

Educational, employment aspirations get boost in New Bedford: \$97,000 awarded to non-profits

6,000 students (pre-K through college-age) are receiving customized backpacks and grade-level school supplies during the 2021-2022 school year through the Schools on Wheels program, Pathways to Success. And thanks to Discovery Language Academy, adult non-native English speakers are improving their English language fluency, so they can self-advocate in the workplace and engage in civic events.

These two programs are made possible, in part, by a Polaroid Fund grant from the SouthCoast Community Foundation. Twelve New Bedford nonprofits are receiving a total of \$97,000 from the Fund dedicated to enhancing the skills and education of New Bedford youth and its workforce.

The award recipients include:

- Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores – \$10,000
- Community Economic Development Center of SE MA -\$12,000
- Immigrants' Assistance Center – \$12,000
- Junior Achievement of Southern Mass, Inc. – \$10,000
- New Bedford Art Museum/Artworks! – \$9,000
- New Bedford Children – \$4,000
- PACE, Inc. – \$8,000
- Portuguese United for Education d/b/a Discovery Language Academy – \$7,500
- School on Wheels – \$8,000
- United Way of Greater New Bedford – \$5,000
- Women's Fund SouthCoast – \$3,500
- YWCA of Southeastern MA – \$8,000

“Fueling economic opportunities within New Bedford through the Polaroid Fund is central to the work of the Community Foundation,” said SouthCoast Community Foundation President and CEO Leonard M. Lee. “It is inspiring to see people from throughout our city realize their educational and employment aspirations thanks to the exceptional programming these grantees bring to the community.”

The award School on Wheels receives will help give vulnerable students impacted by poverty and the pandemic the skills, confidence, and opportunities to grow, learn, and thrive. “Thanks to the generosity of the Polaroid Fund of the SouthCoast Community Foundation, School on Wheels can provide Pathways to Success for our students and help them overcome the challenges of experiencing homelessness,” stated Steve Telesmanick, School on Wheels CEO.

Discovery Language Academy will use the grant to help expand their Adult English Language Program, recruiting new participants, providing more intensive classroom instruction, and offering transportation and childcare to offset the burden many adult students face with multiple jobs and dependent children. “Discovery Language Academy provides skill development and training opportunities in the areas of language acquisition, cultural understanding, and career education to achieve personal, professional, and vocation goals. With support from the Polaroid Fund at the Southcoast Community Foundation, we can expand a turnkey program and help many more immigrants with English fluency,” stated Executive Director Leslie Ribeiro Vicente, Ph.D.

For more than a decade, the SouthCoast Community Foundation has managed the New Bedford-based grant program of the Polaroid Fund. The SouthCoast Community Foundation is a nonprofit serving the communities of Southeastern Massachusetts through philanthropy. The Community Foundation mission is to mobilize philanthropy by matching donors and resources with community needs for the benefit of our region.

Since 1995, the organization has distributed over \$50 million from more than 200 funds to humanitarian, educational, and cultural organizations in the region. For more information, visit www.southcoastcf.org.