



Winter 2026 Newsletter

January 2026

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Alex Armani-Munn

I am drafting this note on January 13, 2026, exactly one year to the day since I sat down for an interview with the hiring committee tasked with selecting the next executive director for the Addison County Economic Development Corporation.

It is hard to believe it has already been a year since that interview, and what a year it has been!

I should acknowledge that the committee took a risk in hiring a candidate who was not only brand new to Vermont but who was also stepping into a leadership position for the first time in their career.

I am hopeful that this risk has thus far paid off, and to the extent it has, it is due entirely to the leadership of the ACEDC board, the tutelage of one Fred Kenney, the hard work of ACEDC staffers Nichole Bachand-Bartlett and Camille Lyons, and the immeasurable support of the businesses and individuals here in Addison County.

addisoncountyedc.org



From the desk of the Executive Director Continued....



We ended 2025 on an extremely positive note with news that we were awarded a Regional Economic Development grant totaling more than \$57,000 to support projects at four local businesses. This news was followed by an announcement that the City of Vergennes was awarded a \$1 million grant from the Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) to support infrastructure costs for a new housing project on N. Main Street. This brings the total number of active NBRC grants being administered by ACEDC in Addison County to five.

Perhaps the most exciting news we have to share from the past quarter is the hiring of Richard Worsman as our new assistant director! In this position, Richard will lead ACEDC's business support and grant services while assisting the executive director in managing the organization.

Looking ahead to the first quarter of the new year, ACEDC will be submitting an application to USDA-RD for a \$500,000 recapitalization of our small business revolving loan fund, we'll be completing pre-development engineering for new infrastructure at the Phase II and Phase III areas of the Middlebury Industrial Park, and we will be working with the City of Vergennes and Vergennes Housing Partners to secure additional financing for the Vergennes North housing project.

The ACEDC team is entering the new year with a lot of momentum and looks forward to delivering expanded support and services to Addison County businesses and municipalities throughout 2026!

ACEDC | WELCOMES

Assistant Director | Richard Worsman

Richard Worsman joins the ACEDC team with more than a decade of interdisciplinary professional experience and a passion for community service.

After earning his undergraduate degree from Connecticut College in 2012, he began his career in public education as a Mandarin Chinese teacher, department chairperson, and instructional coach.



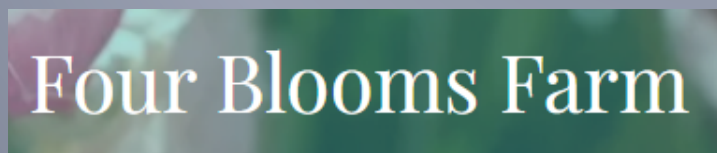
Motivated to make an impact beyond his classroom, Richard earned his master's in Education Policy and Management from Harvard University in 2019. Since then, he has served as a consultant and program evaluator for organizations spanning a variety of sectors, including education and energy efficiency. Richard and his family relocated to Addison County in the summer of 2025 when his wife accepted a position in the area.

Outside of work, you can find Richard spending quality time with his wife and daughter, cycling, and playing music!





Welcome New ACEDC Members



Become an
ACEDC Member

click here

RENEWING MEMBERS

Hall Bookkeeping

Middlebury Studio School

Berkshire Hathaway

HomeServices

Vermont Realty Group

Birchmore Sales & Services

addisoncountyedc.org

2025 | Annual Meeting



ADDISON COUNTY
Economic Development Corporation
Great starts here.

Thank you to all who
attended our Annual Meeting!



Thank you to Chef Tony, and
The Waybury Inn for the
impressive and delicious spread!



As always, the crew at
Town Hall Theater was gracious
and hospitable, providing an inviting
and comfortable space in the new
Jean's Place Lounge & Anderson Studio.

Our appreciation to Miro Weinberger for speaking
on behalf of Let's Build Homes about their
mission to create affordable housing in Vermont.

Well wishes to our retired Board Members
Jason Larocque, President
Gina Larrow, VP

Welcome to our newest Board Members
Elise Shanbacker, Addison Housing Works
Ron Dendas, Representing ACRPC

FY2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

539 Total Engagements

- 97 direct business engagements
- 136 direct partner engagements
- 201 Business Education Series attendees
- 105 attendees at ACEDC networking events

25,000 website visits

- 90 email campaigns sent
- 1,581 followers across social media

\$462k Total Grants Secured

- \$122k ACCD RDC grant
- \$34k BGS-Building Communities grant
- \$150k GROW grant
- \$56k Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits
- \$100k Kendall Foundation NE Food Vision Prize

\$230k in Total Lending

- \$200k for 1 new loan
- \$30k increase for 1 existing loan

\$1.39M in Deployed Capital

- 17 active ACEDC loans as of FY2025



ADDISON COUNTY

Economic Development Corporation

Great starts here.



ACEDC ^{IN} THE NEWS

Fall Recap

Four Addison County Businesses Awarded BGS Regional Economic Development Grants

This fall, four Addison County businesses received Regional Economic Development Grants totaling \$57,630. Little Seed Coffee Roasters in Middlebury will use the funding to stock a mobile coffee cart to grow their business. Bristol's Hogback Mountain Brewing will repair its roof to maintain steady operations. Adrienne Raphael of Jones Provisions will be renovating space to open a Monkton general store and cafe. Four Blooms Farm in Bristol is expanding its grow space to meet demand and support winter production.

[Read more](#)

little seed
COFFEE
ROASTERS



Four Blooms Farm

The 2025 Catalyst Fall Competition Awardees

The Northern Border Regional Commission Awards

The City of Vergennes \$1M

The city of Vergennes is one of thirteen projects awarded NBRC Grants. The project the city of Vergennes Construct a new 1,280-foot city street with sidewalks and utilities to support the 130-unit Vergennes North workforce housing development, while also improving transportation and water infrastructure.

[Read more](#)

Otter Creek Child Care Ribbon Cutting



A seven-year community effort becomes reality this week as Otter Creek Child Center opens its expanded facility on Weybridge Street, adding 77 new child care spaces for Addison County. Community members, project partners, and students gathered recently for a ribbon cutting to mark this milestone for local families and Vermont's child care system.

Watch
[OCCC's Ribbon Cutting Ceremony](#)

Read

[The College Campus Article](#)





Village Trust Initiative

The [Preservation Trust of Vermont](#) (PTV), [Vermont Council on Rural Development](#) (VCRD), and the [Vermont Community Foundation](#) (VCF) are pleased to announce the second cohort of communities selected for the Village Trust Initiative:

Two Addison County Towns Chosen

- New Haven – Historic Society & Community Space in former train depot (Addison)
- Orwell – General store project & Community Hub (Addison)

[PRESS RELEASE HERE](#)

New Haven Comes Together - Step 3
January 15th - New Haven Town Hall

VTI will be heading to the town of Orwell next!



Vermont Child Care Employer Survey

In 2023, Vermont passed Act 76, a child care law that includes more than \$100 million in annual public investment.

Building Bright Futures is an organization that monitors Vermont's child care system and policies.

They want to hear from you.

How is Vermont's child care system supporting your growth as a business and supporting your workforce?

Your input will inform state agencies, the legislature, and other stakeholders on what's working and what needs improvement.

Review introductory slide about Vermont Child Care [here](#).

To learn more about Building Bright Futures visit www.buildingbrightfutures.org

[Start Survey](#)

*This survey should take roughly 10 minutes to complete
Answers are confidential, un-identifying quotes may be used.*



ACEDC | Highlighted Partner

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)

is a Community Action Agency that hosts 11 different anti-poverty programs and serves the four counties of Northwestern Vermont – Franklin, Grand Isle, Chittenden and Addison.



Addison Community Action, one of CVOEO's three Community Action offices, partners with clients, collaborates with other social service agencies and connects individuals to the larger community – all with the goal of bridging gaps and building sustainable futures.

Free Tax Preparation

CVOEO
50 Industrial Drive
Middlebury

Call or email for an appointment:
Elaine Markey
802-388-2285 x200
emarkey@cvoeo.org

VITA
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance
cvoeo
Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

Locations:

CVOEO office, Middlebury - February 2 through April 10

- Monday & Saturday 9:00AM-12:00PM
- Wednesday & Thursday 12:00PM-3:00PM

Bixby Library, Vergennes - Thursday March 5 & March 12

- Afternoon hours, 1:00PM-4:00PM

Requirements:

- No age requirement
- Total household income must be less than \$69,000
- Must be a US resident for the full tax year
- Social Security cards for each person named on the return

What to bring:

- Photo ID and Social Security cards
- All income statements: W2's, 1099's, 1095-A, etc
- Your property tax bill (for Homestead Declaration)



Addison Community Action at Orwell's Food & Farm Fest.

