Alumni News Flash, March 3, 2014

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Want to see committed people working to strengthen our communities? Below is a quick News Flash on leadership activities by MCLI alumni. If you would like to connect with any of these alumni to learn more about their work, I am happy to put you in touch.

You can help the Class of 2014 develop new projects and strategies!
Join us at our next MCLI Mixer to discuss their new ideas:
Wednesday, March 12 from 3:30 to 5:00
At the Lawrence Public Schools central office, 255 Essex Street
RSVP to me.

- Todd

MCLI Alumni News Flash

Joshua Alba ('14) is the new Executive Director of Lawrence's annual Bread and Roses Festival, and he aims to expand the Festival's educational activities.

Amanda Cochrane ('13) is working with community partners to find a permanent home for the **Lawrence Bicicocina** bike and board shop. To follow their progress, like them on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceBicicocina.

Kamal Jain, Eric Sack, and John Noto (all '13) are developing new activities and welcoming new tenants to Lowell Makes, our new community "makerspace" that they created during MCLI. For the latest updates, visit them atwww.LowellMakes.com or follow them on Facebook.

Nancy Kieran ('12) is getting close to her goal of opening a bed and breakfast. She hopes to have good news to share very soon!

The Board Cultural Inclusion Project that **Judith Kamber** ('12) launched with the Lawrence YWCA and Jericho Road Lawrence is successfully diversifying nonprofit boards. The program has expanded to Jericho Road Lowell, which graduated its first class of new board members for Lowell nonprofits.

Dan Koff ('12) and **James Ostis** ('12) are presenting their work the Symposium on The History of the "New Immigration" to Lawrence and Similar Communities" on Saturday, April 5. The Symposium is presented by the Lawrence History Center. For more information, visit http://www.lawrencehistory.org/symposium.

Maryka Lier ('12) co-chaired the annual Conference on Minority Health at the University of North Carolina. This year's topic was "Engaging Youth in Creating Healthy Communities," and Maryka shared the keynote address via webcast with her friends back here in the Merrimack Valley.

Bopha Malone ('12) is now chairing the Board of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association in Lowell.

Tony Marino ('13) has joined **Loreen Lopez** ('12) on the Board of Groundwork Lawrence. Who will be next from the Class of '14!?

Amsi Morales ('13) and **Nik Pappas** ('13) have joined the Scholarship Committee of the Greater Lowell Community Foundation.

The A.M.S.I Foundation led by **Amsi Morales** ('13) is bringing inspirational "Hip Hop Preacher" Eric Thomas to speak in Lowell on April 17. Amsi is working with the Saab Family Foundation, and **Vladimir Saldana** ('14) is working on the event as well. For information and tickets visit the Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/pages/AMSI-Foundation/168355473524

Pavel Payano (Staff '12) and **Elisabeth Mulcahy** ('14) were featured yesterday on NBC Channel 7's Urban Update, talking about the development of the Greater Lawrence Young Professionals Network over the past four years.

Pavel Payano (Staff '12) has announced his run for the Massachusetts State Senate. You can follow him on Facebook, or email him if you would like to help the campaign: Info@PavelPayano.com.

Nik Pappas ('13) and his brother **Arthur Pappas** ('14) have created a donor advised fund at The Greater Lowell Community Foundation to allow them to support future community efforts by MCLI classmates and others.

Jose Pino ('12) has joined the Board of Jericho Road Lawrence.

The Merrimack Valley Time Exchange is a finalist in the Merrimack Valley Sandbox's Winter Accelerator. **Emily Rosenbam** ('12) launched the idea, and**Joy Mosenfelder** ('14) has brought it to life!

Sopheak Sam ('13) is working on a new logo for the MCLI. Stay tuned for our new design!

Silvia Serrano ('13) is leaving Northern Essex Community College to become the Executive Director of the Malden Senior Center. Congratulations, Silvia!

Sochenda Uch ('12) spoke on a panel after the documentary Monkey Dance, which features him as a teen growing up in Lowell. The showing is part of a series on Cambodian dance and culture at the Lowell National Historical Park.

Alumni News Flash, May 27, 2014

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Below is a quick News Flash of leadership activities by MCLI alumni.

See more MCLI projects at our Community Showcase on June 4!
At The UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center
8:30 - 11:30 - with speaking program at 9:30
Guest speakers:
- Theresa Park, Director of Planning, City of Lawrence; Past Director of Economic Development, City of Lowell
- Luis Pedroso, President of Accutronics
To Register: mktix.com/mcli

MCLI Alumni News Flash
Working through her A.M.S.I. Foundation, **Amsi Morales** ('13) recently filled the Lowell Memorial Auditorium for an inspirational evening with Eric Thomas, the Hip Hop Preacher. She partnered with the Saab Family Foundation to produce this special evening for area youth.

Nik Pappas ('13) has started a new medical device company, Ascend Medical Inc.

Nancy Kieran ('12) has opened Kendall Tavern bed and breakfast - the goal she set for herself coming out of the Institute. She's eager to have visitors up to Freeport, Maine. Check it out at kendalltavern.com.

Bopha Malone ('12) was honored at the Lawrence YWCA's 2014 Tribute to Women.

Judith Kamber ('12) now chairs the board for Jericho Road Lawrence, and **Rachel Concepcion** ('13) is a new member.

Deb Gurry ('13) is expanding her Lawrence Salsa Social Nights! Dance lessons and dance nights the fourth Friday of the month - cohosted by Deb's Bell Tower Cafe and the Lawrence Senior Center.

Lawrence BiciCocina is hosting Saturday pop-up bike repair shops**. Amanda Cochrane** ('12) is working on this social enterprise with the Lawrence YMCA and other partners.

Jose Pino ('12) is a new member of the City of Lawrence Zoning Board.

Lowell Makes continues to expand its equipment, membership, and workshops for "makers," thanks to founders **Kamal Jain, Eric Sack, and John Noto** (all '13). Visit the makers space at LowellMakes.com, on Facebook, or in person any Wednesday evening for the weekly openhouse from 6:00 to 9:00.

Eileen Burns ('12) has joined the board of Merrimack Regional Catholic Charities and heads their Program Committee. She also recently spoke on a Harvard-sponsored panel on immigration in Lawrence.

Ricky Orng ('13) continues to champion poetry in Lowell. He brought the Spoken Word Olympics Party to Lowell, honored National Poetry Month by displaying poetry in downtown store windows, and recently guided his local FreeVerse! youth poetry slam team to the "Louder Than A Bomb" festival to win the Massachusetts championship!

Vladimir Saldana ('14) is a new Board member of the Lowell Boys and Girls Club, Vice Chair of the Lower Highlands Neighborhood Group, and Chair of the Committee to Elect Dave Ouelette State Representative.

Flor Maldonado ('13) has joined the Board of the Notre Dame Education Center.

The Greater Lawrence Young Professionals Network continues to grow with MCLI leadership. GLYPN Co-Founder **Pavel Payano** also co-founded the Leadership Institute. Now **Jose Pino** ('12) is GLYPN Vice President and **Elisabeth Mulcahy** ('14) is Treasurer. **Jose** was also recently honored with the GLYPN Founders Award for his dedicated service. And **Pavel** is now running for State Senate!

Several MCLI alumni presented at the recent symposium on the history of "new immigration" to Lawrence and similar communities: **Dan Koff** ('12), **Victor Martinez** ('13) and **Rosemary Agbede** ('13). Also, **Deb Gurry'**s Union Street Grill ('13) catered the symposium!

James Ostis ('12) is beginning the PhD program in Public Policy at UMass Boston.

Lorie Mendoza ('14) spoke at the Chica Mentoring Program's annual Lawrence career panel and speed mentoring event.

MCLI alumni are leading workshops at Lawrence's new Qniversity community education center, including **Maria Natera** ('14), **Victor Martinez** ('13) **Deb Gurry** ('13) **Spencer Buchholz** ('13) and **Todd Fry** (Director).

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, December 2014

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Below is a quick News Flash of leadership activities by MCLI alumni.

Shaylah Begley ('15) joined with **Elisabeth Mulcahy ('14)** to organize a successful Networking Night co-hosted by the Greater Lawrence Young Professionals Network and Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union.

Tasha Baclawski ('13) has started a new job as the Director of Communications and Programs at the Colleges of the Fenway in Boston.

Ana Camargao ('14) has launched the Merrimack Valley Youth Advocacy Coalition. Its goals are to collect data on youth homelessness, identify youth resources, and provide training to existing shelters and housing advocates to enable them to work more effectively with youth who are homeless.

Amanda Cochrane ('13) is developing Lawrence Bicicocina with a dedicated team. They have established a partnership with the Lawrence YMCA, run successful pop-up bike shops around the community, and are hiring part-time staff!

Marilyn Glazer-Wiesner ('13) co-presented a session on innovative teaching strategies at the New England Conference for Student Success.

Lowell Makes, co-founded by **Kamal Jain ('13), John Noto ('13) and Erick Sack ('13)**, continues to expand its membership and activities. In addition to all the usual "making" activities, Lowell Makes now hosts two entrepreneurial ventures: Random Wire Technologies and Brew'd Awakening Coffeehaus coffee roasting business. Congratulations to all involved! For more info, visit http://www.LowellMakes.com

As chair of the Board of Jericho Road Lawrence, **Judith Kamber ('12)** continues developing the Board Cultural Inclusion program with Jericho Road and the YWCA. The program received a generous grant to support a third phase of activity: creating a learning community among the participating nonprofits and board recruits to create Board environments that are more welcoming, effective, and inclusive.

Several MCLI alumni have participated in the Board Cultural Inclusion Program already. The current class includes **Digna Jhonson ('14) and Lorie Mendoza ('14).**

Therese Leone ('13) has been appointed to the Boards of Directors of Lazarus House Ministries and Nevins Family of Services.

Flor Maldonado ('13) is now Co-Chair of the Men's and Women's Health Working Group of City of Lawrence's Mayor's Health Task Force

Two alumni are now leading the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association. **Bopha Malone ('12)** is Chair of the Board, and **Sovanna Pouv ('12)** is Executive Director.

They first met as classmates in the Leadership Institute, and now are leading CMAA into a new, evolving leadership role in the Cambodian community. Bopha and Sovanna's leadership was needed soon after they assumed their roles last spring. The Branch Street Fire tragedy struck, killing seven and displacing many more people. Bopha and Sovanna coordinated many community responses and held a benefit event that raised vital funds.

CMAA also moved into a new office this summer at 465 School Street. Then in November the organization celebrated 30 years of service to the community! Congratulations Bopha and Sovanna!

Joy Mosenfelder ('14) coordinated several special projects related to the Merrimack Valley Time Exchange including the Lowell Skillshare and Helping Hands: Help Your Neighbors Weekend. She is also a new member of the Board of 119 Gallery

Elisabeth Mulcahy ('14) accepted a position as Assistant Vice President with East Boston Savings Bank. She continues as Treasurer of the Greater Lawrence Young Professionals Network.

