Metro North Regional Employment Board  
Project Name: CONNECT

**Mission:**

CONNECT is an innovative partnership of six organizations that includes: Bunker Hill Community College (a multi-campus urban educational institution), Career Source (an American Job Center chartered by the Metro North REB), The Neighborhood Developers (a community development corporation that provides affordable housing, financial stability, and asset development services), Metro Credit Union (a credit union that offers financial products and services), Centro Latino (an adult basic education/ESOL provider in the community), and Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (a homeless prevention and housing services organization).

These six organizations have come together in the city of Chelsea to co-locate and bundle complementary services for local residents. This is in contrast to the traditional system of residents accessing disconnected services by traveling to multiple locations, which can be an impediment for individuals. Through a pioneering approach, CONNECT aims to increase the impact of such services on the employment, educational, and financial outcomes of low-wage and lesser-skilled workers, limited English and lesser-educated workers, and the unemployed. The program leverages braided funding from more than 16 separate funding streams, incorporates asset development and the use of social networks to support client success, and reaches a greater number of clients with multiple services than each partner could serve on its own. This level of bundled and integrated service delivery, supported by coaching and peer support, will result in better interim and long-term employment, educational, and economic outcomes.

**Initiative Goals:**

- Improve employment outcomes, persistence in training, and housing stabilization for vulnerable populations by forging partnerships that support co-location and integration of multiple service delivery strategies.
- Increase the efficiency and efficacy of service delivery by leveraging federal, state, and private funding to design an integrated, client-centered service strategy that includes housing stabilization, financial education, employment and training, career and technical education, and adult basic education.
- Enhance the knowledge of the workforce system about evidence-based services by rigorously evaluating the integrated service delivery model to determine which service components are catalytic to successful client-centered outcomes, and collaborative service integration.

**Location:**

Cambridge and Chelsea, Massachusetts

**Grant Award Amount:**

$3,000,000

**Areas Served:**

Twenty communities located adjacent to and north of Boston will be served.

**Innovation Focus Area:**

Integrating Services at the Regional Level  
Braided Funding  
Asset Development and Social Capital  
Education, Employment, and Housing Services  
Integrated Case and Data Management

**Target Population Served:**

Low-skilled workers  
Unemployed workers  
Individuals with limited English proficiency

**Target Industries Engaged:**

Benefits All Industries

**Partners:**

The Neighborhood Developers, Bunker Hill Community College, Career Source, Centro Latino, Metro Credit Union and Metropolitan Boston Housing
Approach:

Using the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Centers for Working Families model as well as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation’s Financial Opportunity Center Model and the United Way’s Financial Stability Center mode, the CONNECT program will align and integrate workforce development, education, and human services programs to more efficiently and effectively achieve better results for employers and vulnerable job seekers. CONNECT will target individuals who are unemployed, low-wage workers, and/or limited English proficient—these are people who are most in need of a comprehensive, wrap-around case management because of their multiple barriers to employment. CONNECT will bundle and integrate job placement, financial coaching and education, and public benefits access in a single location.

Stay Connected:

If you are interested in learning more about this grant and following its progress, visit https://innovation.workforce3one.org/.

Evaluation Type:

Formative, outcome design

People Served:

4,000 people annually

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Web Link to Full Proposal: