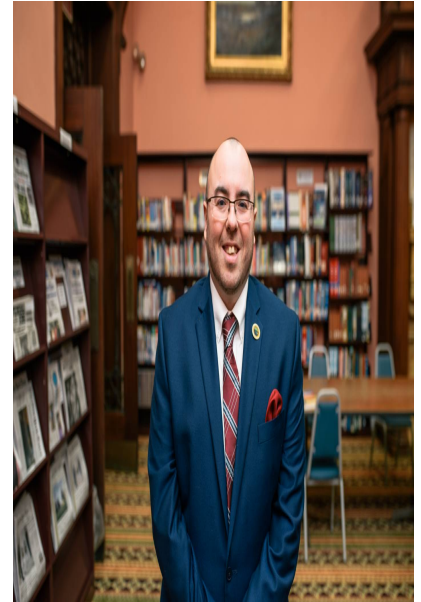


Faces Of New Bedford #83 – Ian Abreu

Meet Ian Abreu, 31-year-old City Councilor At-Large and Manager of Public Policy and Business Development with the Chamber of Commerce.



Growing up in the south end of New Bedford with his family, Ian has immense love for the city he was raised in. Watching his mother run for a councilor position in the 90s, when he was only 9, sparked a fascination with public office and helping advocate for the community.

He attended Bridgewater University, where he attained his Bachelor's Degree in Communication and soon began working for the region Chamber of Commerce. With the Chamber, Ian is responsible for working with employers and businesses throughout the Greater New Bedford Region to help them build their companies and make them profitable.

In 2015, Ian ran for the position of City Councilor at-Large, just like his mother had in the past, and successfully won. He takes immense pride in helping the city that raised him, as he hopes to provide a place that is not only safe for him and his family, but for every resident that calls New Bedford home.

“Every resident of New Bedford who is ready and able to work, should be able to and I want to foster an environment that is

conducive to do that.”

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Faces Of New Bedford #82 – Shonna Ryan

Meet Shonna Ryan, 29-year-old instructional technologist and founder of non-profit organization Civic Support.



Shonna moved to the area when she started attending the University of Massachusetts, where she received her Bachelor's Degree in Communication.

Shonna currently works at Providence College, where she is an Instructional Technologist. This position focuses on running the learning management system for the school, which the

professors use to organize their classes. She trains the faculty, and helps them with any needs that they may have with classroom technology or teaching software.

With friend and fellow UMD grad student, Kevin Pelissier, she decided to start Civic Support, an organization focused on helping non-profits with their outreach efforts through marketing and PR services. Seeing that they were already working with non-profits throughout their graduate program, it was easy for them to help target the needs of each organization.

Their hope with Civic Support was not just to provide marketing services, but to train those community causes in best practices for up keeping their own outreach efforts.

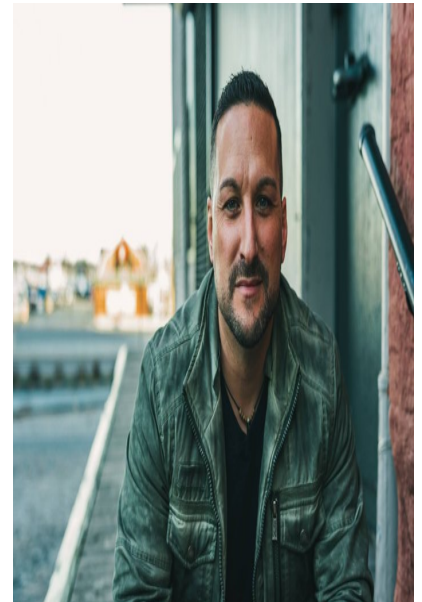
“One great, strong, unselfish soul in every community could actually redeem the world. –Elbert Hubbard”

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Faces Of New Bedford – #29: Jamie Casey

Meet Jamie Casey, a 42-year-old ministry leader and property manager.



Now life for Jamie hasn't always been living to serve others and make a difference, in fact it was very destructive for many years. At an early age he was focused on money, having "fun" and self fulfillment, while indulging himself in the underworld of New Bedford.

It wasn't soon after working in bars and nightclubs that he not only started selling drugs, but using them as well. With a wife and 3 children he tried to balance out his life by starting to go to church at the age of 25, but in turn created two parallel lives. On Sundays he would go to church and wrestle with his faith, but the rest of the week his life would be in total disarray.

By 35, he had jumped from job to job and even lost his wife and the relationship he had with his children, all of this due to his drug addiction. At the verge of committing suicide, his two parallel lives collided and his faith became a very real thing to him for the first time in 10 years. Not wanting to live the life he had for so long, with the help of family and friends, he checked himself into Teen Challenge New England, a faith-based residential rehabilitation program.

After a year in the program, Jamie returned to New Bedford renewed and ready to re-build his life the right way. He

started all over again and spent a lot of time in the community, trying to right the wrongs he had made over the years. His goal was to help those who were still in the darkness and introduce them to the light he had found in his relationship with God.

He has since remarried to Stacey, who shares his passion and vision for ministry. And in the past 5 years he and a few close friends founded the Acts 29 Project, which has been involved in multiple foreign mission trips, as well as a yearly Thanksgiving Ministry at GNB Voc-Tech that prepares and delivers meals to the elderly, sick and shut-ins of our community. They also “adopt” families during Christmas to help them provide gifts, and have a recovery program that focuses on reaching those struggling with addiction.

“Its for Christ, for the glory of God. The call of the Christian life is to live out your faith and not just go to church, but to be the church. There’s a war on our streets and the greatest weapon we possess in this city, is love.”

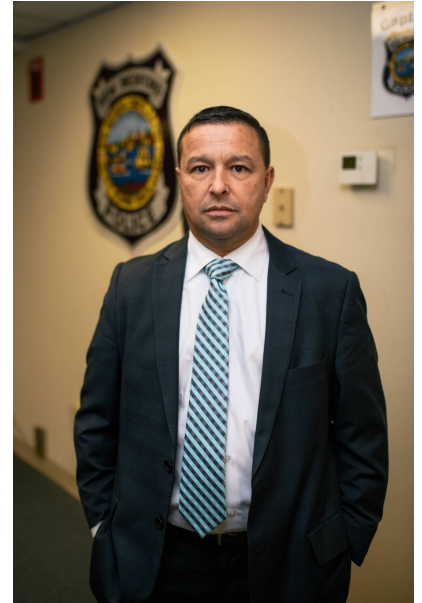
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Faces Of New Bedford #81 –

Joseph Cordeiro

Meet Joseph Cordeiro, 52-year-old New Bedford Police chief.



Joseph moved to New Bedford with his family from St. Michael, Portugal when he was only 2 years old. He never considered becoming a police officer growing up, but when he was 19, he owned his own sports supply store and worked as a baker. At both of those jobs, he ran into a lot of police officers that encouraged him to join the academy.

Joseph joined the academy and initiated as a police officer on June 1st, 1986. Throughout his time serving our city there have been a handful of occasions that remind him why he loves what he does. Early on in his career, he responded to a house call of a young boy named Joey and during that time he bonded with the boy and took him to safety. Years later he was preparing for a parade and a young boy yell out "Joey," just to find the boy he had helped years before. It was then that he realized that all though they may not see the effect, police officers can impact everyone they help.

After years of schooling, attaining even his Master's Degree in Criminal Justice and working in many departments of the force, Joseph had the opportunity to apply to become the chief of police. In his short time, as chief, he has already done

plenty to help create a more positive atmosphere in New Bedford. He recently organized with the police department and Target to host a day where the Police officers could pair with a child who is less fortunate and get gifts for them and their family.

“If people care for the each other and the community, our city can become the great city that it has been historically and is.”

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Faces Of New Bedford #80 – Adam Davenport

Meet Adam Davenport, 29-year-old business owner and environmental designer.

Adam was born and raised in the area and after high school went to the University of New Hampshire, where he majored in civil engineering. It was during this time that he really became passionate about sustainability, pushing him to take as many environmental courses as possible to fully understand the subject.

