



Emerging Leaders of Southern Vermont 2018

Notes from the Nominators

Sponsored by:

Edward Jones, Heritage Family
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Southern Vermont Young Professionals



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Emerging Leaders of Southern Vermont at the 2nd Annual Southern Vermont Economic Development Summit:

Today we recognize 24 emerging leaders in the Bennington and Windham regions. They were nominated based on their contributions to economic and community development in their town and region. These young leaders are championing notable economic development initiatives, assuming leadership roles within their place of work, and demonstrating outstanding commitment to serving their communities.

The young professionals nominated and recognized at this event will also be nominated for the Vermont Rising Star award. Read on to learn more about each of this year's 24 emerging leaders in the words of the community members who nominated them!

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“Summit Award” Leaders:



Katherine Partington
Mondo Mediaworks

Katherine Partington lives and works in Southern Vermont. She serves on the Southern Vermont Young Professionals Steering Committee which has a mission to attract and support Young Professionals in VT by providing engaging opportunities and community events in a socially equitable way in Southern Vermont.

She also manages two Airbnb Property Listings as a proudly awarded "Superhost" (all 5 star ratings year-round) that thus far have brought in hundreds of people to vacation in, enjoy, and contribute to the economic vitality of Southern Vermont. Katherine promotes all Guilford and Vermont-based products and the Vermont experience through properties rented out on Airbnb.

Katherine was recently promoted to Director of Accounts at Mondo Mediaworks where she will supervise the Accounts team and oversee Mondo's relationship with its clients. This includes maintaining a high retention rate, sustainable growth plan, developing trust to enable long term relationships with clients and delivering high quality creative work that meets the client's needs and addresses their business objectives.

As an Account Manager at Mondo Mediaworks this past year, Katherine worked with a variety of businesses and

organizations including the Grafton Inn, and the Rutland County Marketing Committee as their Account Manager. In her role as Account Manager she oversaw marketing strategies and plans, implemented and optimized by Mondo Mediaworks. She also contributes to a healthy work culture by inspiring and then actively initiating an office re-design for Mondo Mediaworks.

Katherine was the Choreographer for the 2017 holiday musical at New England Youth Theater which included inspiring and training approximately 30 young people ranging in ages from 11-18.

Katherine was involved in restoring, preserving and rebuilding a 1792 Farmstead in Guilford, Vermont, worked closely with Windham regional Commission and the Guilford Historical Society on various buildings including a 10,000 sq. ft barn, farmhouse, carriage house and former blacksmith shop.

Katherine has demonstrated the highest integrity in all areas of her life. She is a dynamic leader who is driven to support economic and creative development in Southern Vermont both professionally and on a volunteer basis. She is an ambitious creative producer and among her many pursuits is currently writing a short film.



Michelle Marrocco

Bennington County Regional Commission

Michelle spearheads the Bennington Comprehensive Internship Program. This is an initiative to bridge the gap between local businesses with the capacity to grow but are hampered by workforce development barriers and local residents who are seeking work but lack certain skill sets. By strengthening community partnerships and building new connections, Michelle has increased economic development opportunities in the region.

Michelle has also played a large part in growing the Lightning Jar, an entrepreneurial hub and co-working space located in downtown Bennington. She runs the small event series, to increase community outreach and expand economic learning opportunities that are available for the public. She is an avid grant-writer for several organizations and is dedicated to making Bennington into a thriving hub for local entrepreneurs.

Active in the arts community, Michelle is transitioning into the role of Director of the Bennington Area Arts Counsel. Her passion is to utilize art as a way to design creative solutions to transform downtown Bennington and revive the economy. Michelle also assumes leadership in the following organizations: Alliance for Community Transformations and the Idea Fund. In all of

these positions, Michelle acts as a strong leader and advocate.

Michelle contributes, build teams and leads wherever she goes. She commits and gracefully encourages others to commit. Michelle came to the area through the Americorp VISTA program and immediately got to work within the community. She later accepted a job at the BCRC and has continued her efforts in art & culture, economic development, and community development & volunteerism.

