear Friends,

I just spent a week camping at Branbury State Park with my family and while floating on Lake Dunmore once again realized how lucky I am to live in this incredible state. We who live and visit here get to explore what makes Vermont the most wonderful place in the world: our mountains, forest trails, swimming holes, country stores, music on the village green AND incredible local food! At the Loan Fund, we are honored to support local food, local drink and local business borrowers - and share their stories in our latest edition of NoteWorthy, "[Loan to Plate: Vermont Community Loan Fund Borrowers Bring Vermont to the Table](#)".



Executive Director Will Belongia

You'll also learn about the Loan Fund's increased support of Vermont's essential early care & learning programs, how Vermont's historic passage of Act 76 has boosted their capacity, accessibility, affordability...and our lending to the dedicated providers who care for our youngest Vermonters. Plus, financing Montpelier's newest arts nonprofit, and fantastic job opportunities here at the Loan Fund!

Read on and enjoy!



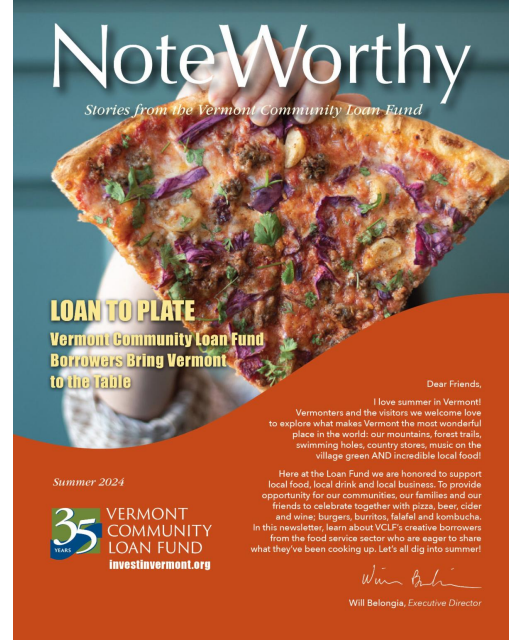
Will Belongia
Executive Director

Dig Into Vermont's Best Bites in "[Loan to Plate: VCLF Borrowers Bring Vermont to the Table](#)"

Vermont's reputation as a foodie hub is well known. And, some of Vermont's most exciting new plates are coming from the kitchens of VCLF borrower/restaurateurs!

Read "[Loan to Plate](#)", the latest edition of [NoteWorthy](#), you'll get a taste of what these hardworking and creative entrepreneurs are cooking up - from culinary classics to inventive new dishes, to beverages brewed and bottled on-site and around the world. And, you'll learn how your support has helped feed their success!

Read "[Loan to Plate: Vermont Community Loan Fund Borrowers Bring Vermont to the Table](#)" right [here!](#)



NoteWorthy
Stories from the Vermont Community Loan Fund

LOAN TO PLATE
Vermont Community Loan Fund
Borrowers Bring Vermont
to the Table

Dear Friends,

I love summer in Vermont. Vermonters and the visitors we welcome love to explore what makes Vermont the most wonderful place in the world: our mountains, forest trails, swimming holes, county stores, music on the village green AND incredible local food!

Here at the Loan Fund we are honored to support local food, local drink and local business. To provide opportunity for our communities, our families and our friends to celebrate together with pizza, beer, cider and wine, burgers, burritos, falafel and kombucha. In this newsletter, learn about VCLF's creative borrowers from the food service sector who are eager to share what they've been cooking up. Let's all dig into summer!

Summer 2024

35 YEARS
VERMONT
COMMUNITY
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Will Belongia
Will Belongia, Executive Director

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Wren's Nest Forest Preschool Completes its Forever "Nest" with Help From the Loan Fund VCLF Lends \$2.13 Million in 2nd Quarter 2024



Snapshots of [Wren's Nest Forest Preschool](#) students illustrate the wonder of childhood discovery in nature. A young girl on a forest trail collects autumn leaves into a bouquet. Students gather to investigate a pond's intricate ecosystem; a fallen tree inspires inquiry.

The 4 STARS-rated, licensed preschool has been celebrated as a unique and remarkable educational opportunity for place-based, experiential learning, connecting students ages 3-5 to the natural environment. But its own place hasn't always been secure. The Loan Fund helped change that...