Upon graduation he traveled for some time before returning to Massachusetts, where he became a teacher at a therapeutic day

program in Waltham. After a few years of teaching, Adam quit his job to start a company, Terra Cura (which in Latin means Earth Care). Terra Cura is a regenerative design and consulting company who's mission is, "to promote the social ethics of land care, people care, and equity, locally and globally.

With Terra Cura, Adam has worked on an urban agriculture initiative with a local organization, the Food Security Network. He and his team have worked to research and analyze how New Bedford can be impacted by a stronger local food system with an increase in urban agriculture.

He also worked on similar projects for the Marion Institute, most prominently the Grow Education Program. Through this program, they have built 11 community gardens at public schools throughout the city. The main idea behind the project is to create community spaces, not to feed the community, but to create a platform for people to come together and build connections, while gaining skills and abilities.

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Faces Of New Bedford #79 –

Dena Haden

Meet Dena Haden, 34-year-old Co-founder/Co-Owner of Groundwork and artist.



Dena had always been interested in art as she used it to communicate from an early age. As she got older and realized her passion, she decided to pursue it in college. Attending the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, she double majored in painting and illustration, in the hopes to have a feasible career drawing and using painting for her passion.

Upon her graduation, she moved to Boston, where she taught at Newbury College in Brookline. As an adjunct professor, she taught foundational art studio classes but wanted to get more out of her career in teaching. With that in mind, Dena went to Philadelphia, where she attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. She was challenged during this time because she felt that she could just draw or paint anything she wanted and felt stagnant, which is where Dena fell in love with sculpting.

Her plan was to move to New York and continue teaching and pursuing art, but due to an illness in her immediate family, she moved back to the area. She was teaching for a nonprofit art program that serviced inner-city kids, while also attending an artist critique group in Boston, which helped her

gain inspiration for her art at the time. This has led to her constant work and her recent installations at Haskell's Garden and Ropeworks.

While meeting with her life-long friend, Sarah Athanas, who had just moved back to the area and was telling Dena that she wishes there was a local group like the one she attended in Boston. That is where they came up with the idea for Groundwork, the creative co-working space on Purchase street in New Bedford. It is a place that is home to many local entrepreneurs and start up companies, including Pidalia, Eforall, Marion Institute, and many others.

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Faces Of New Bedford #78 – Edwin Cartagena

Meet Edwin Cartagena, 31-year-old Community & Family Engagement Coordinator at City on a Hill Charter School and President of United New Bedford.



Edwin was born and raised in Brockton, MA until the age of 9. During that time, both of his parents were struggling with addiction, while he and his sister were taken in by their grandmother.

At age 9, his mother had gotten custody of them and he moved with her to New Bedford. Although she was still struggling with her addiction, they stayed with her as they bounced from different people's homes and motels, until finally getting their own home in Presidential Heights. While living there, Edwin got involved with the street lifestyle and all that it encompassed, which led to him getting kicked out of school his senior year and then his home.

This lasted for a long time and brought him to the lowest place he has ever been in his life. He was facing legal issues and because of that wasn't able to get a job to provide for his girlfriend, now wife, and child. He attempted to take his life but at the last minute he made a plea for God to show himself if he was real to save him from this. It was then he remembered everything that happened until that point and saw every moment God had been there to save him from destruction.

Now Edwin uses all of those bad experiences to provide hope for others. He has since then gotten his GED and is attending

school to get his degree in Business Management. He also works for the City on a Hill Charter Public school, where he works to provide families with resources on how to get enrolled in the school and puts on events for those students and families already involved with the school.

Edwin also runs the operations of United New Bedford, an organization he and his wife started in 2013 to help bring life, hope, and love back to this city. Most noted for their I Love my City event at Buttonwood part which follows the God Belongs in My City prayer walk from city hall, those are just the beginning ideas they have. With the newly implemented Adopt A Block program, they hope to reach all of the broken and hurting communities in New Bedford, one street at a time.

“If you have breath, you have life, and if you have life, you have purpose. No matter what may come your way. Never give up.”

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**Faces Of New Bedford #77 –
Richard Gormley**

Meet Richard Gormley, 40-year-old Photographer and Graphic Designer.



