

The Curtis Fund
General Education Fund Inc.
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SPRING 2019

the mission
Provide Educational
Scholarships

the commitment
Help Vermont
Students

the goal
Secure Brighter
Futures



**SHOW YOUR
SUPPORT**
Donate today!

LEGACY OF HOPE

Supporting Future Curtis Fund Scholars

By remembering the Curtis Fund in your will, you leave a legacy of hope that supports the next generations of Curtis Fund scholars.

You don't have to be wealthy to make a bequest to the Curtis Fund—even people of modest means can make an incredible difference!

For more information, please contact Joyce Cellars, Director of Advancement, at joyce@thecurtisfund.org or (408) 500-5304.

*Welcome to all of our new and former
CURTIS FUND SCHOLARS, FRIENDS, & FAMILY!*

Your Contribution Will Make a Difference!

Would you consider making a donation to the Curtis Fund today, so another aspiring learner can succeed? The Curtis Fund needs your help to continue its mission. You can make a difference and change the lives of deserving and motivated Vermonters. Please consider making a gift today. Thank you so much!

What a Difference Your Gift Makes!

All contributions are tax deductible to the limit of the law. Please donate online at thecurtisfund.org/donate or send your check in the enclosed envelope.

Thank you!

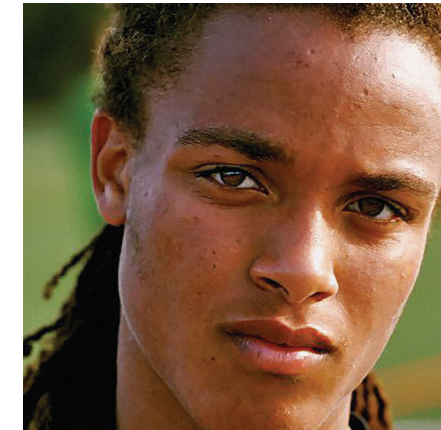
*If you haven't visited
our website in awhile,
TAKE A LOOK!
thecurtisfund.org*



IT'S OUR MISSION—Education and Training are Meaningful and Important

In this issue we are excited to introduce you to a new Curtis Fund initiative. In partnership with the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), we launched a scholarship pilot for Vermonters seeking “credentials of value.” These are industry-recognized credentials valued by employers as critical assessments of a potential employee’s skills. This program is funded thanks to a seed grant of \$100,000 from an anonymous donor and additional support from Northfield Savings Bank and the Harriet and Harry Mitiguy Fund at the Vermont Community Foundation.

While a college degree is considered the most reliable means to a successful future, not all learners want to attend a 2- or 4-year college. Many aspire to careers that do not require a college education yet are just as valuable to a vital society. These careers include bookkeeping, nursing, welding, early child care, auto repair, etc.—needed and valued services. But, while not requiring a college degree, these



“
I am truly grateful for the help from the Curtis Fund. This support is helping me learn a skill that will result in finding sustainable work and hopefully a career that brings a lot of success.
”

—TESFA JACOBS

professions often require certification in order to be considered for employment.

When Emma Eliza Curtis, our founder, bequeathed the \$120,000 that launched the Curtis Fund, she made a point of including education and career training in our mission. This new initiative is in keeping with our 110-year old tradition and now provides financial assistance to learners pursuing a post-secondary education resulting in certifications in various fields. It has always been our goal to help Vermonters who are experiencing financial instability get the education they need to succeed, whatever that may look like.

Our funds will match VSAC’s existing Non-Degree Grant Funds, a proven program that receives state funding. However, the demand for these grants is so great, funds run out early every year. If successful, we will be Vermont’s largest provider of private scholarships to learners pursuing non-degree credentials of value.

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It's Our Mission—Education and Training is Meaningful and Important *continued*

To date, the Curtis Fund has awarded 16 scholarships to learners across Vermont. Meet a couple of our scholars.

TESFA JACOBS—Windham County

Tesfa is a single parent who is getting a certificate in bookkeeping after taking a few years off from college, becoming a dad, and being laid off from his job. Currently he is studying accounting but he would like to work in finance in the near future. "My education is important because it will contribute to my success professionally. I am also a single parent and I think it's important that my son sees me as a lifetime learner." While he plans to pursue his Associate Degree at CCV eventually, he is prioritizing his Bookkeeping Certificate so that he can obtain employment as soon as possible in that field, and then continue his education toward a degree.



EDEN TOWERS—Washington County

Eden is currently in the VTC Paramedic program, an 18-month program that will prepare her to become a Nationally Registered Paramedic. Despite obtaining a BA in biology from Northern Vermont University (formally Johnson State College), she was not able to find a job in her chosen field of medicine without continuing her education. This realization led her to take an EMT-B course and an EMT-A course in Charlottesville, Virginia. These courses allowed her to pursue her love of emergency medicine and a career as a paramedic. "Sadly, because of my BA I do not qualify for most scholarships. Without the help of this scholarship, I would not have been able to fund my fall semester and continue my dream of becoming a paramedic."

We focus on funding credentials that:

LEAD TO AN OCCUPATION IN HIGH DEMAND IN VERMONT.

We are informed by the work of the McClure Foundation and Vermont Talent Pipeline Management, among other partners.



LEAD TO A LIVABLE WAGE in Vermont.

ARE YOU A CURRENT OR FORMER RECIPIENT OF A CURTIS FUND SCHOLARSHIP? SHARE YOUR STORY!
thecurtisfund.org/contact/



ARE OFFERED BY AN ACCREDITED INSTITUTION

or one that has demonstrated career success for graduates.



ARE STACKABLE,

which means that a sequence of credentials can be accumulated over time to build an individual's qualifications and help them move along a career pathway to increase learning potential.

Board Chair's Letter



I spent almost forty years helping people of all ages and walks of life start businesses in the state of Vermont. It was exciting watching them realize a dream, but it was also painful when that dream ended in failure. Running a business successfully is a difficult task and few are able to do it over a sustained period of time. The failure rate is very high, but people continue to open small businesses in record numbers believing that they can be one of the successful few.

An important ingredient in a business' success is its employees and their relationship to the owners. I was fascinated with the European and Scandinavian model whereby the employees are considered part of the capital of the company, which management deems important to continue to invest in.

Apprenticeship programs, in this part of the world, begin at an early age for many employees. They continue to develop their skills on the job and as their job changes, they are retrained to learn the skills required to continue to work productively in their field.

In many countries, not all secondary school graduates are mainstreamed into a college degree track after graduation. We in the U.S. are the exception, not the rule. But things might be changing. The Curtis Fund recently started a pilot project with our partner, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), to help students earn certificates for certain skills-based training in proven programs throughout the state and parts of the Northeast. These certificates will give them advanced training for key jobs in the ever-changing, more complex, and technical economy. The certificates usually guarantee that compensation will be higher than for an entry level employee and the opportunity for additional education in the future could be available as the program expands.

The J. Warren & Lois McClure Foundation, a fellow supporting organization at the Vermont Community Foundation, has identified a number of areas where there is a shortage of skilled job applicants. We have focused our program to support students seeking credentials in these areas for now, but we think the opportunities are endless. And, we have an unlimited supply of learners who are eager to get trained and start working. We invite you to join us in helping them get started!

Joseph Boutin,
Chair, The Curtis Fund Board of Trustees