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VT Act 76 Leads to Jump in Loan Fund's Early Care & Learning Lending



Act 76, Vermont's historic Child Care Bill, was enacted last year to increase affordability and access to early care & learning (ECL) programs throughout the state. Since the bill's June 2023 passage, the Loan Fund has seen a dramatic rise in the number of applications for **ECL loans**, said Vermont Community Loan Fund Executive Director Will Belongia.

"There's been significantly increased interest from Vermont's ECL programs and providers for VCLF financing the expansion of existing programs, and for startup of several new programs," Belongia said.

Recent VCLF ECL loans have supported the construction of new facilities, real estate purchase for facility development, additions and expansions to existing structures, funding staff additions, equipment and fit-up costs and more. In the first half of 2024, the Loan Fund's ECL lending reached \$1.47 million, compared with \$104,500 for the first half of 2023, just prior to Act 76's passage.

"With Act 76's increases in state reimbursements, plus changes making more families eligible for assistance, Vermont's ECL sector and programs are able to grow," said VCLF Director of Business and Early Care & Learning Programs Dan Winslow. "The Loan Fund is committed to helping build capacity and access that Act 76 is making possible, and that Vermont's families need." Learn more about the Loan Fund's lending to Vermont's ECL programs [here](#).

VCLF Helps Bring Nonprofit Montpelier Performing Arts Hub to Capitol City



When the newly formed nonprofit arts organization the **Montpelier Performing Arts Hub** found their ideal new home at **Vermont College of Fine Arts'** former Gary Library, they came to the Loan Fund to help round out their fundraising campaign. The team, shown left, closed on the Montpelier property on July 30th, with support from VCLF. Read the full story from Seven Days [here](#).

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Celebrating St. Johnsbury's New Vibrancy - and VCLF Borrowers

As a recent [Seven Days](#) article has proclaimed, "St. Johnsbury, Vermont is experiencing a revitalization". With its increasingly lively downtown, its arts and culture institutions, shops and restaurants, the city is attracting new entrepreneurs, manufacturing, tourism, events and excitement.

Shout-outs in the article included several St. Johnsbury-based Loan Fund borrowers: [Catamount Arts](#), [Whirligig Brewing & Bistro](#), [Rural Edge](#) and the [Caledonia Food Co-op](#). Read the full article [here](#)...and then head out to St. J and explore!



[READ MORE](#)



We're Hiring! Join the VCLF Team!

Are you passionate about social and economic justice, and providing opportunity for ALL Vermonters? So are we!

The Vermont Community Loan Fund, a nonprofit 501(c)3 mission-driven alternative lender, is hiring a [Senior Staff Accountant](#) to apply principles of accounting to record and analyze financial information and prepare financial reports for internal and external customers. Click [here](#) for more information and application instructions!

Make a Gift to the Loan Fund This Summer!

Summer is the Loan Fund's busiest season! Vermont's farmers are growing and harvesting, our local businesses are jumping to serve seasonal visitors, our builders and developers are deep into their working season, and they all need the Loan Fund's financing to make it happen.

Your tax-deductible gift helps us be there for our borrowers, whenever & wherever we're needed. Our work is made possible by the vision and generosity of VCLF supporters just like you.

Please make a gift TODAY to support our work creating opportunity, community, financial empowerment and justice for ALL Vermonters. THANK YOU!

Make a Gift
Today



Where You'll Find Us: The Loan Fund in Your Community!

The Loan Fund is proud to exhibit and sponsor at these upcoming events:

- Tuesday, August 6th: **Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Leadership Summit**, Vermont State University, Randolph
- Wednesday, September 11th: **Vermont Specialty Food Association Annual Meeting**, Mountain Top Inn & Resort, Chittenden
- Friday, September 13th: **Addison Housing Works 35th Anniversary**, Bristol Town Green
- Tuesday, September 24th: **WBON (Women Business Owners Network) Annual Conference**, Hampton Inn, Colchester
- Wednesday, October 23rd: **Common Good Vermont 2024 Vermont Nonprofit Summit**, Capitol Plaza, Montpelier

Look for us if you're in the neighborhood. We'd love to chat with you!

Creating Opportunities Leading to Healthy Communities and Financial Stability for ALL Vermonters

Have news you'd like
to share about a
Loan Fund borrower?

[Email us!](#)



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