



## ANNUAL REPORT 2021





# Table of Contents

A Message from the Executive Director .....	1
Our Mission .....	3
Board of Directors and Leadership Team .....	4
NorthStar Programs	
Early Education and Care .....	5
School Age Programs .....	6
Young Adult Support Programs .....	7
Youth & Family Services .....	8
Mental Health .....	9
Community Health	
Southcoast Coalition for Early Childhood Education .....	10
The Basics Southcoast .....	11
Manifest Love .....	14
Community Partnerships .....	15
Reaching for the Stars Capital Campaign .....	16
Financials .....	18
Contributions and Contracts .....	19



# A Message from the Executive Director



**Maria A. Rosario**  
Executive Director

The 2021 fiscal year was a year of growth and learning for NorthStar Learning Centers. It started with us thinking outside the building as well as outside the box. We had to create a culture in the organization of acting bigger than we were – having a bold vision.

We took risks, knowing that to get more success, we also would experience failures, but we never gave up and kept moving forward. We accepted that change is difficult, yet, inevitable to sustain a healthy organization.

As a people of color-founded and -led organization, we celebrate both our legacy and our promise as we approach the 50 years' mark of service to our community. This year, we affirmed who we are, where we come from, why we exist, who we are trying to impact. We come from the civil rights movement whose goal of racial equity remains our own. Nearly half a century under our belt, we remain committed to consistently applying the lens of racial equity in all manner of decision-making—from our policies and procedures to who we partner up with.

It is in that pursuit of racial equity that we unveil our new logo—a black star that acknowledges our African origins and ongoing pursuit of freedom. Our

new logo honors our ancestors who understood and did not shy away from struggle and persevered by any means necessary, who understood that there is a better tomorrow that you and I get to live and enjoy. And who understood that authentic systems change cannot be accomplished by one individual or group alone. It is in that spirit that I thank you for subscribing to and supporting our mission, for supporting who we are and the critical work we do, and understanding that we deserve—indeed, demand—a seat at the table.

NorthStar has become more than just an organization; we are a movement. In this special identity and capacity, we will keep working toward the emergence of a healthy community in its many dimensions, scales, and possibilities—specifically, toward the goals of full acceptance and celebration of our differences and diversity and enjoyment of the many benefits that will confer on all of us.

As you read this annual report, I hope it will remind you of our recent successes and energize you for the future as you envision the mission of NorthStar Learning Centers. For those of you who have tirelessly committed time and energy to the success of this organization, I thank you. This committed and visionary group of people inspires me every day to make North Star Learning Centers an ever more powerful force for change.

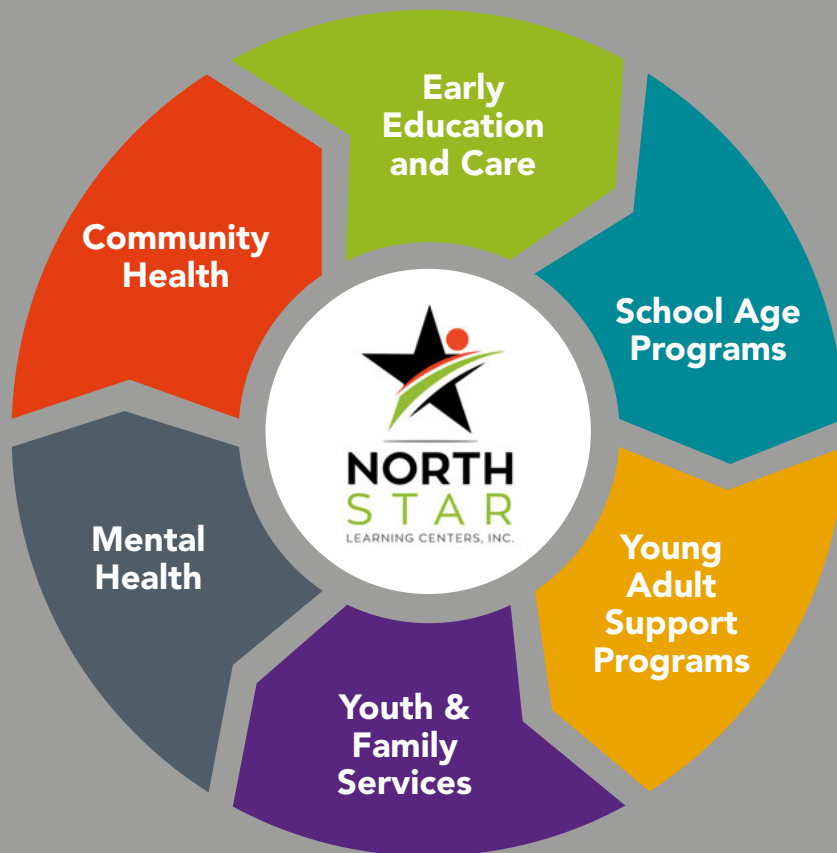
With appreciation and respect,

**Maria A. Rosario**  
Executive Director



# Our Mission

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. In advocacy and public policy, we as a minority-led nonprofit organization advance diversity as a strength and resource to open pathways to create a better life.



**NorthStar Learning Centers is a people-of-color and women-led organization working with and for the people.**

Born from community action during the civil rights movement, NorthStar maintains a bold vision to provide individualized, strength-based, culturally responsive, family-focused programs that help children, youth, and families realize their strengths and dreams. Founded in 1974, we have grown from one neighborhood-based preschool center to a constellation of programs that serve New Bedford area children from birth to adulthood.

# Board of Directors & Leadership Team

## Board of Directors



**Stella Rebeiro**

*President*

*Retired New Bedford Juvenile Court  
Probation Officer*

**Arnold J. Grace**

*Secretary/Treasurer*

*Retired New Bedford  
Juvenile Probation Officer*

**John F. DeMello**

*Private Attorney*

**Susan Nielsen**

*Probation Officer,  
Mass Trial Courts Juvenile*

**Frank Muller-Karger**

*Professor, Institute for Marine Remote  
Sensing College of Marine Science*

**Rhoda Purcell**

*Retired, High School Principal*

**Wayne Ramos**

*Retired, Umass Dartmouth Administrator*

**Damon Chaplin**

*Director, New Bedford Health Department*

## Leadership Team

**Maria A. Rosario**

*Executive Director*

**Hilda Ortiz**

*Senior Accounts Manager*

**Zoe Hansen-DiBello, PhD**

*Director of Innovation*

**Marlene Barros**

*Director of Early Education  
and After-School Programs*

**Lori Quigley**

*Director of Education*

**Edward Machado**

*Director of The HEAL Center*

**Meghan Ryan, LICSW**

*Director of Clinical Services*

**Jennifer Torres**

*Director of Youth Services*

**Nick Matthew**

*Director of Strategic Partnerships  
and Development*

# Early Education and Care



Ages ranging from 1 month – 5 years old. Full-day, full-year active learning programs for working families and families referred by the Department of Children and Families.

## Our Impact

Massachusetts early education centers expel children at a rate 13 times higher than the national average. Nationwide, 250 children are expelled every day. NorthStar values are reflected in our policies and practices: we do not expel children. **This year our centers achieved 95% kindergarten readiness for all our preschool graduates.**

To achieve equity in education, from kindergarten through college, we must first understand that the majority of a child's cognitive brain development occurs before the age of 5. Therefore, while we address and provide mental health, social and academic support for those engaged in our services and programs, we recognize that beyond the age of 5, much of our efforts and interventions are necessary due to early childhood developmental needs not being met.

While we at NorthStar continue working to expand the horizons of opportunity for all the people we serve, we recognize that when we are intentional and strategic in investing our efforts in providing excellent, accessible and affordable early childhood education, we are simultaneously making ripples of long-term change with each student we touch and teach.

FY 2021  
Students Served\*

10

Toddlers

60

Preschoolers

*\*Due to reduction in ratios due to COVID-19, we were sadly unable to serve infants.*



# School Age Programs



Through school-community partnerships, we create afterschool opportunities for children and youth to achieve academically, socially, emotionally, vocationally, civically, and physically.

## SCHOONER Program

Our licensed SCHOONER program offers after-school care when school is in session and all day care during school vacations/professional development and summer. **Programming includes project-based learning, field trip experiences and academic support for children ages 5 to 12.** Children enjoyed participating in classroom STEAM projects, especially our butterfly lab where we documented the transformation process of live caterpillars into butterflies!

## Leading Senioritas

Offered at Roosevelt Middle School, Leading Senioritas teaches young at-risk ladies skills to know and appreciate who they are, connect with and achieve in school, recognize and forge healthy relationships, and become leaders in school and community change. Exploring what it means to be a woman and options on how to show up in the world, **Leading Senioritas helps all participants to reach their true potential despite any negative influences they may have had in the past.** Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Youth Violence Prevention Through Positive Youth Development program, partially funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Grant Program.

## Tying On Success

For the Roosevelt Middle School boys in TOS, wearing a necktie is a rite of passage into responsible manhood and an example of the ways in which they can express their identity. **Focusing on improving participants' self-esteem, social skills, and grades, this mentoring program helps struggling, violence-prone boys become part of the solution to the concentrated violence in their lives.** Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Youth Violence Prevention Through Positive Youth Development program.

## The SCHOONER Program Impact:

50

students from

11

elementary schools across New Bedford

## Leading Senioritas and Tying on Success Impact:

Leading Senioritas:

17

Tying on Success:

18

35

Total participants directly served

95

Total participants indirectly served

# Young Adult Support Programs



In today's global economy, high-quality education is no longer just a path to individual opportunity, but also the way to community safety, economic prosperity, and social well-being. Thus, we have a stake in helping all students develop into responsible, educated, productive, and caring adults.



## HEAL Center

The HEAL Center is an initiative of NorthStar Learning Centers that is supported by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Gun Violence Prevention Intervention, Treatment and Recovery Services.

The HEAL Center's mission is to work with youth ages 17-24 who have had first-hand experience and exposure to gun violence, in promotion of their healing, overall health, and well-being. Our success is dependent on our ability to cultivate and support authentic partnerships.

The HEAL Center 67 Active Partnerships, most prominent being New Bedford District Court Adult Probation, Department of Youth Services, Bristol County Sheriff's Office, St. Luke's Hospital Trauma Center, MassHire among others. **The HEAL Center was the recipient of the 2020 Department of Youth Services Commissioner's Community Partner award.**

40

participants enrolled

22

incoming referrals

187

internal & external referrals made for resource allocation

11

participants enrolled in in-house HiSet Course

this year

3

of our participants achieved their HiSet, a phenomenal achievement

## FY 21 Programs:

- Sankofa 2
- Ready 4 Life
- On-The-Job Training
- National Accreditation Certification
- Media Campaign
- Mother's Group [Voices of the Unheard]
- Summer Nights
- Occupational Skill Support

# Youth & Family Services



In our work with youth, our job is to awaken a sense of possibility and opportunity and help them take action steps toward achieving the new personal, educational, and vocational goals they have set for themselves.

## Youth and Family Support

Many New Bedford area youth, especially those living in poverty, face an uphill struggle toward becoming healthy, educated, responsible, self-sustaining adults. In our work with youth, our job is to awaken a sense of possibility and opportunity and help them take action steps toward achieving the new personal, educational, and vocational goals they have set for themselves.

Our programs are grounded in positive youth development theory of change and social theory of youth empowerment.

We draw from multiple evidence-supported youth-serving models, including standards for effective afterschool and youth mentoring programs.

**We believe that every youth has a voice and deserves to have a seat at the table.**

## Program Metrics

145

participants engaged in our Family Actualization Support and Empowerment (FASE) Program

104

families engaged in our Supervised Family Visitation

110

families engaged in our Kinship Care Reunification Support Program

312

private paying family visitation sessions



# Mental Health



The purpose of the NorthStar Mental Health Clinic is to improve the lives of people with mental health challenges and the lives of their families and friends.

NorthStar Learning Centers Mental Health Clinic started as a thought, and then emerged into a set of principles that is now an established culmination of an exemplary history of professional, and dedicated direct services to the communities of Southeastern Massachusetts for over 40 years. **NorthStar Mental Health Clinic is the next progression of services offered by NorthStar Learning Centers.**

## Clinic Team

- 2 full-time Clinicians
- 2 part-time Clinicians
- 2 graduate Masters in Social Work Interns

## Breakdown of Schools Serviced:

- New Bedford Public Schools:
  - New Bedford High School
  - Keith Middle School
  - Roosevelt Middle School
  - Parker Elementary School
- Alma del Mar
- Our Sisters' School
- Nativity Preparatory School

## Mental Health Clinic

80

### Participants

- Diagnostic Evaluations: 3% of service delivery
- Family Therapy: 4% of service delivery
- Group Therapy: 3% of service delivery
- Individual Psychotherapy: 90% of service delivery

## School-Based Therapy

380

### Participants

## Diversion & Assistance Program

17

### Direct Interventions

- Follow Up Interventions: 6
- Care Coordination with NBPD: 3
- Outpatient Referrals: 7
- St. Luke's Hospital Referrals: 9

## Impact

477

individuals received  
mental health support

# Community Health



We believe strength is found in the collective not the individual, therefore here at NorthStar we strive to cultivate, build and maintain cross sector partnerships as a means to increase our participant's social capital and exposure to opportunities. Over the years our partnerships with our community at large has offered NorthStar the unique opportunity to work with and serve as a source for professional development.



SOUTHCOAST COALITION  
for  
early childhood  
education

## The Southcoast Coalition for Early Childhood Education (SCECE)

The Southcoast Coalition for Early Childhood Education (SCECE), an initiative of NorthStar Learning Centers established in July of 2019, is a collective of 85 cross-sector stakeholders dedicated to ensuring every child has the best start in life and enters kindergarten ready to reach their full potential.

The first Coalition initiative is The Basics Southcoast, a regional chapter of The Basics Learning Network. With Southcoast Health as our lead implementation partner we launched The Basics Southcoast, seeking to saturate the community with the five Basics' Principles of caregiving best practices, changing the way people think and engage with young children.

**The Coalition's aim is to increase kindergarten readiness across the region.**



# Community Health



## The Basics Southcoast

The Basics Southcoast is a strategy for our whole community to get behind the healthy development of every child by embedding five Basics Principles into everyday interactions with young children. The Basics are five science-based, fun, simple and powerful ways we can collectively support and optimize brain development in children starting at birth.

**Fact: Science shows that 70% of brain growth occurs before a child's first birthday, 80% by age three and 90% before age five.**

## The Five Basics Principles:



"After [The Basics Southcoast presentation], I experimented with my two year old granddaughter and realized I was forgetting to categorize. Once introduced to it, she does it automatically and with glee. As a literacy coach and elementary teacher, my primary focus is on language. Nice to get a little bit more well rounded!"

– Karren Babbitt

*Retired Literacy Coach, Dartmouth Public Schools*

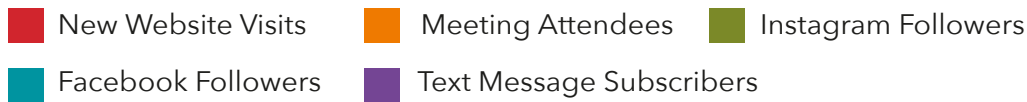
## The Basics Southcoast Implementation Strategy:



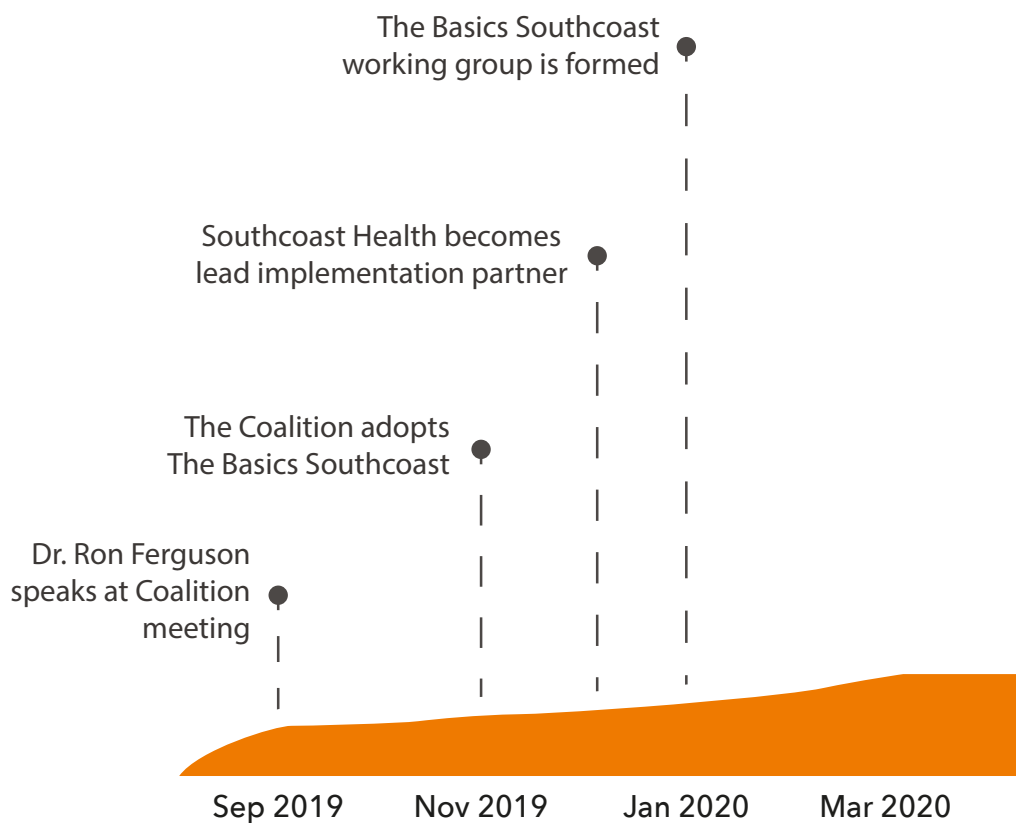
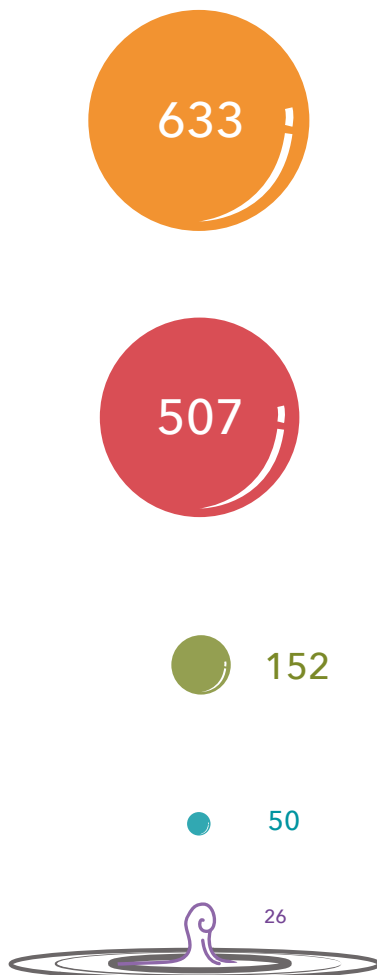
# The Basics Southcoast Ripple Effect

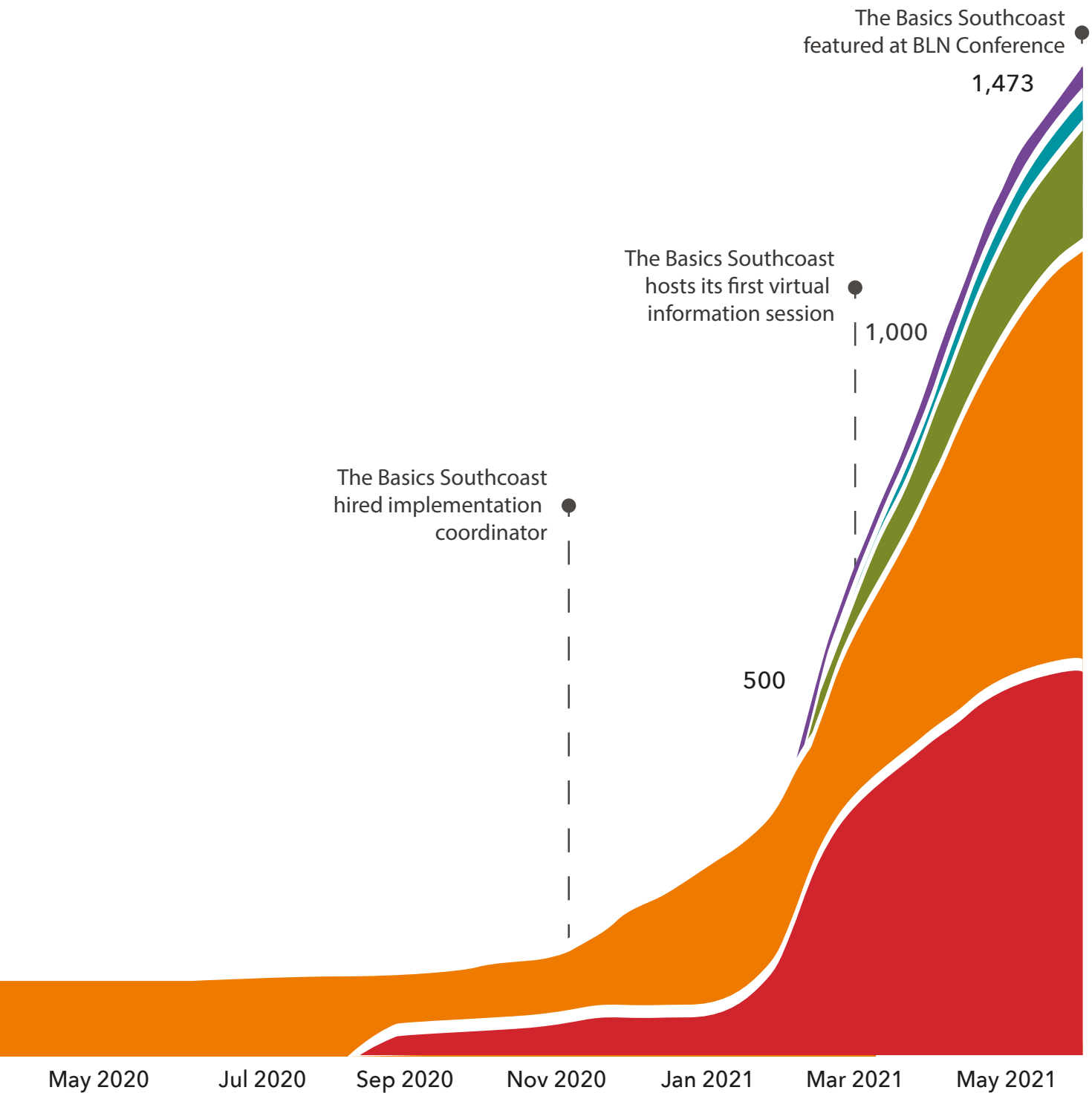
## Cumulative Socio-Ecological Saturation

September 2019 - June 2021



### Total Saturation by Category





# Community Health



## Project Manifest Love

Project Manifest Love continues to deliver healthy fresh local food to families across the City of New Bedford.

The initiative was conceived as COVID-19 swept through our neighborhoods and we quickly realized the families we work with and for would experience an increase in food insecurity and limited access to affordable healthy food.

Thus a collaborative effort and alliance took shape between Round the Bend Farm, YWCA of Southeastern Massachusetts, Youth Opportunities Unlimited and NorthStar Learning Centers.

This year, with a generous donation, the Manifest Love collaborative was able to hire a Distribution Community Liaison to deliver shares and continue to cultivate the relationship between the farm and the people!



eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**  
southeastern massachusetts

## 44 NorthStar Weekly Share Breakdown:

20

Early Childhood Education and Care

10

School-Age Programs

5

Children and Family Support Services

7

Young Adult Programs (HEAL Center)

2

Administration Team

# Community Partnerships



**BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY**



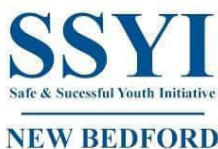
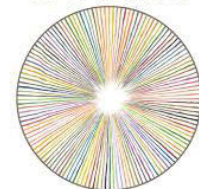
**BRISTOL**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



**GUN VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION  
PROGRAM**



**SANGHA**



**eliminating racism  
empowering women  
ywca**

# Reaching for the Stars Capital Campaign

*For a New Early Education and Community Center in the South End of New Bedford*



## NorthStar is building a state-of-the-art Early Education & Community Center in the south end of New Bedford.

The new Center will be a childcare facility by day, with a commercial kitchen, large gross motor/maker space and nature-inspired outdoor play and learning spaces – including edible gardens. The Center will be open to the community on evenings and weekends, supporting a range of activities, including professional development training for teachers, parent gatherings, health care education and delivery, art workshops and exhibitions, and simply play – indoors and out.

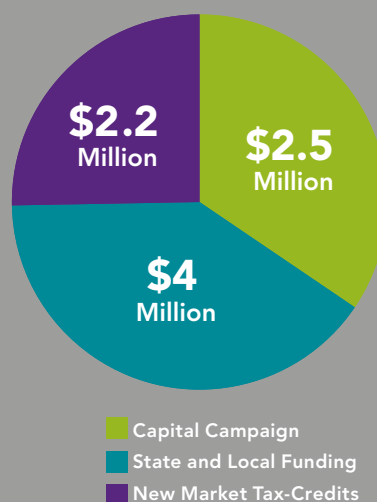
### **Our new Early Education & Community Center will:**

- Expand full-time enrollment by 40%, serving an additional 40 children and families;
- Serve as a regional laboratory school for best practices and professional development for the entire SouthCoast;
- Consolidate our current two sites into one, improve operational and financial efficiencies; and,
- Provide the community with access to playspaces, community rooms, and our commercial kitchen, all while simultaneously addressing urban blight.

Our new Center is a clear statement of NorthStar's commitment to early childhood development and will be the hub of all of our early childhood programming. The Center will be a teaching lab and training site for pioneering best practices, as well as home base for the Basics Southcoast initiative. **With the support from corporations, foundations and genius individuals, NorthStar has raised \$1.5 million of our \$2.5 million goal through our Reaching for the Star Capital Campaign. Please join us in reaching for the stars by visiting <https://northstarlc.org/contribute/>!**

## Campaign Financial Breakdown

(\$8.5 million-dollar project)



# Capital Campaign Contributions

## **\$100,000+**

City of New Bedford  
 Eastern Bank Foundation  
 The Bromley Charitable Trust  
 Bristol County Savings  
 Charitable Foundation, Inc.  
 Amelia Peabody Foundation  
 Maureen & Ray Armstrong

## **\$50,000 – \$99,999**

Acushnet Foundation Fund  
 BankFive  
 BayCoast Bank  
 Carney Family Foundation  
 Charlie's Children's Charities  
 Jonathan and Eve Rounds  
 Acushnet Foundation Fund  
 The Mabel Louise Riley  
 Foundation  
 Dr. Robert French

## **\$25,000 – \$49,999**

Island Foundation  
 Joe Nauman  
 Priscilla & Allan Ditchfield  
 Santos & Santos P.C.  
 Sylvia Group

## **\$10,000 – \$24,999**

AI Wainwright LLC  
 Cecelia Hicks  
 CHT Foundation  
 Coastal Financial Services  
 Crapo Foundation  
 First Citizens Federal Credit  
 Union  
 New Bedford Day Nursery Inc.  
 Susan & Cliff Boehmer  
 Theresa Street  
 William E. Schrafft & Bertha E.  
 Schrafft Charitable Trust

## **\$5,000 – \$9,999**

Bettina Borders  
 Carole Ferguson  
 Christopher and Patricia Arnold  
 Hanumara Chowdri  
 Nanci & John Winterhalter  
 William & Mary Jane MacLean

## **\$1,000 – \$4,900**

Frank Muller-Karger  
 Rachael Kolb  
 Massachusetts Bankers  
 Association  
 Michele Pratt

## **Under \$1,000**

Amanda McMullen  
 Andreas Romero  
 Arnold Grace  
 Bernadette Souza  
 Christopher Hendricks  
 Cynthia Rose  
 Darlene Spencer  
 Damón Chaplin  
 Estella Rebeiro  
 Jacqueline Medeiros  
 Jeremy Waxler  
 John DeMello  
 Jennifer Ferland  
 Jim Robbins  
 Monica Dumas  
 Michelle Loranger  
 Nathaniel Rodriguez  
 Pamela J. Cruz  
 Paul Oliveira  
 Rhoda Purcell  
 Raechel Grady  
 Susan Costa  
 Susan Nielsen  
 Stephanie Taylor  
 Wayne Ramos  
 Vantage in Philanthropy

# Financials

## Income and Expenses Financials for July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Audit Prepared by Clifton, Larson, Allen, LLP

### 2020 Expense Breakdown

**Income:**  
\$3,086,919.00

**Expenses:**  
\$2,900,677.00

**Assets:**  
\$2,079,088.00

**Liabilities:**  
\$2,900,677.00

### 2021 Expense Breakdown

**Income:**  
\$3,326,703.00 *(increased by 7.77%)*

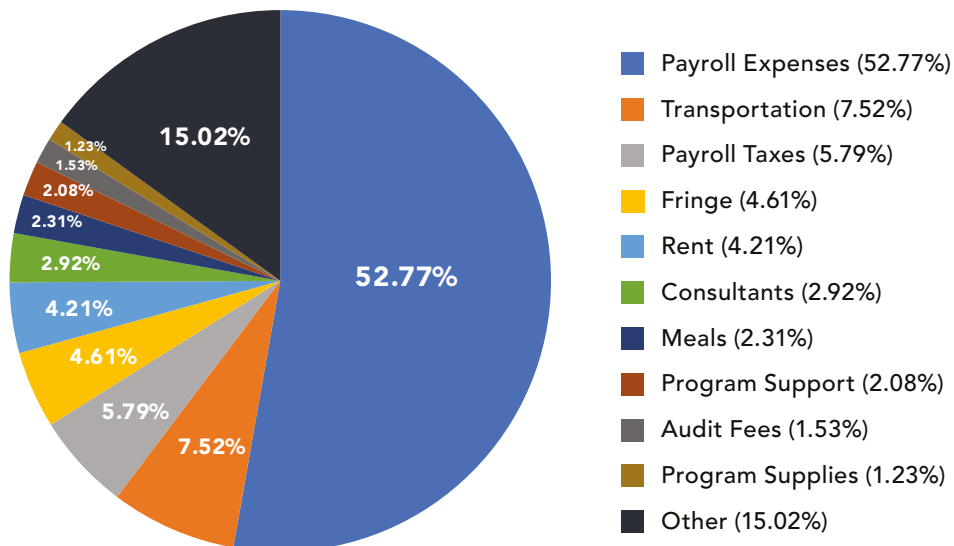
**Expenses:**  
\$3,445,407.00 *(increased by 18.78%)*

**Assets:**  
\$2,209,314.00 *(increased by 6.26%)*

**Liabilities:**  
\$3,445,407.00 *(increased by 18.78%)*

### 2020 Expense Breakdown:

Total: \$3,445,495.41



# Contributions and Contracts

June 30, 2020 – July 1, 2021

## Contracts:

Department of Early Education and Care

Department of Children and Families

Department of Public Health

The Child and Adult Care Food Program  
(CACFP)

PACE, Inc.

## Program Support Contributors:

Acushnet Foundation

New Bedford Public Schools

The Island Foundation

Boston University Superfund Projects

Senator Montigny Child Equity and  
Empowerment Fund

Southcoast Community Foundation

Greater New Bedford Youth Alliance  
Cityspan Initiative, United Way of  
Greater New Bedford





*Helping children, youth and families realize their strengths and dreams.  
Enhancing the lives of children and adolescents,  
strengthening our families, and enriching our Community.*

**CONTACT US:**

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[www.northstarlc.org](http://www.northstarlc.org)