For the past year, Michelle has served as the stand in Director for the Alliance for Community Transformations. ACT is a coalition dedicated to preventing drug and alcohol use in minors. As director, Michelle has increased community outreach, raised awareness, helped to plan a successful Youth Appreciation Day, and coordinated efforts with local and state organizations who all serve the same purpose.

Michelle currently serves as co-director for the Bennington Idea Fund. This is a young female leader to watch as she grows into the community. Although hailing from MA, she has a love for the Bennington community. She is constantly challenging our social norms to try new things; to be the best versions of ourselves. She takes the best of what she sees in other areas and works to adapt it to make it fit within our community.

Emerging Leaders:



Betsy Dunham

Southern Vermont College

Betsy is SVC's Director of Careers and Internships. She works with numerous businesses and nonprofit organizations in the area to place students in internships, practicum experiences, and employment both while enrolled and after graduation. Her expertise and close knowledge of the SVC student body have enabled her to be extraordinarily effective in helping employers meet their needs and to help create a context in which young people choose to stay in Bennington and contribute their skills to their employers and the community. Given the issue of our aging population and the skills gap between what employers need and what prospective employees offer, Betsy has been instrumental in efforts to address those problems.

Betsy is one of the most respected and effective employees at SVC. She routinely takes the lead on important strategic initiatives and is critical in creating and maintaining the relationship between the college's academic programs and our external constituencies. She is a "go-to" person for committees and ad hoc projects, as she is efficient, reliable, and committed.

Betsy both works herself in the community, and in her case probably more importantly helps many, many community nonprofits to find suitable interns and volunteers to meet their needs. She is invaluable in the college's creation of excellent relationships in town.



Bridget Struthers

Brattleboro School of Dance

Bridget is fully aware of, and engaging in, work to help develop the economic engines needed to support a vibrant and diverse community who can, in turn, support a vibrant and diverse arts community.

In January 2018, at 31 years of age, Bridget assumed the ownership and directorship of the BSD this year. Bridget grew up, from age 2 to age 18 in the BSD programs and the Performing Arts program at Brattleboro High School. She went on to attain her BA in Dance from Goucher College, her MFA in Dance and New Media from the Tisch School of Fine Arts at NYU, and started her own dance company, Bridge & Olive Dance in NYC before moving back to the Southern, Vt area to help revitalize the arts community and economy.

Bridget moved back 'home', forsaking the big city opportunities, and wagering her future on being a part of a successful Southern Vt revitalization. She will surely connect the two, helping the area's up and coming dancers become exposed to a larger dance world!



Duncan Hilton

St. Michael's Episcopal Church
and Community College of
Vermont

Duncan is a new faculty member working at CCV with the Governor's Career Readiness Certificate through the Jobs for Independence program. He has harnessed all his years of experience as a community organizer, leadership trainer, and spiritual seeker to help our students find new momentum toward work. He was also ordained as an Episcopal priest in January and has work that he is doing in community outreach and organizing at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Brattleboro. He has his eye on social justice issues and is mindful of the ways we all walk together to make better community and better lives together.

Duncan brings years of experience in community organizing, social justice work, and leadership development with him to Brattleboro. He is a leader in our faith community and is an outstanding faculty member who goes above and beyond to be a champion for our students through his compassion and skills at making social change possible.

Duncan chose to move to Brattleboro two years ago on faith that Vermont was where he wanted to be after years of living and working in other places. His work at CCV and at St. Michael's are rooted in his belief that this is the place he wants to share his gifts and talents.

Truly grateful for Duncan for the kind, generous, and thoughtful person and professional he is.