Rick and his family moved to the area from Cincinnati when he was eight. Raised on a diet of Activision and Hanna-Barbara cartoons he would eventually graduate from Dartmouth High and get a degree in Film and Video from Michigan.

From there he moved to Los Angeles where he had the (mis)fortune to work on several straight to VHS movies. After 4 years in LA, Rick moved to Tokyo Japan, where he taught English to natives and although it wasn't what he'd gone to school for it was his calling. He fell in love with the people and the country. Unable to accurately describe the city to friends back in the States he started to take photographs.

Richard returned to New Bedford in 2009 and although he was unsure of what to do he knew he wanted to pursue his love for film, photography and design. Working a few odd jobs upon arrival, he quickly got working on pieces and featured a Tokyo inspired photo collage at Jeremiah Hernandez's U.G.L.Y. Gallery. He noted Jeremiah for his inspiration and encouragement to continue to pursue his desires as a creative.

His day job is as a graphic designer for Ahead USA, where he works on logo development and product photography. His hobby for photography has led him to photograph weddings, family portraits, fashion catalogs and most recently still lifes. His

latest show at Alison Wells Studio in downtown New Bedford alongside Andrew Kepsinki and Peter Pereira features black and white photos of locally grown flowers.

His hope is to continue inspiring the youth of New Bedford through his work, especially the designs he partners with local skateboard shop Solstice to produce. Nothing makes him happier than to see the youth full of local pride.

“Everything I’m doing now I didn’t go to school for and although I am not wealthy, I am happy. Be happy, because we are all going to be working 70 hours a week, so you better like what you are doing. And if you want to get good get ready to fail, and enjoy failing.”

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Faces Of New Bedford #76 – Bienvenido “Ben” Perez

Meet Bienvenido “Ben” Perez, 26-year-old Lawyer.



Bienvenido was born and raised in New Bedford by his mother and father. He first thought of getting involved with law at the early age of 11, when his family was evicted from their home and faced homelessness. Because his family made just above the amount needed for a free lawyer and didn't make enough to afford to pay for one, they were forced to live between family members house for an entire summer.

Quite a few years later, Ben graduated from New Bedford High School and with a full tuition scholarship to Roger Williams University, he embarked on his journey to becoming a lawyer. During a mentorship program, he shadowed an attorney and that solidified his decision to practice law. Upon graduating with his bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice he enrolled in the Law School at Roger Williams.

Now he is practicing law, alongside his wife and father-in-law, in both New Bedford and Rhode Island. He has been able to give back and help families facing the same situations his family did, depending on the severity of the case. He loves that with his career he is able to service and give back to the people of the city where he grew up.

“Are we as big as Providence, no. Are we as big as Boston, no. We have a lot of character and that is all that matters.”

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Faces Of New Bedford #75 – Alison Wells

Meet Alison Wells, 44-year-old Artist and College professor.



Alison grew up on the island of Trinidad, where from a very early age she knew that she wanted to be an artist when she grew up. One day in class, a teacher embarrassed her for her grandeur ideas and told her she would most likely starve if she tried to make a living with art. This deterred her from keeping that a reality.

Once she graduated high school, she attempted to pursue a degree in architecture, as it seemed like the best way to blend art and a very plausible career. Becoming easily bored

after a year, she received a letter notifying her she had received the scholarship she applied for 2 years earlier, to the Edna Manly College of Visual and Performing Arts in Jamaica. It was there she received a Bachelors in Fine Arts.

She returned to Trinidad, where she worked in advertising and teaching high school for quite some time, until her former teacher urged her to get her Master's degree. After taking a huge leap of faith, she moved to New Bedford, alone and without any friends or family, enrolled at UMass Dartmouth's masters program.

She fell in love with New Bedford, as the coastline city gave an island girl like herself a sense of comfort. Alison had come to New Bedford at a unique time in the city's history, as the artists of the area were developing a renaissance, that has had ripple effects on the art scene we have seen develop over the last decade.

She graduated from UMass and began teaching drawing and painting between there and Bristol Community College. She loves that she has been able to turn what she has loved her entire life into a reality and that New Bedford played in integral part in it.

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