

MASSACHUSETTS



WAY FINDERS HOUSING CENTER & HEADQUARTERS

Springfield, MA (2018)

FINANCING

NMTC Financing: MHIC NE New Markets CDE II LLC (MHIC), Evernorth Rural Ventures (formerly Vermont Rural Ventures, Inc.) and Capital One Community Renewal Fund, LLC: \$14.6 million
Equity Investor: Capital One, N.A.

IMPACT

- 36 construction jobs
- 165 new permanent and retained jobs
- 26,000 people served annually

COMMUNITY

- Poverty rate: 63.2%
- Median income: 15.37% of the AMI
- Unemployment: 2.54x the national average

“The most important thing about our new building is that we designed the space to be client-centric. At the Housing Center, which will occupy the first floor, we can engage with our clients much more effectively. People who come there can use the computers and have integrated access to the information they need about housing, jobs and [our] programs.”

Peter Gagliardi, Way Finders' recently retired President and CEO

Since it was founded in 1972 to provide stable housing for individuals and families facing poverty, Way Finders has grown into a multi-faceted organization. Today its programs and services include affordable housing development, rental assistance, homelessness prevention, home-buyer education, job training, and financial education and housing counseling—all designed to build a stable base so clients can achieve their economic goals. Wayfinders' new 33,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art Housing Center & Headquarters consolidates and enhances these services. With accessible meeting spaces for counseling, assistance, training and placement and all major functional departments under one roof, the Center addresses the diverse needs of Way Finders' clients and staff.

NMTC SUPPORTS GROWTH OF SPRINGFIELD LEADER IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION, JOB TRAINING & FINANCIAL EDUCATION

The building is in the most economically challenged neighborhood in the Springfield with poverty rates as high as six times the state average.

NMTC financing was essential to close a \$4 million financing gap for the \$14.7 million center's development. In fact, both MHIC and Evernorth Rural Ventures (formerly Vermont Rural Ventures) increased their NMTC allocations to the Center after PeoplesBank's appraisal yielded a lower than expected value and construction bids came in higher than anticipated. Other capital sources include a \$10 million loan and funding from the state. Way Finders contributed \$950,000 of its own equity to the development.

The center is now Way Finders' "front door" for people who have a housing concern or crisis, with integrated services for housing support, homeownership, financial education, and rental assistance. The facility serves 26,000 individuals annually, 85 percent of whom are low-income. The development was also a key component to the City's downtown revitalization. Finally, the Center created or retained 36 construction FTE jobs, and 165 permanent FTEs, all but 3 of which are full time. Way Finders' employees, 54 percent of whom reside in low-income communities, enjoy excellent benefits, including paid holidays and vacation, health and dental coverage, short-and-long-term disability and 401K with employer match.