Forest Weyen
Bennington Rescue Squad

Forest is the Executive Director of Bennington Rescue Squad. He was recruited to Bennington to fill the need of the growing Emergency Medical Services agency in southwest Vermont in October of 2013. Since that time, he turned Bennington Rescue into the pinnacle of EMS agencies in Vermont and the Region. In his few short years at Bennington Rescue he has turned an inefficient, expensive agency into an efficient, quality Emergency Medical Services provider. He led a year-long strategic planning process that established a 2020 vision. The crowning achievements for Forest are that his agency received the 2017 by achieving the Mission Lifeline Gold Plus award, which is the first time that award was given to a Vermont EMS agency.

Forest is heavily involved in the development of ‘systems’ and ‘processes’ in the community. He has made the Rescue Squad a key part of community development and you see his impact at many community events from Mayfest to the Snowshoe Championships. He volunteers countless hours to the success of these events.

Forest also maintains his Paramedic licensure and occasionally will be seen responding to calls. Forest also serves on the Boards for the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, where he is chair of the Governance Task Force and United Counseling Service (UCS). He also represents Bennington Rescue on the Vermont EMS District 12 Board of Directors and is heavily involved in the Vermont Ambulance Association (VAA).



Gregory Boshart

Maple Valley Design Build

Greg Boshart is an architect who founded and runs a design build firm in Manchester, Maple Valley Design Build, which specializes in energy efficient home design and employs 8 to 10 people. In this capacity he has worked on various projects that are important to economic development of the Manchester area, including the development of the Manchester Medical Center.

In addition to his professional work, Greg has served on the Manchester Planning Commission since September 2009 and has served as its chair since August of 2014. He has led the commission as it has worked diligently on a comprehensive rezoning effort for the town. His leadership style is one of inclusivity and listening. Throughout Planning Commission proceedings, he is focused on hearing and addressing the concerns of community members. The recrafted ordinance and zoning map offer creative solutions to community housing problems and increased economic development opportunity throughout the town core. It is currently under consideration for adoption by the town select board.

Greg has assembled and trained a team of craftsman who specialize in sustainable energy efficient homes. He recently hired a graduate of BBA and is training him so that he will develop the skills needed for a long and successful career as a carpenter. While running his successful business Greg has found the time to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity and play Ice Hockey at Riley Rink.



Josh Roberts

Edward Jones

Josh actively promotes economic development through his profession, which is centered on increasing financial stability of Windham County residents. Josh also volunteers with our Prosperity Team, which supports our initiatives to support financial wellness of Windham County. Lastly, Josh also volunteers on the UWWC Resource Committee, where he helps build connections between resources and United Way.

Josh has undergone intensive Edward Jones training and is in the process of opening up his office after a lengthy and difficult search for an appropriate office space. His tenacity embodies the ideal YP entrepreneur. Additionally, Josh has stepped up as a leader in the community with his dedication to United Way of Windham County's mission and his recent acceptance of a leadership role as a Southern Vermont Young Professionals board member.

Josh has become a champion of HOPE (Health, Opportunity, Prosperity, Education) as a United Way of Windham County volunteer. He volunteers on the HOPE Team, the Prosperity Team and the Resource Development Committee. His wide range of commitments shows his support of all aspects of financial wellness -- be it an individual community member, an organization, or the community at large.

Josh is a positive ambassador of the YP community and helps to dispel myths and negative connotations associated with our age group.



James Salerno
Hale Mountain Research

James is an active member of the BCIC Board of Directors, and he has taken the time to work closely with BCIC's Workforce & Education Committee to provide workforce development policy insights from a small business perspective. He has consistently spoken to the value of regional economic development initiatives, from local select board meetings to legislative committees in Montpelier.

In response to a local plant closure, James formed his composite design and manufacturing startup, Hale Mountain Research, in 2014. In time, he was able to hire some former colleagues who were also affected by the closure, and subsequently expand operations.

James decided to make a go of it as an entrepreneur in Southern Vermont after the job that brought him here left town. His decision to put down roots in Shaftsbury, build a business in Bennington that employs other local residents, and find ways to build the skills of his workforce to enhance their economic opportunities, exemplifies the next generation of prosperity in Southern Vermont.



