Heather’s Highlights

Dear Readers,

Happy New Year! December’s forum featured a presentation by the Census as well as a brief overview of the Kinship Navigator Program. The North Quabbin Community Coalition is proud to be a community partner for Census 2020 because we know the value and impact it can bring to our region! The Census impacts 675 billion dollars in Federal funding, transportation, libraries, councils on aging, legislative delegation, school access to technology and teacher development, and so much more! We need to be heard and counted here in the North Quabbin! Also, the Census is protected under Title 13 Federal Protection that no information collected can be shared with any other agency or government entity. Such an important piece of knowledge for all to have. Please do your part for our community and participate in the Census 2020!

The NQCC also wanted to take a moment to recognize our latest Spotlight Award Winner, Hannaford Supermarket of Athol. Joe and his team have gone above and beyond to support the Thanksgiving Meal program for the homebound and elderly this past year and did so with compassionate smiles and gratitude. Thank you, Hannaford, we are proud to have you in our community!

Please join us this month for a presentation on Grandparents! Same Bat Time, Same Bat Channel! Wishing you a safe, healthy and happy New Year!

Heather Bialecki-Canning
Executive Director

Next Coalition Forum:

January 17, 2020
9:00—10:30 am
Topic: Richard Barree,
NQ Grandparents Group

Orange American Legion
40 Daniel Shays Highway
Orange, Massachusetts

February Newsletter DEADLINE: JANUARY 21
Email details to admin@nqcc.org

Visit our comprehensive North Quabbin Area Community Calendar at nqcc.org/events.html

Like us on Facebook for regular updates!

NQCC
251 Exchange Street
Athol, MA 01331
978-249-3703
www.nqcc.org
info@nqcc.org

Athol Hannaford staff accepting the NQCC Spotlight Award from NQCC's Sarah Collins
Board of Directors

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Clinical Support Options

Sharon Tracy, Vice President
Quabbin Mediation

Steve Raymond, Treasurer
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John Bruinsma
Community Representative

Lynee Feldman
LifePath

Nicole Guertin
Franklin County Sheriff’s Office

Rev. Megan Leary
Orange Central Congregational Church

Chief Craig Lundgren
Athol Police Department

Pat Moore
Community Representative

Jeanette Robichaud
Community Representative

Charlie Winters
Community Representative

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Heather Bialecki-Canning
Executive Director

Amanda Mankowsky
Youth & Family Engagement Coordinator

Sarah Collins
Drug Free Communities Coordinator

Katrina Burton
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Thank You

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251 Exchange Street, Athol, MA  01331
978-249-3703 ~ info@nqcc.org
Census Updates

LOCAL CENSUS PAY RATES INCREASED
The U.S. Census Bureau announced that new pay rates for census workers will increase to $22.00 from $19.00 per hour for areas located in western MA, including cities and towns in Worcester, Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden and Berkshire counties, and southeastern MA. The pay increase became effective on January 6, 2020. Please encourage your community stakeholders to apply online today at 2020census.gov/jobs.

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS
We are asking that you please contact your state legislators to ask them to push for a full state waiver that means Census job income would NOT be considered for benefit eligibility. Many low-income folks are wary of getting one of the temporary April to June Census jobs because they are afraid that the added income will make them ineligible for benefits they depend upon (such as DTA, etc.). States have the option to get a waiver so that Census job income is not considered for determining benefit eligibility. Many states have such a waiver. Massachusetts only has a waiver related to housing, but not for other benefits.