Ricky Orng ('13) is leading The Untitled Open Mic, Lowell's long-running open mic poetry slam. Twice a month, Ricky gathers aspiring and established voices to host and maintain a tradition that first began in 2008!

Pavel Payano (Co-Founder, '12) ran a dynamic campaign for the State Senate. While he did not come out on top in that race, MCLI still salutes his steady commitment to public service! Pavel also recently received the Youth Nonprofit Professionals Award from the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network.

Abdiel Perez ('14) is piloting Accounting Made Easy! He started his first consultation with a local start-up IT management company. This first project provides the opportunity for Adbi to test his workshop/mentorship model with an actual business.

Vladimir Saldana ('14) recently visited Rwanda as part of a leadership exchange with the Rwanda Youth Healing Center in Rwanda. Ricky Orng ('13) and Sandrine Mukakinani ('15). joined Vladimir at a special event to raise funds and awareness around his trip.

Nicole Sammartino ('12) is now Director of Development at Career Resources Corporation, which helps people with disabilities find homes, social assistance, and employment.

Luciano Sappia ('13) won a competitive grant through National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship. Now Middlesex Community College will expand its E^3 (Empowering Entrepreneurship Exchange) activities – including integrating entrepreneurship across academic disciplines, turning its Entrepreneur in Residence program into an EIR Network, starting an Entrepreneur Forum, a Student Entrepreneur Fair, and new courses including Social Entrepreneurship!

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, March 2015

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Below is a quick News Flash of leadership activities by MCLI alumni.

Joshua Alba ('14) was elected President of Bread & Roses Heritage Committee after serving as Producer Director last year. He also helped organize the American Made Holiday PopUp Shop at El Taller in Lawrence, and started a series of "monthly public conversations with progressive figures" for the community.

Ana Camargo ('14) is participating in Jericho Road/YWCA Board Cultural Inclusion Program. As part of her initiative to develop support systems for homeless youth, Ana coordinated the 2015 Youth Point in Count in Lawrence, a national youth homeless count. She brought public agencies together with 7 community organizations to support the count and her growing networks to support homeless youth.

Felix Garcia ('15) and **Mary Beth Burwood ('15)** have joined with the Lawrence Rotary Club to launch Lawrence Rotaract, a service club for young leaders ages 18 to 30. They are looking for young leaders in the community who share their passion for service learning.

Sue Grolnic ('12) continues to develop the global network she founded, Sister to Sister, as it develops a new local focus - identifying "thriving seniors" - especially women - and helping them "mentor" other senior women in their community who are not thriving.

Lowell Makes continues to innovate under the leadership of **Kamal Jain ('13), John Noto ('13) and Eric Sack ('13).** With the Lowell Public Schools, Lowell Makes was awarded a $50,000 grant from the Massachusetts Life Science Center to purchase a scanning electron microscope to make available to public school students. As part of the project, they will work with Lowell Public Schools on teacher professional development.

In addition, Lowell Makes is in the process of establishing the Merrimack Valley Center for Industry and Art, and further engaging local manufacturers to assess their needs, gaps and opportunities for focused training.

Digna Jhonson ('14) is a new member of the Lawrence CommunityWorks Board of Directors.

Conratulations to **Bopha Malone ('12)** who was honored with the "Because of Her" Award at this year's Lowell Women's Week Annual Breakfast.

Lorie Mendoza ('14) has been chosen as the new Executive Director of Si Se Puede in Lawrence.

Joy Mosenfelder ('14) is coordinating the annual Lowell Skill Share coming up in May.

The University of Massachusetts Lowell honored **Clara Orlando (’14)** with the annual Martin Luther King Day Distinguished Service Award.

Clara Orlando (’14) and Ruby Carnevale (’15) are organizing The Merrimack Valley Compact First Regional Career and Networking Fair. The theme for the Fair is “Our Diversity, Our Strength: United to Create Opportunities for All”. The event includes a panel discussion moderated by **Todd Fry (Director)** and featuring **Keon Webbe (’15).**

James Ostis (’12) was chosen as a 2015 Public Policy Summer Fellow at the Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston of the Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government!

Jose Pino (’12) has joined the Board of Directors of The Lawrence Partnership, a new economic development collaborative bringing together business, nonprofit, and government leaders to advance the city. On the Board, Jose represents the Greater Lawrence Young Professionals Network.

Basudha Rizal (’15) led the Bhutanese Community of Lowell to achieve official nonprofit registration with the state as an official 501c3 organization!

Sayon Soeun (’15) shared his film Lost Child: Sayon’s Story at a special showing for MCLI classmates and alumni. The film tells the story of his childhood in Cambodia during genocide and his return as an adult. For the discussion, he was joined by **Mao Kang (’14) and Sovanna Pouv (’12). Sayon** is also speaking at the upcoming symposium on “Pursuing Justice Through Art: A Multicultural Genocide Exhibition” at Lowell’s Whistler House Museum.

Thanks to our friends at **Enterprise Bank** for nominating MCLI as Nonprofit of the Year at their Celebration of Excellence Awards Gala!

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, June 2015

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni leadership activities.

MCLI salutes **Kamal Jain ('13),** who passed away suddenly this spring. Kamal was a dynamic part of the MCLI community - one of the founders of Lowell Makes, a new member of the Board of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, and generously involved in countless organizations and efforts around the Merrimack Valley. We miss Kamal's great heart, many talents, and generous, dedicated spirit.

Joshua Alba ('14) is one of three up-and-coming leaders profiled in a *Merrimack Valley Magazine* article on "Building the Lawrence of Tomorrow" Joshua has also launched "The Rogue," a social forum to expand critical conversations around human issues that matter to the local community. Its first session featured an educator discussing progressive education reform and a skype session with community activists in Baltimore.

Stephanie Buchholz ('15) has joined a committee to create a children's museum in Lowell, organized by a sub-committee of the Lowell Public Schools Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Sister Eileen Burns ('12) of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, was honored by the Lawrence YWCA at its annual Tribute to Women Awards.

Ana Camargo ('14) has joined the Board of Asociacion Peruanos Unidos, the United Peruvian Association, to preserve, promote and enhance the Peruvian culture as a means to tie the Lawrence community together. She coordinated the Association's first Festival of the Sun celebration in Lawrence.

Lawrence Bicicocina is up and running! **Amanda Cochrane ('13)** is part of the leadership team that created this new bike and skateboard shop, now operating in partnership with the Lawrence YMCA.

Nina Davidson ('15) is the new Co-chair of the Diversity Committee at Middlesex Community College. She recently brought The Dialogue Arts Project to campus to generate dialogue around diversity. She also participated in a workshop at Lowell High School on "The Black Experience of the Modern Public School Community."

Bopha Malone ('12) and Sovanna Pouv ('12) met as Institute classmates in 2012, and now are Board Chair and Executive Director of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association. To continue strengthening CMAA, they recently completed the Institute for Nonprofit Management and Leadership based at Tufts University.

Tom O'Donnell ('12) is the Director of the new Innovation Hub at UMass Lowell, a co-working & incubator space for emerging companies. The Hub has four companies committed and more in the pipeline.

As President of the Greater Lawrence Young Professionals Network, **Pavel Payano (MCLI Co-Founder)** created and moderated a community forum on "Emerging Leaders: Changing the Educational Paradigm." The forum helped concerned leaders and parents get more engaged with public education.

Jared Ravreby ('14) co-created the "Reel Talk" film and discussion series with a grant from Mass Humanities and partnership with Merrimack College. Reel Talk engaged young Lawrencians in exploring films on gender roles, technology dependence, and realities of the immigrant experience.

In the last election, **Jeovanny Rodriguez ('12)** won a seat on the Lawrence School Committee. Congratulations, Jeovanny!

Basudha Rizal ('15) worked with the Bhutanese Community of Lowell to organize a candelight prayer vigil and fundraiser for the people of Nepal who were affected by the recent earthquake.

PBS recently broadcast the documentary *Lost Child: Sayon's Journey*, which tells the story of **Sayon Soeun ('15)** as he returns to Cambodia to find family members and uncover his personal history of conscription as a child soldier during the Cambodian genocide. Sayon created the film to advance the global movement against the use of child soldiers.

Jeff Tejada ('15) is serving on several boards dedicated to creating educational opportunities for youth in our communities: the Central Catholic High School Montagne Project Network, the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School, and the Beyond Scholarship Fund.

Bowa Tucker ('15) and Sandrine Mukakinani ('15) are founding board members of Africa America Alliance in Lowell, created to support African immigrants in the area and build bridges of support between the USA and Africa. The Alliance is partnering with UMass Lowell to create the Nelson Mandela Overlook, a new public memorial and community space adjacent to the Tsongas Center and the Merrimack River.

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, October 2015

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni leadership activities.

Fran Acosta (’16) has joined the Board of Lawrence Community Access Television.

Rosemary Agbede (’13) is the new president of the Nigerian Association of the Merrimack Valley.

Joshua Alba ('14) hosted the next community discussion in his series called “The Rogue.” This one featured a young adult leadership panel for a discussion of “Who Speaks for Lawrence?” Joshua has also been hired in a new position as the Youth Engagement Worker for the Lawrence Youth Team and a coalition of local groups, working as a mentor and advocate for youth in the city.

Dee Byas (’15) has launched Bridge Builders, a new effort to build bridges of support connecting people in the Merrimack Valley who are willing to mentor with ex-offenders and those who struggle with substance abuse or mental illness. Her motto is “We cannot forget those bridges that brought us over.”

Joseph DeJesus (’14) organized a State House forum and gala event on “Breaking Barriers” in immigration policy, highlighting achievements of immigrants, both documented and undocumented. He is Vice President of the International Law Students Association chapter at Massachusetts School of Law, which sponsored the events.

Christine Doucette (’15) and Tony Marino (’13) have created a new partnership between the Merrimack Valley Credit Union and MCLI. When members of the MCLI network finance a car loan with the Credit Union, it will donate $100 to MCLI! For more information, see the attached flyer.

Janin Duran (’13) has expanded the Spanish Program at Entrepreneurship for All. She is now working with 20 Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs in small businesses and startups in Lawrence and Lowell.

Eric Guerrero (’14) has expanded the community programming at El Taller bookstore café in Lawrence. The latest innovation is Wednesday night “Study Hours.” Students of all ages are invited to drop in for a quiet study space, wifi, and bottomless coffee with any purchase. To provide homework help, community members are encouraged to drop in and offer tutoring support in areas where they have skills to share.

Deb Hilse (’13) has hired two interns at her restaurant, Bell Tower Café. One is from YouthBuild Lawrence and one from the Point After Club, which supports people with mental illness. The internships provide an initial employment experience for people making a fresh start in the workforce.

Ana Javier (’13) coordinated the annual Grand March for Peace in Lawrence this summer.

Victor Martinez (’13) has been named the Executive Director of Communities Together in Lawrence.

Amsi Morales (’13) raised funds for her A.M.S.I. Foundation at the Foundation’s annual Hallows Eve Fun Run and Walk. The Foundation awards scholarships to Merrimack Valley students. In addition, the Fun Run partners with Rerun Shoes, which provides employment for adults with disabilities who prepare donated, gently-used shoes for export to micro-entrepreneurs in African nations, thus providing economic opportunity both here and abroad.

Lis Mulcahy (’14) has a new job as Assistant Vice President and Retail Branch Administrator at Newburyport Bank. She is working to improve branch efficiencies with “green” steps like recycling and repurposing supplies.

MassDevelopment has awarded grant of $162,000 to Lowell Makes, founded by **John Noto (’13), Eric Sack (’13), and Kamal Jain (’13, deceased).** The grant will help this makerspace expand its workshop up to a second floor, developing new room for retail, work stations, precision measuring tools, and 3D printing. The expansion will also create the Merrimack Valley Center for Industry & Art, which will offer classes in foundational math and computer skills, drafting, 3D modeling, and manufacturing software.

Carmen Paulino (’12) is leading Ishah House, a new program of Lazarus House in Lawrence that provides housing and support for single women in search of shelter and support.

Rosa Pina (’15) has been appointed to a new position just created by the City of Lawrence as Sanitary Code Enforcement Officer. The role is an exciting extension of her work with Groundwork Lawrence and many community projects!

Altagracia Portorreal (’15) has started Real Juice on Wheels – a pop up shop for fresh, healthy juices. She has also gathered friends for an ongoing audio-book club in which they discuss a wide range of books and topics from personal finance to self esteem to climate change!

Jeovanny Rodriguez (’12) succeeded in the primary election for City Council in Lawrence. Now he moves on to the general election coming up in November!

Jeffrey Tejada (’15) has been promoted to Director of Diversity Outreach & Recruitment at Middlesex Community College. This new position at the College is part of its overall commitment to the ‘Closing the Achievement Gap’ and the “Complete College America’ national community college initiatives.

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, March 2016

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are some quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni leadership activities:

Joshua Alba (’14) is holding regular events with “The Rogue,” a forum he created for people “to practice critical dialogue on the common good, public life, and social justice, so that actions can address root causes, rather than applying patchwork to broken systems.” The Rogue’s latest topic is “Why do teachers in Lawrence leave?”

Stephanie Buchholz and Lulu Garcia (both '15) mobilized neighbors to improve Gagnon Park, their local park and playground. Together they approached the City of Lawrence and Groundwork Lawrence, who then obtained State and local funding to redo the playground and improve infrastructure on the block. With energized neighbors, they start the park redesign process in April!

Dee Byas, Lulu Garcia, and Jeff Tejada (all ’15) teamed up to provide mentoring and guidance for a young man returning to the community from the house of corrections. This successful experience has led to a conversation with the Parole Department about ways more MCLI alumni can help others returning from incarceration to access education, work, and personal support.

Anna Elzer (’16) and her MCLI classmates worked with Lawrence High School student leaders, faculty, and administrators to create a "Success for the Best" networking event. Over 100 students and community professionals attended, building relationships for internships, job-shadowing, capstone projects, and summer jobs.

Masada Jones (’16) initiated “Courageous Conversations: Why Talking About Race is Important” – a community discussion hosted by the Lowell Violence Prevention Coalition.

Sandra Katz DeLeon (’16) teamed up with Latino women from six different nationalities to create a Zumbathon fundraiser for communities in Guatemala that were devastated by a landslide in October. The event surpassed its goals and will equip over 100 children there to continue their educations.

The Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Lowell was selected as a 2016 Social Innovator by the Social Innovation Forum in Boston. The honor brings a year of intensive consulting, development, and connections to investors. CMAA is led by Board Chair **Bopha Malone** and Executive Director **Sovanna Pouv (both ’12).**

Maria Natera (’14) started Maria’s Fresca Cooking Club, an opportunity for the community to come together and learn about cooking and nutrition in a practical, fun time together!

Lowell Makes, created by **John Noto, Eric Sack, and Kamal Jain (all Class of ’13)**, has added 50% more space, opening up a classroom, conference room, and lounge, an upcoming coworking space, photography studio, laboratory, and retail areas, plus new work areas for Pottery and Sewing! Stop by Lowell Makes during their Wednesday night openhouses, or visit it at www.lowellmakes.com.

James Ostis (’12) has become Co-Chair of the Lowell Cultural Council.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded Lawrence its “Culture of Health Prize” - one of 8 winners from among 340 communities that applied from across the country. **Tracy Sopchak (’16)** co-led the community effort that won this prestigious award.

Cheryl Parent (’15) has joined the board of Blueskies Wellness, Inc, an anti-bullying organization in Methuen.

Myrna Percibal (’16) has joined the Board of Groundwork Lawrence.

Jeovanny Rodriguez (’12) was elected to the Lawrence City Council in November! After serving a term on the Lawrence School Committee, Jeovanny moved on to this second successful campaign. Congratulations!

Vladimir Saldana (’14) and a colleague from Enterprise Bank created a special workplace success workshop for youth at the Out Of School Youth Development Center at Middlesex Community College.

Tracy Sopchak (’16) is starting a Lowell Development Professionals Brown Bag Lunch series. The group will be a loosely structured, democratically run professional meet-up group for Lowell development professionals, fostering collaborative fundraising and peer support.

Entrepreneurship for All and The Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association have partnered to support entrepreneurs in the Cambodian community. Their effort kicked off with a panel discussion including **Dahvy Tran (’16)** of Angkor Dance Troupe, and moderated by **Franky Descoteaux (’16)** of EforAll and **Sovanna Pouv (’12**) of CMAA.

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, August 2016

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are some quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni leadership activities:

Lawrence Filmmaker **Fran Acosta (’16)** will be honored by Eastern Bank and El Mundo Newspaper at the third annual Viva Lawrence event, where he will premier two new films!

Joshua Alba (’13) is preparing for the annual Bread & Roses Festival coming up on Labor Day, serving as Vice President of the Festival. In addition, Saturday evenings he hosts “The Commons,” an open forum and “soapbox” on the North Common Stage for critical engagement around issues community members wish to speak out about. He is also helping organize a “Know Your Rights” workshop to help empower youth in Lawrence to interact safely with police, part of a Black Lives Matter solidarity group.

Kevin Blanchette (’16) and **Jon Machado (’16)** have been elected to the Board of Lawrence CommunityWorks.

Caitlin Campbell (’16) has been elected to the Board of Groundwork Lawrence.

Joseph DeJesus (’14) is hosting events with Movimiento Pro-Cultura, promoting intercultural awareness in Lawrence.

Janin Duran (’13) has opened a new office in Lawrence for E Para Todos, the Spanish program of EForAll. The program is the only Spanish-language entrepreneurship accelerator in the nation!

Nora Frederickson (’16) has joined the Advisory Council for DIY Lowell.

MJ Harwood (’16) has launched "Adult Summer Pick-Up Soccer" in Lawrence, bringing people together for casual, spirited soccer and building community with old and new friends.

Amarri Jackson (’16) and **Todd Fry (Director)** traveled to Rwanda for a third round of exchange, mentoring, and training with young leaders developing new businesses and youth empowerment programs there.

Masda Jones (’16) has co-founded The Kindred Project, an initiative to unite, uplift, and empower Black and Latino communities in Lowell. The Project is starting by hosting “Courageous Conversations” to help people come together and talk about race.

Bopha Malone (’12) has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of Middlesex Community College. She also spoke at a public forum on “Immigration and Community Challenges” in Lowell, cosponsored by the Lowell National Historical Park, Middlesex Community College, the Coalition for a Better Acre, and the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, which she chairs.

Amsi Morales (’13) hosted the fourth annual Greens Fore Grads golf tournament to raise funds for the A.M.S.I. Foundation, which benefits students in Lowell and across the Merrimack Valley.

Lis Mulcahy (’14) co-chaired the Greater Newburyport YWCA's annual luncheon. The event featured author Debbie Irving on the topic of “waking up white” and understanding structural racism beyond ones own personal experience. The discussion proved powerful and eye-opening for many, continuing the YWCA’s tradition of tackling important current issues at this event.

Pavel Payno (Co-Founder) and **Victor Martinez (’13)** participated in a community forum with Elevated Thought Foundation on the question, “What is Education?”

Rosa Pina (’15) has been elected to the Board of Health for the City of Lawrence and the Board of Directors of the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center.

Jared Ravreby (’14) and **Anna Elzer (’16)** co-created the Reel Talk Conscious Consumers Film Series for youth-focused discussion open to the whole community. The series explored how/what/why we as a society "consume” on a daily basis, socially, physically, and economically.

Jim Wilde (’14) and the Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership were featured in the Huffington Post, saluting Jim for 23 years of leading the MVHP! At least one out of fourteen houses purchased in Lowell since 2000 was bought by a graduate of the MVHP’s homebuyer training program, and the foreclosure rate for these buyers is very low. Jim also recently moved that homebuyer training online, a new approach that has already allowed over 400 families to complete the course. Learn more by watching the MVHP’s 30-year anniversary video!

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, January 2017

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are some quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni community leadership activities:

Fran Acosta (’16) won a cash award from EforAll for Mi Casita, his startup business creating “Tiny Houses” in Lawrence. His efforts continue to earn interest from the City of Lawrence and other local leaders – as well as coverage in media like the Boston Globe: https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2016/11/13/tiny-house-movement-lands-lawrence/d56XB1gCkLqtZh9KL0el5K/story.html#comments

MCLI alumni are bringing compost services to Lawrence and Lowell. **Kesiah Bascom (’16)** is launching OffBeet Compost in Lowell. The business will start to operate this spring. To find out more, visit offbeetcompost.com. **Sebastian Brown (’17)** has started Roots Compost in Lawrence. He won a cash prize in a fall pitch contest at EforAll, and his business is up and running! To find out more, visit rootscompost.com.

Jessica Colcord (’17) has been appointed to the Board of the Essex Arts Center in Lawrence.

Ricardo DeJesus (’17) and **Andy Vargas (’17)** are developing a new method for bridging political divisions - an app called Dialogue that will connect voters in a safe environment to chat about their differing views. The private pairings will allow people to communicate without being subject to conflict or ridicule that can occur on platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

Aurora Erickson (’17) co-founded Lowell Votes, which is kicking off its third year of helping all Lowellians participate in local, state, and national elections, insuring that Lowell’s diverse citizens make their voices heard. They registered over 100 new voters this fall. She also co-founded DIY Lowell, a community-led initiative to create small-scale projects and events in Lowell, with upcoming events including DIY Lowell Community Chill Night “with chili and a chilly dessert” and the spring multicultural “Points of Light Lantern Celebration.

Eric Guerrero (’14) has expanded the success of El Taller Café and Bookstore to a new campus restaurant at Northern Essex Community College, called *El T at NECC*! His new place is encouraging healthy options and creating an atmosphere to support studying and community-building on campus.

Deb Hilse (’13) has joined the board of the Point After Club in Lawrence, which provides a community of support for people in recovery from mental illness. Deb has employed some Point After Club members at her restaurant, Bell Tower Café

Masada Jones (’16) is holding community gatherings through “The Kindred Project,” a new initiative she co-created in order to connect and strengthen communities of color in Lowell.

Mark Kampert (’14) was selected by the Boston Business Journal as one of it’s “40 Under 40” rising leaders in our region!

Amsi Morales (’13) held her A.M.S.I. Foundation's Fifth Annual Hallows Eve 5K Fun Run and Walk. Walkers and runners support the Foundation's scholarship programs for area youth. For more information, visit www.hallowsevefunrun.com. You can already register for the 2017 race!

4 Nichols (’17) has co-founded Refuge Studios, a studio that offers young artists a safe place for creating art and self-expression. The youth built a bench of recycled bottles on Lowell’s North Common this summer, and they are now finishing a mural at Northern Avenue Studios that pays tribute to Lowell’s history and the young women who worked in the mills.

Tom O’Donnell (’12) is the founding Director of the UMass Lowell Innovation Hub, a growing resource for entrepreneurial startups from around the region. With the success of its new Hub space in Lowell, UMass plans to open a new Innovation Hub in Haverhill.

Sovanna Pouv (’12) spoke at the Massachusetts State Asian American Commission 5th Annual Young Leaders Symposium, addressing history, success and challenges in leadership roles as Asian Americans.

Tracy Sopchak (’16) successfully launched a Development MeetUp group in Lowell that now has almost 50 members, patterned after the group she began in Lawrence. She is launching similar groups for the other cities served by EforAll including Fall River, New Bedford and Lynn.

Andy Vargas (’17) was honored by El Mundo as one of the New England “Latino 30 Under 30” promising young leaders for our region.

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, June 2017

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are some quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni community leadership activities:

Diane Baxer '(16) has been elected to serve in Chelmsford Town Meeting. She has also joined theEngineering Academy Advisory Council at Nashoba Valley Regional Technical High School

Sebastian Brown ('17), Spencer Buchholz ('13), and **Victor Martinez ('13)** were part of the planning committee for the Lawrence's Day Without Immigrants rally and march. **Lorena Salazar ('17)** was an active member of the outreach team. The May Day event engaged thousands of people, including many city leaders, in supporting immigrants in our communities.

MCLI Connectors is a group of alumni who are starting to provide professional guidance to parolees, men and women who are individually referred to MCLI at the discretion of Parole Department. In the early stages of this partnership, **Melvin Maria ('16)** has helped several parolees establish banking services at Eastern Bank, while **Myrna Percibal ('16) and Melba Acevedo ('16)**have helped others with access to higher education at Northern Essex Community College.

Jackie DeLaCruz ('17) and **Maria daSilva Dickinson ('14)** are rallying volunteers to furnish and decorate a children's room at the pre-release facility for the Essex County Sheriff's Department. This room at "The Farm" will provide a more supportive, enriching, environment for children when they visit their fathers before they are released to the community.

Carolyn Delehanty ('17) awarded the John Michael Delehanty Memorial Scholarship. The award assists a graduate of Lowell High School currently attending Middlesex Community College. Carolyncreated the scholarship fund to remember and celebrate the life of her son, who had the kindness to always care for others.

Janin Duran ('13) was honored by the Lawrence YWCA at its 34th annual YWCA Tribute toWomen awards luncheon.

John Espinosa ('14) has founded a new nonprofit. FECT is a civil liberties and human rights organization that uses education and advocacy to help protect rights and resolve conflict. John has also joined the Board of Directors for Lowell Makes, a dynamic makers' space in Lowell that was founded by MCLI graduates in 2013.

Sandra Katz DeLeon (’16) is a new member of Semana Hispana, Lawrence’s Hispanic Week Committee 2017.

Sako Long (’17) has been elected to the board of Thrive Communities, which is creating a new approach to empowerment for people after incarceration.

Rosa Lopez (’16) is launching a new professional mentoring program in Lawrence, called Merrimack Valley Mentors, a collaboration among The Lawrence Partnership, Community Inroads, and MCLI. **Jon Machado ('16)** is a member of the advisory committee. The program's goal is to help promising area professionals attain higher levels of leadership in their careers and business sectors.

Bopha Malone (’12) was honored with the Distinguished Young Professional Award from the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, recognizing those who continually demonstrate outstanding leadership, business achievement, and commitment to the community. Bopha spoke recently at Merrimack College, on “My Personal Refugee Story: The power of mentors, community resources, and giving forward.”

Victor Martinez (’13) is a coordinator of the Lawrence Immigrant Strong Network with many other area organizations supporting immigrants in this time of national tension around immigration and belonging.

Fru Nkimbeng (’12) organized a community forum in Lowell on the evolving crisis in Cameroon, including a panel discussion, civic resolution, and peaceful demonstration. He is a leader of the Cameroonian Community of Greater Lowell.

Saody Ouch (’13) was honored by Lowell Votes with its Volunteer Appreciation and Founders Award, saluting her outstanding contributions to increasing civic engagement in Lowell. Called a voting canvasser extraordinaire, Saody has been going door to door in the Lower Highlands and Acre neighborhoods for years discussing civic participation, encouraging people to register and then get out and vote!

Abdiel Perez (’14) is helping area churches improve their business sides. He is training area pastors in bookkeeping and helping them set up finance systems, providing stronger financial management for local congregations in Lawrence.

Zoila Ricciardi (’16) is bringing new community support resources to the Lila Frederick Middle School in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood, including Budget Buddies from Lowell! Their financial empowerment program proved a great success for a group of the school's parents. Zoila is also bringing students to the Upward Bound program at Boston College and the TAG program at UMass Boston. She engaged Bay Cove Human Services to run parent support groups at the school, and Brookview House as a community partner doing home visits to families that ask for that depth of support.

Vladimir Saldana (’14) is among the plaintiffs in a voting rights lawsuit to get the City of Lowell to adopt district representation. He is one of a diverse coalition of Asian-

American and Hispanic/Latino residents of Lowell who filed a federal voting rights lawsuit alleging that the city's municipal election system discriminates against minorities. According to the lawsuit, the use of citywide at-large elections for all seats on the Lowell City Council and Lowell School Committee dilutes the voting power of minority voters in Lowell, violating the federal Voting Rights Act and the Constitution. The recent filing of the lawsuit was widely covered in local and regional media.

Jeremy Thompson ('17) is part of the team founding Elijah's, Inc, an innovative group home in Atlanta, Georgia.

Aleksandra Tugbiyele ('12) has relaunched "The Foundation Mixer" series in Lowell. She and her husband Bobby are hosting monthly casual-but-stylish mixers in various locations around Lowell. They bring together professionals around themes of entrepreneurship, inclusion, creativity, and community connection.

MILL CITIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Alumni News Flash, January 2018

MCLI Partners and Friends:

Looking for committed people working to strengthen our communities? Here are some quick news flashes of MCLI Alumni community leadership activities.

Growing numbers of MCLI alumni are running for office! We salute their commitment to this important form of public leadership:

- **Fran Acosta ('16)** ran for the Lawrence City Council this fall. He was not elected, but made a good first showing as a candidate and said he learned a lot!

- **Bopha Malone ('12)** is running to represent the Massachuesetts Third District in the United States Congress! This seat is currently held by Congresswoman Nikki Tsongas.

- **Pavel Payano (Co-Founder)** was elected to the Lawrence City Council! He has served several terms on the School Committee during the complex time of school receivership.

- **Jeovanny Rodriguez ('12)** was re-elected to his seat on the Lawrence City Council. The Council then elected him its Vice President as well!

- **Elissa Salas ('17)** was elected to the Lawrence School Committee, in her first-ever campaign!

- **Andy Vargas ('17)** was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives to represent the Third Essex District in Haverhill. He was serving as a Haverhill City Councilor when he was elected to the State House.

Joshua Alba ('14) developed the community conversation series he founded as "The Rogue" into "Lawrence Liberation Mic" - a forum hosting writing and open mic sessions on the theme of "What makes a good education?"

Sebastian Brown ('17) and **Mary Jeanne Harwood ('16)** are building community and awareness through their business, Roots Compost. They invited their 150 members to a community gathering at El Taller in Lawrence, insuring that the business "helps people be more connected to the Earth by being more connected to each other! (especially across the lines of difference that keep us from getting big things done)."

Janin Duran (’13) is piloting an entrepreneurship program for Spanish-speaking students at Lawrence High School’s International School, designed for those who have been here for less than a year. EparaJovenes (EforYouth) is Janin’s new initiative as Executive Director of EparaTodos, the Spanish language branch of EforAll.

Marilyn Glazer-Weisner (’13) founded The Intensive English Institute at Middlesex Community College. The program takes students who speak a language other than English and are almost ready to apply to college, boosting the language skills they need to succeed!

Lauryn Klingler (’17) started a weekly Spanish Community Conversation Circle at the Lawrence Public Library. The Circle is designed to help people who live and work in Lawrence improve their conversational Spanish at all levels!

4 Nichols (’17) launched “Build Something” – a new program at Refuge, an art studio that he co-founded for youth in Lowell. Refuge helps youth develop as artists, designers, and practical problem solvers in life. To see both Refuge and Build Something check out this wonderful segment on Lowell Telecommunications! (4 appears in the second half of the clip.) Click here to see it!

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUvRN0M/playlists/4304/media/312091?autostart=false&sequenceNumber=1&showtabssearch=true&fullscreen=false

Jose Pino (’12) gave a workshop in social media and marketing for area nonprofits, teaming up Pentucket Bank with Community InRoads.

Sovanna Pouv (’12) was honored by Eastern Bank with a 2017 Community Advocacy Award for his leadership of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association.

Lorena Salazar (’17) received the Rising Star Award from the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations. The award is presented to a “community developer” under 40 years old for outstanding innovation, leadership, and achievement. She works as a community organizer at Lawrence CommunityWorks.

Vladimir Saldana (’14) is chairing the Board of Fortaleza, a new Lowell education advocacy group of Latino leaders in education, community, and business. They are working to ensure that Latino students and their families have access to education necessary for upward economic mobility, civic engagement and lifelong learning.

Tracy Sopchack (’16) has helped several local nonprofits develop plans for stronger fundraising: Haverhill Inner City Boxing, Lawrence’s Beyond Soccer and Si Se Puede (which is led by **Lorie Mendoza ’14).**

Beyond Walls in Lynn, where **Pedro Soto (’18)** is Associate Director, was honored with MassInc’s annual Gateway Cities Innovation Award.