Jason Dolmetsch

MSK Engineering & Design

Jason currently chairs the Regional Economic Group for Bennington County, which is participating in the development of the joint Bennington/Windham County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. He is also an investor member of an LLC that is a member of the Bennington Redevelopment Group, the organization responsible for the Putnam Block Development initiative. Jason also serves as Vice President of the Sage City Syndicate, a for-profit community development organization investing in real estate projects in and around the Village of North Bennington.

As President of MSK Engineering & Design, Jason has grown the company from three full-time employees in 2015 (when he purchased the company) to ten full-time staff in three years' time. MSK routinely offers internships to local college students to gain experience in the fields of surveying and engineering. As the head of a small business, Jason is involved in every aspect of organizational management and development and maintains a role as a senior engineer on design projects. He is responsible for managing a \$15 million project to extend municipal water lines to areas affected by contamination of perflourooctanaic acid (PFOA) in private wells in the northwest section of Bennington.

Jason's commitment to the community is demonstrated by the portfolio of projects MSK has chosen to work on for municipalities, private investment groups, institutions and non-profit agencies in the greater Bennington area. These projects include repairs and upgrades to the Town of Bennington's infrastructure system to site improvements for local schools.



Kayla Becker

United Ways of Vermont, Bennington
County / Catamount Connections

Kayla is a passionate advocate for parents and families. In every meeting and for every event, Kayla champions family friendly options and child care solutions to make our community more family friendly. Additionally, she has been instrumental in the opening of Catamount Connections, a family friendly work space for parents with small children that is funded by the Promise Community Grant Kayla secured for Bennington, Old Bennington, and North Bennington.

In the few years since Kayla has returned to Bennington (one of those that grew up here, left, and has come back to raise her family), Kayla has already begun to shift the culture of Bennington to be more inclusive of working parents. In addition to her work with Catamount Connections, Kayla has created a community of parents that supports each other and advocates for their children and the community.

Last year, she launched the PB&Jam Slam (a food drive of just peanut butter and jelly organized just in time for school vacations) in partnership with three local food distribution centers. The first year, she surpassed her goal of 1,000 jars collected. This year she is well on her way to surpassing last year's goal.

Kayla is an incredibly engaged human. Outside of her paid work, she runs a motherhood collaborative, led the Babywearers of Southern Vermont, secured a Promise Community Grant to prepare the communities children for kindergarten.



Kayla Davis

Battenkill Valley Health Center

Kayla is now the head of the administrative team at BVHC. The center has recently expanded, bringing new medical opportunities and trained staff to the region. They also just finished a total renovation of their building, bringing lots of construction work to Arlington.

Kayla started work at BVHC in 2014 and has been quickly promoted several times. She is now the head of the administrative team after the CEO recently left. She has been spending time reaching out to other leadership organizations to collaborate. Her previous role was Director of Community Relations and Development.

The more that BVHC grows, the more medical and employment opportunities are brought to the region. It is a federally funded health center, which provides services at reduced costs to those with low incomes.



Ken Lorenz
Spirits of Old Bennington

Ken has not only spearheaded the creation of the first distillery in Southwest Vermont, but he's also taken the lead in developing more partnerships and outreach between beverage brands, makers, and other companies in the area. He participates in economic growth forums, offers Spirits of Old Bennington products for local-booster campaigns, and opens his distillery for tours and events to help promote both other local businesses and the Southern Vermont region.

Ken is the head distiller and chief cook and bottle-washer (literally) at Spirits of Old Bennington.

Not only does Ken firmly believe in the potential and vibrance of the southern Vermont region, but he's doing everything he can to attract and retain other young professionals, makers, and businesspeople. He's helped spearhead legislation to make it easier to go green with power in the region - working with local leaders and state officials to make hydro power a reality in Vermont - and has helped others make green conversions. He also works to bring high-speed internet and data connectivity to low-income residents throughout the region through one of his side projects and supports arts and entertainment in the area.



Laura Kamyk
Big Picture Farm

Laura runs Big Picture Farm's thriving confectionery shop and assumes responsibility for all of our order fulfillment, both wholesale and retail. She manages several other employees and has worked as a mentor with Leland and Gray to assist students in professional work environments. She is also active in the local community (both Townshend and Brattleboro).

She has been promoted several times and is now the head of our shop, where she assumes a very important leadership role for our company and farm.

Laura volunteers as a mentor at our local school (Leland and Gray) and she works in coordination with other young professionals in the area.



Michael Root

United States Postal Service /
Expert-Exchange

Over the past couple years Michael has assisted Expert-Exchange with development and our impact. We have conducted several joint medical clinics with the local government, medical assessments of communities, and medical outreach clinics to multiple locations in Cambodia. We have helped sponsor multiple kids for full-time school. We have also supplied multiple different schools helping over a thousand children with school supplies, from backpacks to books, pens, pencils, and uniforms. We have taught basic first aid classes to locals and initiated deworming programs in two provinces in Cambodia. We have helped facilitate a doctor and university to create better standards for the medical curriculum in Cambodia universities. We also put in 4 wells to give communities safe access to drinking water. We provided children with basic hygiene supplies and taught them how to use them properly along with providing some families in rural Cambodia with bicycles for transportation.

Michael was the founding board member of Expert-Exchange back in 2014 and has been a mentor to fellow Veterans in the community and abroad since.

Besides his work above in Cambodia, Michael is a silent professional maintaining a relationship with Veterans who exit the military and help them navigate the transition into civilian world. He is known in the community to be an advocate for veteran's rights and has helped many successful fundraisers and causes. Michael has been a part in planning the 22-mile march and helping Lt. Marbie organize without credit.



Michelle Demers
Vermont Department of Labor

As the VDOL Jobs for Independence (JFI) coordinator for the Southeastern Vermont region, Michelle has assisted with the success of this pilot project. The JFI program provides employment and training services in our area and around the state. JFI is part of a national study to learn how to best help folks find work or get better jobs. JFI provides assistance with job skills training, education (basic, post-secondary, vocational), and work experiences. The JFI hit program capacity with 3000 enrollments across the state in March 2018!

Michelle has been the VDOL point person for the JFI program in both the Brattleboro and Springfield regions. She has organized team meetings for all JFI partnering agencies: SEVCA, EAP, Voc Rehab Vermont, VABIR and Economic Services Dept.

Michelle is actively engaged in workforce development initiatives across the region primarily working with low incomes individuals that face multiple barriers to employment. Michelle provides intensive case management providing job search, resume and interviewing assistance.

Michelle is dedicated to the community that she lives and works in and she is currently enrolled in a Public Administration graduate program at Norwich University.



Phoebe Connolly

Leland & Gray UHS

Phoebe Connolly is a young professional who settled in southern Vermont after earning a degree at SIT. Her work there led her to working with youth through recruiting kids for summer travel programs and coaching sports teams. From there she began working at Leland and Gray as an after-school program coordinator, then a planning room monitor, and now as our Dean of Students. As a vibrant member of our leadership team, she has helped craft a future mission and vision for L&G and our approach to interactions with students. She's a demonstrated team player, incredibly detail oriented, and a fine human being! Her work in helping revitalize L&G is essential for economic development, as good schools attract families who need work!

As mentioned above, Phoebe is a member of our leadership team, our Operations committee, a girls' soccer and basketball coach, a leader of a girls outdoors adventure trip, and our community service coordinator. She also serves as our supervisory union's coordinator of school safety. And her full-time job is our dean of students - the sole person in charge of student management for 300 students grades 7-12. Her leadership roles are endless!

As our community service coordinator, Phoebe assists with students finding ways to meet our community service graduation requirement. Furthermore, she does this extra job without pay, as she gives back to the community! Recently during our assessment week at school, students who weren't being tested were organized into numerous service learning projects for 2-hours daily. The logistical nightmare of structuring this was the sole responsibility of Phoebe!



Ricky Davidson

Boys and Girls Club – Brattleboro

Ricky Davidson has been a champion for the youth of our community since 2004 when he first started working at the Boys and Girls Club. Ricky recognized early on that with a consistent and stable location for positive experiences, kids would be able to develop the skills to be successful in the adult world.

In 2004, working at the Boys & Girls Club of Brattleboro as Teen Services Director. Since then, Davidson has taken on greater roles within the organization, advancing to Director of Operations as well as Interim Executive Director at the Club's main site on Flat Street. Under his interim leadership, the Club restructured its summer camp offerings to serve more young people and instituted several new after-school initiatives, including "Kids Club" which opened this fall as a licensed after-school program for children ages 6 to 10.

There are many ways that an individual can have an economic impact on a community but I can't think of a more important or far reaching way to impact the economic vitality and workforce strength than to provide the necessary tools to our youth so that they can grow to be contributing members of whatever community they choose to live in. Really when we look towards a model of success it is hard to argue with Ricky's statistics that 100% of his kids who stay with the program through their senior year graduate high school on time and with a plan, whether it's college, an apprenticeship, the military, or a job. A plan after high school and an engaged young adult - that is the secret sauce to a community's economic vitality.



Rob Terry
Merck Forest

Rob chairs the Shires Outdoor Adventure Recreation (SOAR) committee to convene regional members of the outdoor recreation community together in order to drive economic development in the Shires region. He also identifies strategic partnerships and initiatives that Merck Forest can engage in to help connect it's ~10,000 annual visitors with local businesses Rob continues to collaborate with Northshire Grows and other producers in the Mettawee Valley food shed to develop new professional development and farm to institution pathways. Additionally, he serves as a member of the board of the Sheldon Store initiative, an effort to rehabilitate a former general store in Rupert, VT to deepen community and stimulate economic activity.

Rob has instituted a hands to work program that addressed a forming divide between field and admin staff by providing the opportunity for all admin staff to dedicate two days of work per month to the field. He also spends what little free time he has coaching youth soccer and lacrosse.

I met Rob just this last year and I was immediately impressed. In spite of his full plate of professional and community activities, he stepped up to chair our SOAR committee. It is here that I have seen his leadership in facilitating large group discussion, involving outdoor recreation stakeholders from across SoVT, working to define goals and organizing principles for SOAR.



Sarah Lang

Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Sarah is an economic development professional who hit the ground running in 2017 when she came to Vermont. She has become a champion and leader at the helm of the Southern Vermont Economy Project, building capacity and building connections across Bennington and Windham counties. Sarah also runs the Southern Vermont Young Professionals, with a commitment to increasing the critical mass of young adults and fostering their ability to thrive here long term.

Sarah is playing a critical role in developing initiatives and ties across the region to strengthen collaborative action to move the economy forward. She is building capacity in Southern Vermont communities through trainings, education, forging connections with state resources. She has developed events that created new opportunities for new solutions and partnerships.

Sarah brings to her work a deep personal commitment to not only serving communities, but to fostering the communities of tomorrow. Sarah applies a blend of digital smarts and problem solving, strategic design and responsive program development, all based in deep relationships with a wide range of regional partners.



Serenity Wolf, P.E.
Stevens & Associates, P.C.

Through her work, Serenity has contributed to the stability and growth at Stevens & Associates (S&A), which continues to offer a place of employment for professionals with all levels of experience wishing to live in and around Southern Vermont. She works on projects that add to the fabric of our communities by providing additional housing, improving and expanding existing commercial spaces; therefore, creating more jobs, and enhancing our downtowns to attract businesses, visitors, and residents. Serenity works directly with community leaders, stakeholders and developers, helping to bring success to projects in our community

Serenity actively does outreach with local schools and universities to support and communicate the need for curriculum and programs to support students, who may decide to become young professionals in our area.

In addition to her work responsibilities, Serenity completed the Leadership Southeast Vermont program in 2017. She is very committed to actively volunteering within the local schools to share her love of science, technology, engineering and math by supporting STEM programs and drives the career shadowing program at S&A created for students interested in pursuing a career in architecture or engineering

Last week while discussing the challenges of a different project with me Serenity said, “I love working on projects that create jobs in our community”. There has been an inspiring parallel between Serenity’s growth in her profession to become a Professional Engineer and her growth as a leader not only in our community but within our company.



Silvia Cassano

Bennington Area Trails System

Silvia has been working with regional outdoor groups and VOREC to build economic collaborations around outdoor recreation. She is tireless, engaged, and a key person in the newly developing Shires Outdoor & Adventure Recreation team (SOAR) that is working with the Bennington Regional Chamber.

She served on the board of the Bennington Area Trails System, and on the steering committee for SOAR and is helping create new events such as a "Trails Day" to build awareness in the community about recreational opportunities. She is a freelance writer, contributing articles on outdoor recreation and winter snowsports programs in Vermont for Stratton Magazine, Vermont Sports, and Vermont Ski and Ride. Silvia is working with Southern Vermont College and other community organizations to gain more local membership, promote organization, and establish community buy-in to BATS mission.

Silvia has volunteered hundreds of hours of labor to this work. She is always one of the first to raise her hand to help out and is actively engaged in numerous volunteer efforts and groups. She worked side-by-side with Tim Van Orden to bring National Snowshoe Championships to Bennington. Silvia represents the type of engaged young millennial that this sort of award is designed to encourage. Her approach is always, "Let's get it done", leading by example. Silvia is the rare young person giving her time unselfishly to the cause of Southern Vermont outdoor recreation and the associated economic development.



Stacey Woods

Meadowbrook Gypsies LLC

In the state of Vermont, I feel the Vermont Farms and Farm related businesses are striving to make a comeback and continue being a huge part of the communities healthy and happy environmental process. Stacey has grown up helping take care of the family farm in Wilmington VT. The farm is a multi-generational farm; her motivation to make Vermont farms grow is ingrained within her. She has taken that motivation and love for the farm and farm animals to a higher level in trying to get us community active

Stacey is a very self-motivated young woman. She is extremely devoted to the farm and animals; always thinking of new and improved ways to care for them efficiently. She has a great attitude in dealing with the horses and with the other workers. Stacey is extremely hard working always staying busy to keep things in motion.

Our Gypsy Vanner horses here at Meadowbrook Gypsies are still a fairly new breed to the US. Stacey has been key to our breeding and showing business in getting us out in the community for exposure. Stacey pushes to find local and out of the area events where she drives and ride all of our horses for the people and community to see their versatility, kind temperament and beauty. I am forever grateful for all she does to get us out in the world.



Taylor Knoop

United Way of Windham County

Taylor, in addition to being the Development & Community Relations Director for UWWC, is a member of the Board of Directors of the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce and a regular attendee and active participant in the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance. She champions partnerships between public, private, and social sector allies, such as with the UWWC Windham Welcome packet, which was initially developed as a marketing tool for UWWC.

Taylor Knoop moved to Brattleboro and started with the United Way of Windham County in 2016. One of the youngest women in the organization, she immersed herself into this community and created a voice for UWWC.

Taylor not only works in the social sector, she volunteers as well, becoming a Big Sister role model and mentor to a local girl as part of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Vermont. She also volunteers with the Brattleboro Community Justice Center as a reparative panel member.

Taylor has helped to dispel negative stereotypes associated with Young Professionals through her words as well as her actions. She should be applauded both for her professionalism and the value she has brought to this community.

SoVermont Summit Hosted By:

