



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Somerville Job Creation and Retention Trust



COVER PHOTO Now open, 101 South Street is the first of three life sciences buildings at Boynton Yards.

Photo courtesy of [Harry Ehrlich](#).

ABOVE: 250 Water Street, located on the border of Somerville and Cambridge, is the future home of Bristol Myers Squibb.

Image courtesy of DivcoWest.

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Introduction and Background

Job Creation and Retention Trust Overview

- **First JCRT Board Meeting in 2019**
- **Current Jobs Linkage Rate: \$2.75/square foot**
- **Linkage Fees Generated: ~\$2.1M**
- **Allocated Investments: ~\$2M**

This Year's Highlights

- **Over 350 Residents served**
- **Increased staff capacity**
- **Additional funds broadened investment types**

Introduction

This is the third Annual Report of the Somerville Job Creation and Retention Trust (JCRT) Board, completed in September 2022. This report provides information on the funding, investments, and outcomes of the JCRT from September 2021 through June 2022.

In its third year, the JCRT expanded its impact by utilizing increased staff capacity, leveraging the availability of additional funds to broaden its investment types and establishing and reestablishing workforce development ecosystem relationships.

Background

Somerville's Job Creation and Retention Trust is the result of the City's 2016 approved home-rule petition to institute a workforce development linkage fee to create and maintain employment opportunities, and provide training and wraparound support services to Somerville residents, enabling them to succeed and earn adequate incomes to continue to live in Somerville. Following an extensive evaluation of the commercial development landscape, incoming industry sectors, and resident education and skill attainment, as well as exploration to further conceptualize the future structure of the JCRT, the Somerville Board of Aldermen (now City Council) voted in December 2017 to approve a zoning amendment creating the JCRT fund. This zoning amendment set the jobs linkage fee at \$2.46 per square foot on commercial development projects of more than 15,000 square feet.

The current jobs linkage fee has since been increased to \$2.75 per square foot and is revised annually based on the Boston Consumer Price Index (CPI). Since its inception, the Trust has received over \$2.1M in jobs linkage fees. As of June 30, 2022, the JCRT has allocated approximately \$2M to job creation and retention programming.

Administration

The JCRT Board of Trustees is comprised of the following representatives that serve three-year terms:

- ◇ Mayor of Somerville or designee
- ◇ City Council President or designee
- ◇ Superintendent of Schools or designee
- ◇ Representatives of two workforce development non-profits
- ◇ Two Somerville residents, with a preference that such residents have participated in workforce development programs in the City of Somerville
- ◇ Representatives of two local businesses

JCRT Board of Trustees (as of June 30, 2022)

- Tom Bent—Business Representative
- ◇ Vickie Choitz—Resident, *Managing Trustee*
- ◇ Lisa Cook—Superintendent’s designee
- ◇ Silvana Dinka—Resident
- ◇ Tom F. Galligani Jr.—Mayor’s Designee
- ◇ Colleen Moran—Business Representative
- ◇ J.T. Scott—City Council President’s designee*
- ◇ Anika Van Eaton—Non-profit Representative, *Co-Managing Trustee*
- ◇ Rand Wilson—Non-profit Representative

City of Somerville Workforce Development Staff

- ◇ William Blackmer—Workforce Development Coordinator, *Staff Liaison*
- ◇ Jennifer Mancia—Senior Planner



ABOVE: The JCRT Board of Trustees and City of Somerville Workforce Development staff meet monthly to discuss the JCRT’s priorities and investments.

The Job Creation and Retention Trust Board of Trustees met ten times between September 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022:

- September 14, 2021
- October 19, 2021
- November 9, 2021
- December 14, 2021
- January 11, 2022
- February 8, 2022
- March 15, 2022
- April 26, 2022
- May 17, 2022
- June 21, 2022

Meeting agendas and minutes can be found at [Somervillema.gov/JCRT](https://somerillema.gov/JCRT).

* Councilor Jesse Clingan served in this seat until January 2022.

Funding

Funding for the JCRT comes from a commercial development linkage fee of \$2.75 per square foot, as of March 2022, on commercial development over 15,000 square feet. Since its inception, the job linkage fee has generated \$2,155,468 (Table 1). From September 2021 through June 2022, the job linkage fee generated \$794,211. These contributions came from Union Square RELP, Boynton Yards and Co., and Brickbottom I QOZB LP. We are anticipating a significant influx of contributions to arrive during the next year.



LEFT, Union Square RELP is developing a life sciences building in close proximity to the Union Square MBTA Station that opened in March 2022. Photo courtesy of US2, Master Developer of the Union Square Revitalization.

