

New Bedford's NorthStar Learning Centers acquires property for new early childhood education center

With the deed in hand, a vacant lot on the corner of Hyacinth and Rivet Street in New Bedford's South End of New Bedford will become the site of NorthStar Learning Center's new early childhood education center.

"Our vision is a state-of-the-art center where 134 young children and their families can benefit from a robust curriculum that will support children beyond their early years—preparing children to succeed not only in school, but in life," stated NorthStar Executive Director Maria Rosario. At the new center, NorthStar plans to partner with the Boston Children's Museum to create on-site exhibits and free, fun activities designed for children and families to learn together.

Zoe Hansen-DiBello, NorthStar's Director of Innovation, said, "When parents and families are involved in early learning experiences with their children there is a immediate and long-term positive impact". Research shows that family and parental engagement have a direct correlation with academic achievement.

This \$7.3 million project is being supported by a \$3 million Reaching for the Stars capital campaign. Rosario said, "Recognizing the positive impact of our redevelopment plan for the property, the owner, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fall River, generously reduced its price."

NorthStar is close to reaching the million-dollar mark thanks to major donations from local philanthropic organizations.

Michele Roberts of Bristol County Savings Bank stated, "As a local funder, we look for organizations with a strong track record, a results-based approach and a qualified, dedicated team. NorthStar Learning Center hits the mark in all three categories."

For more information on NorthStar Learning Centers or this project, please contact Director of Innovation, Zoe Hansen-DiBello at Zhansendibello@northstarlc.org or 401-743-5731.

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About NorthStar:

Inspired by the civil rights movement, NorthStar was founded in 1974 responding to the needs of historically oppressed, underrepresented, and chronically underserved communities of color in the City of New Bedford, once a safe haven for renowned abolitionist, Frederick Douglass.

The organization's name, "NorthStar" draws a direct parallel to the roadmap in the sky used by those escaping slavery and seeking liberation by following the North Star to freedom. Today, our mission at NorthStar is "to help young people overcome poverty, discrimination, educational disadvantage, violence, and other adversity through learning essential competencies and hopefulness with which they can transform their lives and communities."

Visit www.northstarlc.org to learn more.