*VITA free Tax Prep.
Call for an appointment.*

With offices at 50 Industrial Avenue in Middlebury, Addison Community Action provides housing advocacy, fuel and utility assistance and tax preparation to Addison County (AC) residents who are income eligible. CVOEO's Financial Futures Program served 73 AC individuals and provided 130 coaching sessions in the past year. 230 AC Households received free tax preparation that returned over \$170,000 into the Addison County economy last year through federal and state refunds. CVOEO's "Feeding Champlain Valley" located on Exchange Street in Middlebury, had 2,589 visits to their walk-in food shelf with another 916 deliveries to people's homes or the food locker in Bristol. Our office on Industrial Ave is home to Mountain Community Health's Tuesday Behavioral Health Clinic where 147 patient visits were made between July and November.

It is a privilege to serve our neighbors in need. We see not only the needs but also the generosity of so many Addison County residents whose donations support our services. That generosity enables us to go the extra mile and to be faithful to the value we place on our commitment to our community.



Laura in Housing



*Zoraida
Community News*



Maddy in Crisis Fuel

ACEDC | Highlighted Partner continued



CVOEO Executive Director, Paul Dragon, and Addison Community Action's Maddy – working at "Wheels for Warmth" – over \$500,000 donated in 2025 for the Warmth Program.



CVOEO Director, Mark Demers
Working a Job Fair



Guthrie in
Financial Futures



Mark Demers
Director



Elaine in the
VITA Tax Program

Website: CVOEO.ORG





2026 Educational Business Webinars

Members Only

REGISTER NOW

Register by visiting our [Events page](#).

February 10th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Clarity in Chaos	Porter Knight, Productivity Vermont
March 10th 9:30 - 10:45 AM	ChatGPT	Leslie Parker, SustainVT
April 14th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Advanced Canva	London Middlebury
May 12th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Small Business Lending	<i>More Details Coming Soon</i>
June 9th <i>*[In-person]</i> 9:30 - 10:45 AM	Managing Difficult Conversations	Mark Haymen, HR Happens
July 14th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Digital Marketing	Vox, Will Skolochenko
August 11th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Business Expansion & Relocation	<i>More Details Coming Soon</i>
September 8th <i>*[In-person]</i> 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Small Business Health	<i>More Details Coming Soon</i>
November 10th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Cyber Security	<i>More Details Coming Soon</i>
December 8th 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Small Business 401k	<i>More Details Coming Soon</i>

Not a member? Join now to gain access to all past and future webinars.

JOIN NOW

ACEDC | LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

As we have in years past, ACEDC will provide a comprehensive legislative preview to members in the month of January followed by weekly updates throughout the session. For now, here is a sneak peek at three issues we will be following closely this session.

Act 73

Without a doubt, education will dominate this legislative session, specifically in the context of Act 73. Redistricting will be at the top of the long list of actions to be taken under Act 73. The redistricting process will drive the new weighted foundation funding formula enacted under Act 73. It is also notable that Act 73 will expand property tax classifications from two to three: homestead, non-homestead residential, and non-homestead nonresidential.

Act 181

Originally passed in 2024, Act 181 overhauls the planning framework for land use in Vermont and represents the first-ever reform to Act 250. Implementation of Act 181 and associated rulemaking will be major topics of conversation in this legislative session. More specifically, conversation will focus on finalizing the new tiered structure for Act 250 enforcement, the Act 250 appeals process, and the 800-foot road rule for Act 250 jurisdiction.

Vermont Economic Growth Incentive (VEGI) Sunset Repeal

Of particular interest to the state's Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) is legislation related to the January 1, 2027 sunset of the Vermont Economic Growth Incentive (VEGI) program. The VEGI program provides performance-based cash incentives to businesses that are expanding in, or relocating to, Vermont. Businesses can earn incentives for creating new qualifying jobs, increasing payroll, and making capital investments that go beyond typical growth. ACEDC is joining with other RDCs throughout the state to advocate for a permanent repeal of the VEGI sunset, ensuring the State can continue to offer this key incentive for business attraction and expansion.

What IS Addison County Economic Development?

The mission of the Addison County Economic Development Corporation is to create an entrepreneurial and innovative environment, nurturing businesses to launch, grow, and thrive.

Services & Benefits

Become A Member



Event

Sponsorship

Business Webinar Series
Annual Member Meeting
Annual Mixer

Marketing

Sponsorship

Quarterly Newsletter
Annual Report
Preferred Placement
Member of the Week

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