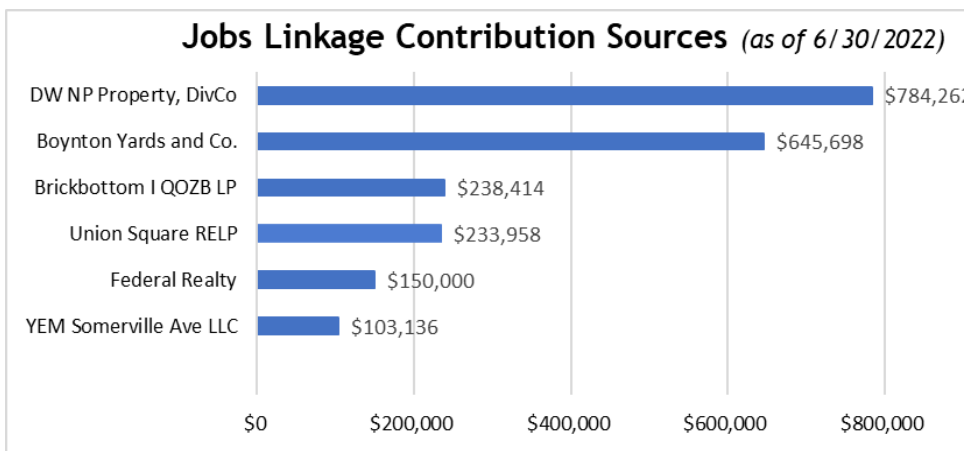
Linkage Contributions

- Received this year: **\$794,221**
- Total Received: **\$2,155,468**

Somerville's Development Pipeline

- Over **2.2 Million SF** of non-residential development projected to be completed in next decade
- Nearly **97%** of current construction is office/research & development space targeted to life science firms.
- These developments are projected to generate over **6,000 jobs**

Table 1



Strategy and Investments

At the April 4, 2019 JCRT meeting, the Board adopted the City of Somerville's Talent Equity Playbook strategies as the framework for prioritizing the JCRT Investments. The four strategies are:

- **Strategy 1:** Build a coordinated system of education and training services that ensures Somerville youth and adults achieve their career goals
- **Strategy 2:** Position Somerville as a national leader in employee engagement practices
- **Strategy 3:** Build a full suite of experiential learning opportunities for Somerville youth and adults
- **Strategy 4:** Develop resiliency responses to the "future of work"

During this reporting period the board allocated funds based on Year Two Ranked Investment Priorities (Table 2) as determined during the Spring of 2021. The "Committed to Date" column indicates the funds that have been committed to each priority. Additional information on these investments and JCRT beneficiaries can be found on subsequent pages.

Table 2: 2021-22 JCRT Ranked Investment Priorities

Rank	TEP Strategy	Investment Idea	Projected Cost	Committed as of 6/30
#1	1 & 3	Industry-Specific Training Programs	\$381,000	\$441,000
#2	1 & 3	Childcare Career Advancement Initiative	\$150,000	\$150,000
#3	2	Wage Theft/Worker's Rights and Responsibilities Training	\$89,000	\$119,000
#4	1	Contextualized Education for Adult and English Language Learners	\$369,000	\$250,000
#5	1	Professional Development Fund for Adult Education Teachers and Workforce Development Professionals	\$117,000	--
#6	1 & 3	Municipal Apprenticeship Feasibility Study/ Good Municipal Jobs Training	Up to \$500,000	--
#7	2	Job Quality HR Training for Somerville Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs	\$81,000	\$81,000
#8	4	Rapid Response Strategy for Worker Displacement	\$40,000	No Investment Needed
#9	2	Supporting Employee-Ownership Business Models in Somerville	TBD	--
#10	1 & 3	One Year Post-placement support for students in 2020 JCRT training and adult education programs	TBD	--
#11	4	Digital Literacy and Training Resources	TBD	--
#12	1	Public Space and Urban Forestry Participatory Action Research Team	\$37,850	--
Ongoing	1	Coordination and Data Collection Staff Position	\$47,500	\$25,577
Ongoing	4	Student Emergency Fund	\$22,000	\$22,000

STRATEGY 1 & 3 INVESTMENTS

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAMS

This year, the JCRT funded three local nonprofits to provide free industry-specific job training and placement services to Somerville residents: Asian American Civic Association (AACA), Just A Start (JAS), and Per Scholas.

AACA provided Alternative Fuels & Emissions, Building Energy Efficient Maintenance Skills, and Careers in Banking and Finance trainings to 20 Somerville residents.

JAS provided IT & Biomedical Careers trainings to 6 Somerville residents.

Per Scholas provided Network/IT Support, AWS re/start, Cloud DevOps, Software Engineer, and End User Desktop Support to 15 Somerville residents.

Residents in all training programs also received wraparound supports and earned stipends to support their participation and training completion.

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT



Korynn Stoyanoff, **LEFT**,
Director of Workforce
Development at Just A
Start

Nafisha, **RIGHT**, a
graduate of JAS's
Biomedical Careers
Training Program, now
works as Manufacturing
Associate II at
Thermo Fisher Scientific.



"The stipends through our grant with the City of Somerville have been an invaluable tool for our students' success. We're hoping to eventually use this Somerville stipend program as a model to provide financial support to all program participants."

- Korynn Stoyanoff

"I'm really very grateful. When I joined Just A Start's program they helped me a lot to learn and get an education in biomedical and they also helped me to get my job. I really appreciate [my career coach] Mary Jo who helped me and teaches us how to grow ourselves, especially when you are new in this country."

- Nafisha

"[Nafisha] brings a positive attitude every day. Her desire to learn, better herself, and everyone around her is a breath of fresh air. She came to our group prepared, ready to be involved the first day. She had the knowledge to immediately contribute, but she also understood and was ready to face the challenges ahead of her. Her positive attitude, motivation and unrelenting dependability brings credit to any organization she is a part of."

- Thermo Fisher Scientific
Manufacturing Management
Team

Participant Demographics at Intake:

- **63%** