Impact Report 2025

ECC Northeast







Cultivating Community Resiliency

Across the Northeast

Emerald Cities COLLABORATIVE

America empowered.

Impact Report 2025

ECC Northeast





Contents

Letter from the Regional Director 3

Expanding Our Impact

About Us

Thank You Partners and Supporters 4

Our History in the Northeast Region 5

Dedicated to Community Resilience 6

Northeast Regional Theory of Change 7

Our Approach

2025 Milestones 8

Accomplishments and Milestones

2025 in Review: Our Success

Adapting Our Strategy to Meet Regional Trends

Our Programs and Partners 13

Impact Through Partnership

Program Spotlights

E-Contractor Academy 14

Emerald Connections Weatherization and Healthy Homes 17

Partner Spotlights 18

Latino Support Network (LSN)

Funder Spotlight 19

Community Heat Resilience Pilot

Barr Foundation

Internships 20

Connecting the Next Generation to Clean Energy Careers

Looking Ahead 22

A Letter from the Regional Director

Expanding Our Impact



Dear Friends and Partners,

Emerald Cities Collaborative Northeast (ECC Northeast) begins 2026 with momentum and a sharpened mission to further climate equity during what is one of the most challenging moments in our country's history, particularly for the advancement of a just and equitable transition to clean energy.

Focusing our efforts on the communities we serve and solving issues that come from their lived experiences is our guiding principle. It is why ECC Northeast roots its programming in locally grounded, people-led initiatives across workforce development, economic inclusion, building decarbonization, and climate resiliency.

Since 2018, ECC Northeast has grown from a single partnership in Greater Boston into a dynamic multi-state operation. Our dedicated and driven team exemplifies this spirit of growth. Last year, the organization reached new heights, with new and expanded partnerships, direct investment in underrepresented businesses and contractors, growing community engagement by providing access and knowledge to extreme heat and healthy home initiatives, and further expanding our scope.

To achieve its ongoing growth and success, ECC Northeast leans on an ecosystem of partnerships consisting of trusted like-minded community-based organizations, funders, government agencies, and community members. This coalition is committed to a collective clean energy mission, solving challenges and prompting innovation.

In 2026, ECC Northeast will deepen its commitment to community ownership, innovation, and climate equity through expanded partnerships and implementation of its work. ECC Northeast thanks its staff and partners in fulfilling our mission. The work continues, and we're grateful you're in it with us.

Alexis Washburn
Northeast Region Director

About Us

Thank You, Partners and Supporters

Our Funders

ECC Northeast is grateful to the funders whose numerous investments helped power our 2025 programs, expand our impact, and strengthen our community. We are proud to acknowledge the support of the U.S. Department of Energy, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), Barr Foundation, Berkshire Bank Foundation, and the United States Climate Alliance.

Our Partners

ECC Northeast believes collaboration is critical to building a healthy, clean economy. Our work is strengthened by community-based organizations, implementation partners, and public agencies that help expand our reach, deepen local impact, and bring programs to life across the region.

We are grateful to partners including Latino Support Network, Action, Inc., Browning the Green Space, VEIC, Resonant Energy, Alternatives for Community and Environment, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Frontline Solutions, Resource Innovations, Center for EcoTechnology, the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, and many others.

We also extend special thanks to our governmental partners: the City of Lynn, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources—whose support helps make this work possible.



Mission

Emerald Cities Collaborative (ECC) advances racial, economic, and climate justice to build communities that are more equitable, economically just, and sustainable through replicable strategies in community power building, economic inclusion, and equitable implementation.

Vision

We envision healthy, sustainable, powerful, and thriving communities.