Census jobs are a win-win-win for individuals, organizations, and our communities. Census workers get some needed cash, more people get counted, and that higher count translates to more state/federal dollars for our communities and organizations. The Census needs to hire lots more folks to help get a complete count of our communities. Let’s get rid of this barrier that is keeping low-income folks from being able to afford working for the Census. And... after you’ve contacted your legislators, share this with everyone you know in other parts of the state and ask them to contact their legislators! Not sure who your legislators are? Here’s a website that will tell you: https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator. Want to know more about the Census and Census jobs? Contact Elaine Arsenault at elaine.m.arsenault@2020census.gov and/or visit https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html.
CSO Wellness Program Groups

Dimensions of Wellness—Thursdays at 9:30 am
Chronic Illness Support—Tuesdays at 2:00 pm
Knitting and Crocheting—Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:00 am and Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:00 pm
Art Group—Fridays from 10:00 to 11:00 am
Mindful Movement for Women—Mondays from 10:00 to 11:00 am
Peer-Led Recovery Support Group—Mondays from 2:00 to 3:00 pm & Fridays from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm
Job Search—Mondays from 3:15 to 4:15 pm
Wii Sports—Wednesdays from 3:00 to 4:00 pm
Adult Game Group—Wednesdays from 4:00 to 5:00 pm
Depression and Anxiety Support—Tuesdays from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm
Early Recovery Group—Wednesdays from 2:00 to 3:00 pm
Walking for Wellness—Tuesdays from 3:15 to 4:15 pm
MENders Support Group—4th Fridays (1/31/20) from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm
Movie Night—Last Thursday (1/30/20) from 5:30 to 7:30 pm

Avoiding Fraud in the New Year
A Community Learning Session at LifePath

Join LifePath on January 29 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm at the Greenfield Corporate Center, 101 Munson Street, Suite 201, Greenfield, to learn how to protect yourself from financial risks! Dean Lagrotteria, LifePath’s Elder Protective Services Regional Director, will explain what financial exploitation is, how to avoid it, and how to report it when you suspect it. Anita Wilson, Consumer Protection Case Coordinator at the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, will explain how to recognize the tricks scammers use to steal your money or your personal information. This event is free. Light refreshments and coffee will be served. Transportation may be available upon request. Registration is not required. If you have any questions, please call 413-773-5555 or 978-544-2259.

Athol Bird & Nature Club Events

Events take place at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol, unless otherwise noted. www.atholbirdclub.org.

2020 Calendars Still Available—A great gift at only $10.00 that supports your local nature club. It is chock full of nature notes, trivia questions, and, of course, some amazing photos of local birds, animals, and plants. You can purchase them online at https://atholbirdclub.org/abnc-calendar.

Jan. 19 @ 1:00 pm: Geology Division Meeting—Chris Coyle invites the Geology Division to his home for the January meeting to look over the many rock and mineral specimens he has in his house. There will be discussions about plans for The Quarry and things to do for 2020 such as field trips, yard sale, and outdoor signs.
Join us!
Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program
Initial Project Design Meeting

January 16, 10:00-4:00
The Episcopal Church of Saints James and Andrew-Whiteman Room
8 Church Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

Lunch will be served

The YHDF Planning Team is inviting young people, area stakeholders, housing and service providers, municipalities, people with lived experience of homelessness and others to join a discussion around the types of interventions that could meet the needs or fill the gaps that we identify.

This will help determine how we, as members of the Continuum of Care, will use the $1.9 million awarded to Franklin County to test innovative strategies to prevent and end youth/young adult homelessness, so we hope to have as much community input as possible.

Please RSVP at https://forms.gle/A32waxA2WwYzBdC6C

Lisa Goldsmith, Homeless Youth Services Manager,
Community Action Pioneer Valley
lgoldsmith@communityaction.us
413-376-1117

ACT Group

A weekly group meeting for men with a history of criminal justice involvement.

TUESDAYS 1:15pm-2:15pm

North Quabbin Recovery Center
416 Main Street, Athol

Please call Ruben at 413-774-4014 ext. 2233 for more information.
NELCWIT Welcomes New Co-Executive Directors

The New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT) is pleased to welcome Juan Carlos Aguilar (formerly Director of Programs) and Rachel Gordon as Co-Executive Directors, based in the agency’s Greenfield offices. Juan Carlos focuses primarily on program strategy and management, while Rachel is focused primarily on finance, fundraising, operations, and outreach. We hope that this co-leadership model will allow NELCWIT to expand its presence and connections with community partners throughout Franklin County and the North Quabbin.

As always, we welcome clients by appointment at our North Quabbin office in Orange at 131 West Main Street, Suites 203 & 206 (inside the Orange Innovation Center), which can be reached at 978-544-9857. We also welcome appointments and walk-ins at our Greenfield office at 479 Main Street in Greenfield. Our crisis line is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 413-772-0806. http://www.nelcwit.org.

State Expanding the Upstream RAFT Homelessness Prevention Pilot Program

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless announced that the Legislature passed the long-awaited supplemental budget to close out fiscal year 2019 (see House Bill 4246). It included language and $2.03 million in additional funding for the Upstream RAFT pilot already underway (Residential Assistance for Families in Transition, line item 7004-9316, language in Section 64 of the supplemental budget). The budget also included $2 million in additional funds for school transportation for students experiencing homelessness (line item 7035-0008). The Governor signed most parts of the budget, including those sections.

Under the current Upstream RAFT pilot administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), eligible households can access up to $4,000 to assist with back rent and back mortgage payments without having to be in the midst of an eviction or foreclosure. With the passage of the supplemental budget, this cap will increase for most households; it will transition from a flat cap to up to four months of back rent or mortgage payments. This will make this upstream resource even more useful for households paying market-rate housing costs. The budget language directs DHCD to spend at least $7 million on the pilot program and also will allow DHCD to carry over the Upstream RAFT funds until the end of FY'21, in case the funds are not expended fully this fiscal year, FY'20. The budget language formalizes the program, provides greater transparency, and increases accountability through expanded tracking and reporting requirements.

In other Upstream RAFT news, the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Housing will be taking testimony on Representative Marjorie Decker’s legislation, House Bill 1264, to move the Upstream RAFT/rent arrearage program from a pilot program into state statute at a hearing on January 14 between 10:30 am and 3:00 pm, at the State House in the Gardner Auditorium (closest to the Beacon Street entrance). For more info, visit http://www.mahomeless.org.

Hearing Page | Bill Fact Sheet | House Bill History Page | Organizational Endorsement Form
NQCC Seeks Members for New Housing Task Force

Housing in general continues to be a huge need in our region so the North Quabbin Community Coalition will be convening a new task force focused on identifying the scope of the problem and creating local solutions. We need your participation, feedback, and support to address this local concern. Our first meeting will be held on January 29 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the North Quabbin Community Coalition, 251 Exchange Street, Athol. If you would like to join us, please RSVP to sarah@nqcc.org so that we can work out the logistics. Please spread the word!!
Employment Opportunities

Opioid Task Force — Visit their site [here](#) for full information.

- **Project Coordinator** — The designated manager for the Franklin County/North Quabbin Public Health Opioid Response Initiative (PHORI). This position is a direct report to the Coordinator of the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region, who is the designated Project Director for the project and is housed at the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office but physically located at the Franklin County Justice Center. This position is also accountable to the Opioid Task Force Executive Council. This is a two-year grant-funded position.

RECOVER Project — Visit [http://recoverproject.org/employment](http://recoverproject.org/employment) for full information.

- **Peer and Community Engagement Coordinator** — A 30-hour position serving as a Peer and Community Engagement Coordinator at The RECOVER Project in Greenfield, MA. The RECOVER Project, a well-established peer-to-peer recovery support program with a strong community presence. Be part of a dynamic team in realizing a vision of an inclusive recovery community designed to increase access to appropriate recovery supports for all people within our communities.

- **Recover Coach Supervisor** — Visit [http://wmtcinfo.org/jobs](http://wmtcinfo.org/jobs) for full information. A part-time position for someone who is excited and passionate about helping individuals achieve their personal and professional goals. The Recover Coach Supervisor will provide positive, and solution based supervision that encompasses administrative support, professional development, and social/emotional wellbeing to The RECOVER Projects Recovery Coach Volunteers.

LifePath — Visit [https://lifepathma.org/about/career-opportunities/job-opportunities](https://lifepathma.org/about/career-opportunities/job-opportunities) for full information.

- **Care Case Manager** — A full time position based in Greenfield. Ideal candidate will be comfortable working independently and as part of an interdisciplinary team providing case management and administrative support for State Home Care program. The position serves consumers in The North Quabbin and Franklin County.

- **Administrative Assistant** — A part time position based in Greenfield to provide general administrative clerical support to the State Home Care Nursing Team and assist in processing screenings for nursing home eligibility.

LUK, Inc. — Visit [https://www.luk.org/get-involved/opportunities](https://www.luk.org/get-involved/opportunities) for full information.

- **Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator & Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist** — These positions will coordinate or assist in the development of the North Central Community Action Team (NCCAT), identifying data that will inform NCCAT in selecting and implementing strategies to reduce/prevent the misuse and abuse of substances, and coordinate or assist in the implementation of such efforts.

Athol Police Department — Visit their post here for full information.

- **Executive Administrative Assistant** — The position provides direct assistance to the Chief of Police and performs a wide variety of confidential and complex administrative support activities that require substantial independent judgement and initiative.
Veterans Mediation
a program of Quabbin Mediation

FREE TRAININGS
for
VETERANS, GUARD, RESERVES, FAMILY MEMBERS AND THOSE SERVING VETERANS, GUARD, RESERVES, ACTIVE MILITARY

6-hour Mediation Skills
Jan. 10, Brockton; January 17, Gardner; February 7, Northampton

35-hour Professional Mediation
Fridays March 13, 20, 27; April 3 and 10; Gardner, MA

TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE

Self Determination: Those who have the problem own it and the solution.
Neutrality and multi-partiality: Skills to engage completely with all parties.
Inquiry: Asking good questions to encourage input and connection to parties.
Active listening: Improving communication through reframing, reflecting, and non-verbal cues.
Positions and Interests: Where people are stuck versus what people are truly seeking.
Developing creative solutions: Approaching problem solving in a forward looking way.
The power of apology: A voluntary apology can often resolve the problem.

Trainers are veterans and those who are military-connected. The training is interactive, engaging. Mediation skills are applicable in situations and conflicts of all types.

TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION: GO TO THE WEBSITE:
WWW.VETERANSMEDIATION.ORG
OR CONTACT QUABBIN MEDIATION
Vets@QuabbinMediation.org; (978) 544-6142; (888) 924-2600
North Quabbin Community Coalition
251 Exchange Street, Athol MA 01331
www.nqcc.org

Mission Statement: The North Quabbin Community Coalition is a community-wide alliance committed to improving the quality of life for all those living and working in the North Quabbin since 1984.

Coalition Regular Happenings

North Quabbin Recovery Center Hours
The North Quabbin Recovery Center at 416 Main Street, Athol, provides a compassionate, safe space to offer peer support to allow multiple paths of recovery for all. Open Tuesdays 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, Wednesdays & Thursdays 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, with All Recovery Meetings from 11:00 to 11:45 am and an All Recovery Meeting Fridays at 7:30 pm. 978-249-4989. All welcome.

Me FIRST (Finding Inspiration, Respect, Self-Love, and Tools)
Have you been considering putting yourself FIRST? Please join us as we develop a confidential group that offers support around balance, health, nutrition, self-care, fitness, and keeping a sense of humor through it all. Second and fourth Thursdays, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, at the North Quabbin Recovery Center, 416 Main Street, Athol. 978-249-3703. All welcome.

Legislator Happenings

Congressman James P. McGovern’s Athol Office Hours
Congressman McGovern has local office hours at the NQCC, 251 Exchange Street, Athol, on the third Friday of every month from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm to meet with constituents. To schedule an appointment or for more information, please contact Eladia Romero, Regional Manager at 978-466-3552.

Senator Jo Comerford’s Local Events
The People’s Office Library Tour on January 25: at the Warwick Free Public Library, 4 Hotel Road, Warwick from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm, then at the Wheeler Memorial Library, 49 E Main Street, Orange, from 12:45 to 1:45 pm. Join Jo for an informal gathering (follow the link below for more info). For the most up-to-date list of events, including bill hearings, please visit www.SenatorJoComerford.org/events.