About Us

Our History in the Northeast Region

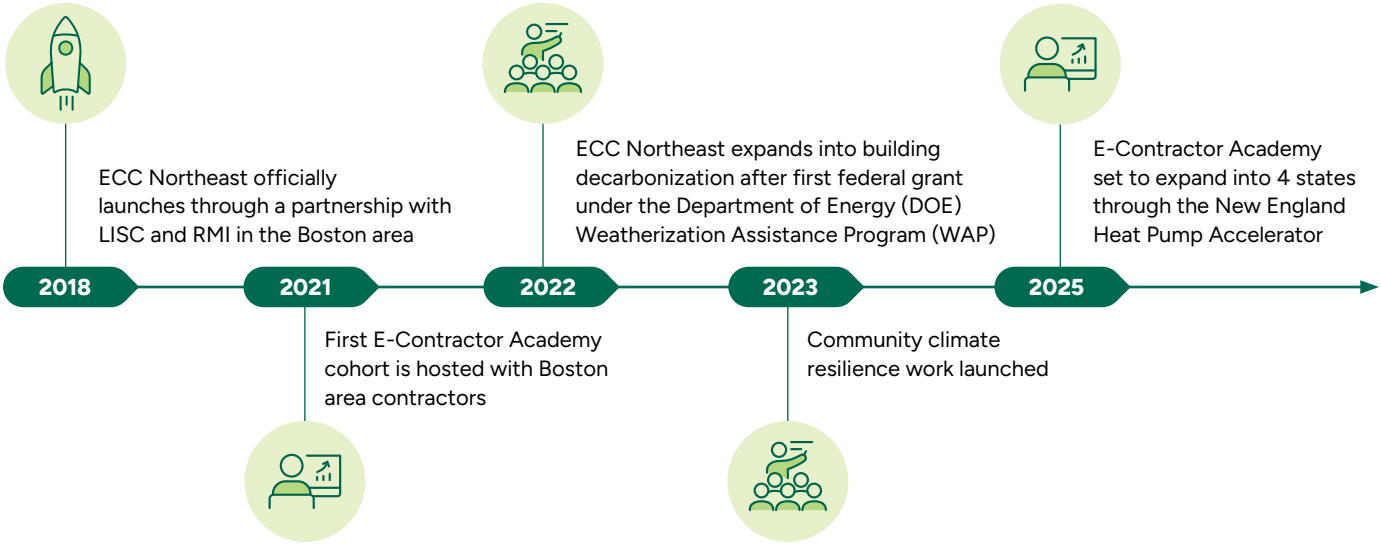
In 2018, Emerald Cities Collaborative Northeast (ECC Northeast) established a partnership with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) that launched ECC Northeast's E-Contractor Academy training program and laid the foundation for its growth.

This partnership provided business and technical skills provided business and technical skills training in the green construction industry to an initial group of 20 Boston-area contractors—readying them to compete and succeed in clean energy alongside more established and well-resourced organizations. Eventually, ECC Northeast expanded its contractor development efforts beyond Greater Boston and across the region, adding new areas of focus including community climate resilience and equitable building decarbonization.

Today, ECC Northeast advances a people-centered clean energy transition. Through intentional growth and partnerships, ECC Northeast is transforming the New England region, creating pathways for communities to meaningfully participate in the clean energy transition. By developing new partnerships and strategically expanding operations, from the Greater Boston, Massachusetts Area to Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire, ECC Northeast ensures programs and services extend across New England.

ECC Northeast's ripple effect strengthens businesses, communities, and regional systems. It is building a more resilient, just, and equitable society for generations to come.

ECC Northeast Regional Milestones



About Us

Dedicated to Community Resilience

People-led, People-served

ECC Northeast's success is driven by deep, trusted relationships built by an exceptional staff of highly skilled and experienced employees. Dedicated team members work alongside organizations and residents to understand local challenges, identify systemic barriers, and co-create solutions that allow underrepresented communities to thrive.

This work is rooted in ECC Northeast's people-led, people-served model. Understanding the communities it serves, is critical to ECC Northeast's work. Team members listen, build trust, and design programs that reflect lived experiences. ECC Northeast staff focuses on amplifying the community's voice and ensuring it remains at the center of every initiative and program we spearhead. This amplifies the reach of the voices most often left out of the green economy.



Alexis Washburn
Northeast Regional Director



Esmeralda Bisono
Climate Resilience Manager



Russell Paul
Senior Economic Inclusion Manager



Emily Audet
Economic Inclusion Project Manager



Sandra Lee
Economic Inclusion Manager



Carolina Gracia
Economic Inclusion Project Coordinator



ECC Northeast staff at a community event in Lynn, MA.

Northeast Regional Theory of Change

Our Approach

ECC Northeast's Theory of Change transforms complex environments into an organized, community-driven strategy for lasting systems change. Its goal is to green cities, build strong communities, and strengthen democracy by creating sustainable, economically just, high-road economies.

Our Region's Vision and Pathway for a Just and Sustainable Future

Furthering climate equity requires building worker and community power, advancing community-owned and inclusive climate solutions, and expanding pathways to quality jobs, wealth building, and long-term resilience. ECC Northeast builds an equitable, more sustainable, and just green economy through four core areas of programmatic work:





Community-Driven Strategies

Community Climate Resilience

ECC Northeast's climate resilience initiatives and programs strengthen equity, center local power, and promote long-term community well-being. Community engagement deepens its understanding of the impact of extreme weather on daily life and access to essential services. This ensures responsive, inclusive and community-driven solutions.

Equitable Building Decarbonization

ECC Northeast reduces carbon emissions by prioritizing access, affordability, health, and economic opportunity through whole-home initiatives. Efforts address energy, health, and safety challenges faced by low-income households, while enhancing and retrofitting existing homes and larger buildings. These strategies support long-term emissions reductions and improved energy efficiency across the built environment.

Economic Inclusion

ECC Northeast creates pathways to good jobs, builds local wealth, and ensures that historically excluded communities share in the economic and environmental benefits of the clean energy transition.

Workforce Development

By increasing equitable access to and readiness for climate-critical careers among the next generation of young people, ECC Northeast is building a skilled workforce equipped to lead a transition to a low-carbon economy.

2025 Milestones

Accomplishments and Milestones

ECC Northeast's 2025 accomplishments reflect a year of strategic growth, trusted partnership, and community impact across our region. Together, the following highlights show how ECC Northeast is building momentum, expanding access, and positioning underserved businesses and communities to thrive in a competitive and evolving clean energy landscape.

Community Impact Award

In 2025, ECC Northeast was awarded and won the prestigious Community Impact Award at The Alliance for Climate Transition (ACT)'s Green Future Gala. The award was presented to Emerald Cities Collaborative (ECC) Northeast for its leadership in advancing clean energy and climate solutions that deliver measurable benefits, foster innovation, and expand economic opportunity for under-served communities.

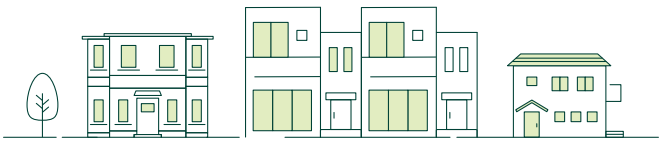


ACT's Green Future Gala.

2025 in Review

Our Success

ECC Northeast Impact Numbers



$685K
invested in communities to deliver retrofit housing at no cost

$100K
re-granted to 16 MWBEs in Massachusetts

60
contractors served across all programs

57
low-income homes upgraded through weatherization and retrofit project

23
active partners across public, private, and community sectors

6
coalitions to inform policy advocacy and community-led strategies

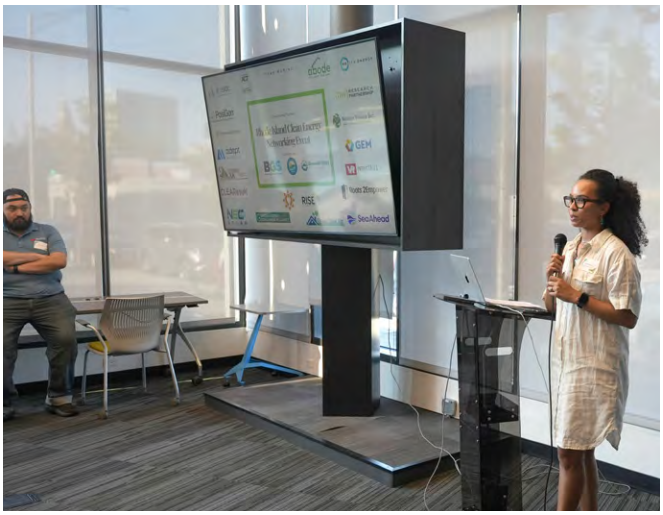
Mass Save's Supplier Diversity Summit 2025 Keynote Speaker Alexis Washburn

In 2025, Alexis Washburn, regional director of ECC Northeast, served as the closing keynote speaker at Mass Save's Supplier Diversity Summit. During the Summit, organizations and partners shared tools, resources, and pathways that expand opportunities for MWBEs across energy efficiency, building electrification, workforce development, and equity. Washburn's remarks focused on the importance of equitable participation in the clean energy economy.

Direct Investments Support MWBEs

Through its partnership with Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, ECC Northeast distributed over $100,000 in direct investments to support 16 MWBEs across Massachusetts working in the green economy.

This milestone affirms ECC Northeast's role as a trusted hub for sustainability-focused contractors seeking to break barriers and enter a competitive industry, but who need access to capital, tools, and resources. All 16 contractors who received grants were ECA graduates, and all 16 were MBEs, WBEs, or MWBEs. In this way, ECC Northeast helps underrepresented contractors grow and compete in the clean energy and sustainable construction sector.



ECC Northeast Regional Director, Alexis Washburn, speaking at an event.



ECC E-Contractor Academy cohort graduation. Photo credit: Doug Hall Photo.



Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) Grants Expand E-Contractor Academy

In 2025, ECC Northeast received a Climate-Critical Under-represented Business Support (CUBS) Planning Grant to create an E-Contractor Academy designed to support MWBEs interested in working with Mass Save. The planning grant sought to better understand how to train and onboard contractors onto Mass Save's programs and develop a curriculum based on the E-Contractor Academy model, which improves the contractor experience and supports regional clean energy and greenhouse gas reduction.

ECC Northeast received a CUBS Implementation Grant. Serving as a spoke across Massachusetts, the region will be delivering E-Contractor Academies, helping contractors access resources, and assisting with procurement activities. In 2026, ECC Northeast will host at least two E-Contractor Academies and train more than 65 contractors statewide in the clean energy field.

Co-Hosted Highly Anticipated 3-Part Webinar Series

ECC Northeast hosted a three-part webinar series "Navigating Federal Shifts" in partnership with Resonant Energy and Alternatives for Community and Environment. The webinar gathered nonprofit leaders, advocates, funders, municipalities, and philanthropic partners to help them navigate the clean energy landscape in these uncertain times. It attracted more than 130 registrants and featured insights from more than 10 clean energy experts. The webinar centered on resilience, cross-sector collaboration, and equity. Sessions explored federal policy shifts impacting community programming, local strategies to strengthen infrastructure and support systems, and pathways to align funding, advocacy, and partnerships for equitable outcomes. The webinar is available to re-watch on ECC Northeast's YouTube channel.

- **3-Part highly anticipated webinar series**
- **130+ attendees and registrants**
- **10+ clean energy expert panelists**



E-Contractor Academy session.



Panelists (left to right): Esmeralda Bisono, Emerald Cities Collaborative; Tristan Thomas, Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE); Joanna da Cunha-Semedo, Resonant Energy.





Emerald Connections Weatherization and Healthy Homes Guidebook

ECC Northeast published an Emerald Connections Weatherization and Healthy Homes Guidebook, a home improvement resource for participants. The guidebook is available to program participants and those considering home improvements. The guidebook offers:

- Easy-to-follow explanations for commonly installed equipment
- Simple ways to save energy and stay healthy
- Seasonal checklists and year-round tips to help you stay on track
- Local programs and people you can turn to for support

Connecticut Stakeholder Engagement and Technical Assistance

ECC Northeast provided technical assistance for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), between September 2024 through December 2025, to advance equity considerations in the state's climate action planning process. Technical assistance included:

- Stakeholder engagement planning
- Conducting, distributing, and analyzing surveys
- Hosting three roundtables
- Hosting a stakeholder workshop



Roundtable at CT DEEP Event in Hartford, CT.

2025 Milestones

Adapting Our Strategy to Meet Regional Trends

The Northeast team shifted our approach in 2025 to continue to drive forward climate justice in the face of emerging challenges and trends affecting building decarbonization, policy, and housing affordability.

CHALLENGE

Unequal Access to Building Decarbonization

Weatherization and decarbonization investments are growing across the region but awareness gaps, language barriers, and limited community education persist. As a result, low-income residents are still the least likely to benefit. Policy progress isn't equity progress if the people most impacted can't access the programs.

Housing Demand

Governor Maura Healey's Affordable Homes Act expanded the ability to build Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), which expanded housing development across Massachusetts and increased demand for skilled contractors in affordable, energy-efficient construction.

Uncertainty for Immigrants in the Region

Federal changes impacting immigration, housing stability, and workforce access raised concerns among low-income and immigrant workers in the clean energy sector. For ECC Northeast, this hit close to home: Lynn's environmental justice community is majority Latino and immigrant. The fear and uncertainty around immigration enforcement directly affects who shows up to community programs, who accesses benefits, and who feels safe engaging with government-adjacent organizations at all.

REGIONAL RESPONSE

Outreach and Education

ECC Northeast closes this gap through local relationship-building, multilingual outreach, resident education, and contractor training rooted in the communities it serves.

Contractor Training

ECC Northeast partnered with LISC Massachusetts to deliver an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) training program for contractors across MA, NH, and RI beginning in 2026. This aligned housing affordability with equitable workforce development goals. Contractors gained practical, hands-on training and graduated from the program with ADU construction listed as part of their services.

Community Engaging Approach

ECC Northeast adapted its community engagement approach for the Lynn Climate Heat Resilience Pilot and related programs to prioritize trust-building, confidentiality, and accessibility for undocumented and mixed-status residents. ECC Northeast also hosted a Know Your Rights webinar to support contractors navigating immigration-related workforce challenges.



Our Programs and Partners

Impact Through Partnership

Partnership is how ECC Northeast turns strategy into impact. Every program was designed and delivered alongside community-based organizations rooted in the neighborhoods they serve, workforce partners, municipal agencies, and funders who invest in community-led solutions. Trusted community partners lead outreach in the neighborhoods they serve, while workforce and training collaborations connect contractors, students, and job seekers to careers in the growing clean energy economy. This ecosystem is how ECC Northeast's programs reach the people too often left out of the clean energy transition and how those programs deliver lasting benefits for the communities they serve. The pages that follow spotlight some of the partners making this work possible.

Program Spotlights

E-Contractor Academy

Building Capacity in Green Construction

The E-Contractor Academy (ECA) is a no-cost small business accelerator program designed to build the capacity of small, women, and minority-owned construction firms to compete in climate-critical fields such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and building electrification. ECC's ECA in Western Massachusetts had its inaugural cohort in 2023. Since then, there have been two more cohorts, totaling more than 50 businesses served in the Pioneer Valley.

ECA training includes instruction about the policy context and technical aspects of green projects, such as how small businesses can market themselves in green construction sectors and leverage certifications to win public works projects (MBE, WBE, VBE, etc.). Contractors receive financial literacy instruction and are connected to financial institutions, insurance brokers, sureties, and lenders, enabling them to bid on more and larger projects. More importantly, ECA offers comprehensive one-on-one technical assistance to ensure that small, diverse firms are at the forefront of the emerging green construction industry.

In Fall 2025, ECC Northeast held a Western Massachusetts E-Contractor Academy in Springfield serving 14 businesses in climate-critical fields. The average annual revenue of businesses was $317,000 with four full-time employees. Ninety-two percent of the businesses were minority and women owned.

For a second year in a row, the E-Contractor Academy celebrated a 100% cohort graduation rate. Businesses ranged from solar installers, asbestos remediation companies, and HVAC professionals."

> **"I learned how to structure my business to meet government requirements, network with larger contractors, and take advantage of local contracting opportunities to grow sustainably."**
>
> ***E-Contractor participant***



E-Contractor Academy training

E-Contractor Academy by the Numbers

50
businesses served in Western Massachusetts since 2023

92%
of the businesses were minority and women owned

$317K
average annual revenue of businesses

100%
cohort graduation rate



Program Spotlights

E-Contractor Academy

At-a-Glance

- 100% graduation rate
- Nearly 92% of participants are MWBE-owned contractors
- Approximately $100,500 in direct investments for small business contractors
- 16 grants to assist contractors with capacity building and sustainability
- More than 130 hours of technical assistance provided to contractors
- 70% of contractors reported a positive business outcome post-graduation
- Average annual growth of $513,018.17 after one-year post graduation
- A year post graduation, ECA reports an average increase of one full-time employee



E-Contractor Academy graduates from the 2025 Cohort

E-Contractor Academy Graduate Spotlight

Genesis Vanderhost Batista



Genesis Vanderhost Batista is co-owner of Quality Air Solutions, a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning company she and her husband, Jorge, built together. Based in Massachusetts and serving communities across Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire, Genesis leads the operations, strategy, and growth of the business while Jorge, an experienced HVAC technician, leads the technical work. Together, they deliver high-quality, energy-efficient HVAC solutions that ensure homeowners feel confident and well cared for.

Genesis first learned about the E-Contractor Academy (ECA) through word of mouth—a suggestion that quickly took root. As she describes it, ECA was a "clean energy ecosystem," where she immersed herself in new knowledge, gained tools to grow her business, and built a strong network for future opportunities and partnerships.

Before joining ECA, Genesis and Jorge faced real industry and economic barriers, including stagnant sales, capped profits, and limited access to larger projects. Without strong banking relationships or a clear understanding of how to access capital, the mere idea of expanding the business, investing in equipment, hiring talent, or taking on more complex work seemed impossible. These challenges slowed their momentum and constrained their ability to fully meet the needs of the families and businesses they serve. They also gained a deeper understanding of why access to training, networks, and an ecosystem is important.

After graduation from the E-Contractor Academy, life looks remarkably different for Genesis, her business, family, and community. Between 2024 and 2025, Quality Air Solutions experienced significant revenue growth from $530,000 to $1.4 million. The growth was driven by the couple's ability to generate more bids, build stronger partnerships, and collaborate with other contractors—opportunities Genesis attributes directly to ECA. Today, the business is better positioned within the clean energy and high-efficiency HVAC market. Looking ahead, Genesis plans to strategically position Quality Air Solutions for long-term expansion by leveraging networking relationships, and applying knowledge gained from the ECA, while exploring post-academy opportunities.

Her advice to other contractors entering the green economy is simple and direct: "Don't underestimate the value of putting yourself in rooms where people are willing to share knowledge, resources, and opportunities. The work we do as contractors has a larger impact. We're not just installing systems—we're helping improve energy efficiency, comfort, and sustainability in the communities we serve. Being part of a program like ECA helps reinforce that mission while giving you the resources to keep pushing your business forward."

Between 2024 and 2025, Quality Air Solutions experienced significant growth revenue from

$530K to $1.4M

"Barriers didn't stop us from pushing forward, but they did make the path to growth more challenging. It reinforced the importance of building strong connections and understanding the financial side of the business so that we could position our company to continue growing and expand our reach."

Genesis Vanderhost Batista

Program Spotlights

Emerald Connections Weatherization and Healthy Homes

Home Energy Upgrades

The Emerald Connections Weatherization Plus Healthy Homes pilot program utilizes a comprehensive, whole-home approach that supports low-income households with no cost home repairs, energy upgrades, and healthy home improvements. The program prioritizes a place-based model, working closely with trusted community partners to address pressing energy, health, and safety concerns identified by residents.

By advancing equitable building decarbonization, the program ensures that low and moderate-income communities benefit from energy-efficient, electrified, and climate-resilient homes. These investments reduce emissions, lower energy costs, and improve health outcomes, while meeting people where they are and addressing real conditions they experience in their homes.

Program achievements:

Complete 60 retrofits for low-income households in Lynn, MA by March 2026:

- **52 low-income households in Lynn, MA, retrofitted through Emerald Connections**

Program offerings include:

- **No cost home repairs, energy upgrades, and healthy home improvements**
- **Repair challenges not covered by traditional weatherization programs**
- **Improving program access via partnerships with community-based organizations**
- **Emerald Connections Weatherization and Healthy Homes Guidebook community outreach, and access**

Healthy Homes Program Process



Connect with Local Organization
Customer learns about the program through a trusted source

Supported Entry
Guidance reduces confusion and administrative burden

Clear Assessment
Evaluation clearly explains feasible improvements

Coordinated Delivery
Repairs and upgrades are managed across partners

Completion and Follow-Through
Work is reviewed and customer feels supported

Lasting Stability
Customer has a safer, more comfortable house

Program Spotlights

Latino Support Network (LSN)

Community Outreach and Engagement

Latino Support Network (LSN) is a community-based organization and Community Development Corporation (CDC) rooted in Lynn serving families across the North Shore and Greater Boston. Founded in 2014 and designated a CDC in 2021, LSN's work evolved from educational services, including computer literacy, citizenship preparation, and small business technical assistance, to broader economic development efforts focused on affordable housing and healthy homes. Today, LSN provides services to residents throughout Greater Boston, including Lynn, Lawrence, Chelsea, and Salem.

LSN became a partner in Emerald Connections over three years ago when ECC Northeast received U.S. Department of Energy funding for a Weatherization Plus Healthy Homes initiative and sought trusted community partners in the region. A referral by Neighbor to Neighbor (a local advocacy organization), led to a partnership with ECC Northeast. Today, LSN leads community-based outreach and engagement for the Emerald Connections program. In addition to providing information about the program, LSN supports households through the application and eligibility confirmation process, and serves as an intermediary between participants, ECC, and service providers—especially when questions, delays, or challenges arise.

LSN also plays a key role in outreach to renters and landlords, hosts community events to build awareness and trust, and provides hands-on support to help residents navigate language barriers, landlord coordination, and other obstacles to participation.

The success of Emerald Connections and the strong partnership with ECC Northeast, led to new opportunities that expand LSN's role within the clean energy ecosystem. For example, the collaboration strengthened LSN's relationships with the City of Lynn and positioned the organization to participate in additional climate initiatives, including the Community Heat Resilience Pilot (CHRP). Through this pilot, LSN continues to act as a trusted community-based organization—one that knows the community, listens to residents, and brings their experiences into program design and implementation. The next phase of work builds on the foundation established through Emerald Connections, deepening collaboration across the ecosystem and reinforcing a shared commitment to community-driven solutions that support healthier homes, climate resilience, and long-term impact.



Inset: Hugo Carvajal, Founder and Executive Director of The Latino Support Network Inc, hosting CHRP Resource Fair. Above: Latino Support Network Halloween Event in Lynn, MA.

"When we think about housing, CDCs are required to do work on developing and preserving affordable housing, which can be complex and take multiple years. We've enjoyed being able to improve the quality of homes—and Emerald Connections has allowed that to happen. It has strengthened and contributed to LSN doing our work more holistically, offering services to renters and tenants." — *Latino Support Network*

"We are a CDC. Being a membership-based organization, we often act as connectors. When ECC was new to the North Shore Boston area, we were happy to partner with them as someone with established relationships with other organizations, leaders, and people within the community in need of these resources."

Latino Support Network

Funder Spotlight

Community Heat Resilience Pilot

Neighborhood Scale Solutions

Funded by the Barr Foundation, The Community Heat Resilience Pilot (CHRP) brings together municipal governments and community-based organizations to collaboratively assess, design, and implement neighborhood-scale heat resilience solutions. In 2025, ECC Northeast, Latino Support Network (LSN), and the City of Lynn Public Health Department launched the first phase of the pilot—establishing a shared project charter, building trusted working relationships, and diving deep into community listening.

Through bilingual surveys and three targeted focus groups with seniors, families with members with disabilities, and urban gardeners, clear themes emerged: unaffordable cooling costs, limited awareness of cooling centers, inadequate access to cooling spaces, and heightened health risks for low-income and Spanish-speaking residents. The pilot is now building toward community-driven solutions and a regional Heat Resilience Community of Practice to translate local learnings into municipal, state, and federal policy advocacy.

> **"We learned that the cost of AC and cooling is very high. There is no assistance for low-income families when it comes to staying cool at home. What we found was a lack of awareness of cooling centers, lack of proximity to the centers, and that some people would prefer to stay in the comfort and safety of their home due to legitimate concerns about their legal status."**
>
> ***Latino Support Network***

Funder Spotlight

Barr Foundation

Boston-based Barr Foundation invests in the "human, natural, and creative potential to help communities thrive," grounding its philanthropy in a belief that durable progress depends on organizations deeply rooted in the communities they serve. ECC Northeast is proud to be a Barr Foundation grantee partner across two distinct areas of work.

In 2022, as federal investments through the Inflation Reduction Act and CHIPS legislation drove rapid growth in clean energy, Barr Foundation issued a competitive RFP to better understand New England's clean energy workforce needs, readiness, diversity, and accessibility. ECC Northeast was part of the team selected to assess the regional clean energy workforce ecosystem and identify pathways to expand access and opportunity—research that continues to inform practice across the region.

Barr Foundation also funds ECC Northeast's role in the Community Heat Resilience Pilot (CHRP), a multi-city initiative in Lynn, Somerville, and Salem. Recognizing extreme heat as a growing risk the region is not yet prepared to manage, Barr invested in ECC Northeast's ability to bring local governments and community organizations together in Lynn to design and implement neighborhood-scale solutions.

At a time when federal funding is shrinking, and climate justice organizations face real instability, Barr Foundation exemplifies the kind of sustained, flexible philanthropy that allows community-rooted organizations to do their best work.

> **"Massachusetts is really great with managing cold...but the heat waves that we have, our infrastructure and our social systems just aren't prepared for it."**
>
> ***Kathryn Wright, Senior Program Officer of Clean Energy, Barr Foundation***

Internships

Connecting the Next Generation to Clean Energy Careers

Workforce Development

Across the Northeast, Clean Energy Internship programs advance a core pillar of ECC Northeast's work: workforce development – preparing the next generation of clean energy professionals to lead an equitable transition to a low-carbon economy. Strategic partnerships and place-based investments enable ECC Northeast to create pathways that connect young people to meaningful, climate-critical careers. These efforts strengthen local economies, expand workforce diversity, and support a healthier, more resilient environment for all.

ECC Northeast's mission is to increase equitable access to and readiness for climate critical careers, ensuring that young people are equipped with the skills, experience, and professional networks needed to thrive in the clean energy economy.

Student Training and Experience for Professional Success (STEPS) Initiative

ECC Northeast supports students through Rhode Island's Clean Energy Internship Program by designing and facilitating workshops for the Student Training & Experience for Professional Success (STEPS) Initiative. In partnership with the RI Office of Energy Resources, Browning the Green Space, and the Renewable Energy Fund, ECC Northeast runs student workshops about environmental justice, clean energy careers, and professional development. This collaboration reflects ECC's commitment to workforce equity across the region.



Interns in the Clean Energy Internship Program, Rhode Island.

Internships

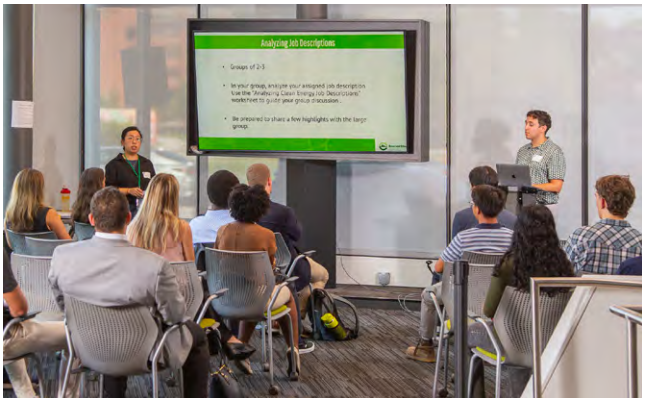
Connecting the Next Generation to Clean Energy Careers

Thank You to Our 2025 Interns!

Massachusetts: MassCEC's Clean Energy Internship Program

MassCEC's Clean Energy Internship Program offers year-round paid internships through a network of Massachusetts clean energy companies. The internships offer spring, summer, and fall sessions for students enrolled in college, vocational-technical high schools, or training programs. ECC Northeast participates, hosting interns each season and offering hands-on experience in community outreach, program implementation, contractor engagement, and climate resilience work. For many interns, ECC is their first exposure to the intersection of environmental justice and clean energy, grounding their technical education in community-centered practice.





Top Photo: Nathalie Saladrigas talks with a Lynn resident about the Emerald Connections pilot at Lynn Earth Day. Below Photo: Avante Grady and Sandra Lee co-facilitate a workshop for the RI STEPS program.



Nathalie Saladrigas
Community Engagement and Policy Intern, Spring 2025



Mica Caine
Workforce Development Intern, Spring 2025

"This is the best job I have ever had. Thank you for allowing me to enter a field I have been trying to get into for a long time and letting me take risks and learn from them." — *Past Intern*



Avante Grady
Community Engagement and Policy Intern, Summer 2025



Sophia Oliveiri
Project Management Intern, Fall 2025

"Climate change always felt like an issue that was far away and something I couldn't impact—this has shown me the many different ways and organizations tackling this issue that I can join or impact." — *Past Intern*

Looking Ahead

Scaling Proven Models in the Northeast

The Northeast team shifted our approach in 2025 to continue to drive forward climate justice in the face of emerging challenges and trends affecting building decarbonization, policy, and housing affordability.

Lynn, Massachusetts

In Lynn, ECC Northeast's community climate resilience work enters its implementation phase. The Lynn Community Heat Resilience Pilot (CHRP) moves from planning to action in Summer 2026, with water infrastructure improvements, community garden capacity-building, and expanded outreach to residents most vulnerable to extreme heat. ECC Northeast is also launching a bilingual energy navigation and induction cooking program called Emerald Connections 2.0: Lynn Energy & Health Connect. This program will pair direct household support with energy with energy literacy workshops to reduce energy burden and improve indoor air quality for low-income and renter households in Lynn's EJ neighborhoods.

Across Massachusetts

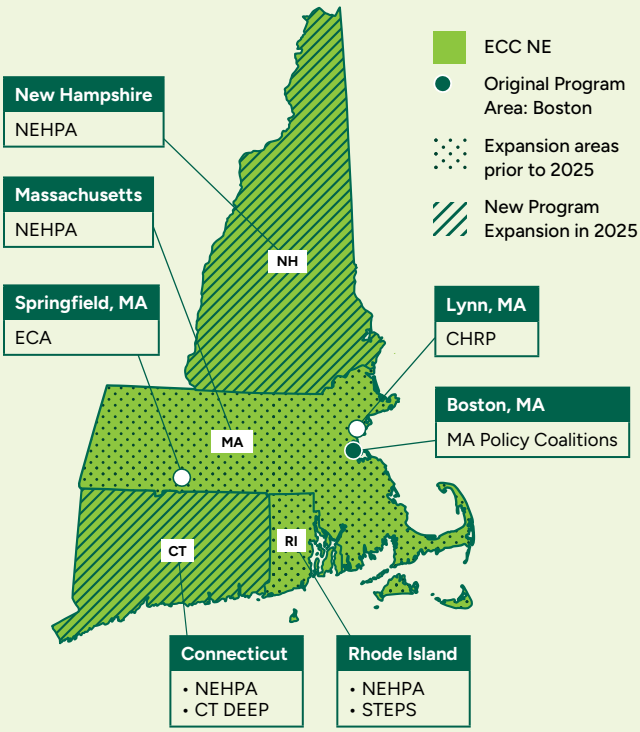
Across Massachusetts, the E-Contractor Academy (ECA) expands significantly through a MassCEC CUBS Implementation Grant that offers academies and support for 45+ MWBE contractors in the Greater Boston and the Pioneer Valley. Additionally, ECC Northeast will launch a specialized academy in partnership with the Boston Housing Authority and develop a contractor talent pipeline specifically for BHA projects—an important step toward sustained, institutional pathways for under-represented contractors. In partnership with LISC Massachusetts, ECC Northeast will host an ADU-focused contractor training in MA, responding to state climate goals as well as state housing construction goals.

ECC Northeast continues to grow, adding staff capacity, strengthening partnerships, and building toward community-led economic inclusion and climate resilience across the region.

Northeast Region

In 2025, ECC Northeast joined the New England Heat Pump Accelerator, a program to speed up heat pump adoption in homes across the region. Leveraging the power of regional collaboration, ECC Northeast is leading the program's strategy to develop small businesses in the heat pump market. This work builds on our long-standing E-Contractor Academy model to reach four states through 2028 and support small contractors to scale in this fast-growing, energy-efficiency market. While ECC has worked in Massachusetts since its founding and continues to support the Rhode Island Clean Energy Internship Program, the Accelerator expands our presence into Connecticut and New Hampshire, building our impact across the region.

ECC Northeast Programs and 2025 Expansion





“Our mission is to advance equity and foster thriving communities, and Emerald Cities helped us achieve that. Families should not have to choose between heat, food, or medication. ECC Northeast programs have the power to reduce healthcare costs, emergency room visits, and long-term housing instability—they deserve more sustained support.”

Brian Beote, Division Director of Energy Services at Action Inc., Program Service Provider

Impact Report 2025
ECC Northeast

Thank You, Partners!

Coalitions

Business Growth Task Force
Clean Energy Equity Working Group
MA Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (EEAC)
Metro Boston Regional Climate Action Plan J40 Advisory Group
NESCAUM Environmental Justice Advisory Group
Zero Carbon Renovation Fund Steering Committee

Community and Advocacy Partners

Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE)
Browning the Green Space (BGS)
Latino Support Network CDC (LSN)
Resonant Energy

Government Partners

Boston Housing Authority (BHA)
City of Boston Department of Environment
City of Lynn Public Health Department
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources
Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council

Industry Partners

Abode
Built Environment Plus (BE+)
Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA)
Building Energy Exchange
Energy Solutions
Institute for Market Transformation
LISC Boston
Ridgeline Energy Analytics
RMI
Slipstream
VEIC

Service Providers

Action, Inc.
CET
Frontline Solutions
Resource Innovations
Slipstream
VEIC

Emerald Cities Collaborative
Northeast Region
50 Milk Street, Boston, MA 02108
202-449-9780
northeast@emeraldcities.org
emeraldcities.org
newsletter sign up

Emerald Cities
COLLABORATIVE
America empowered.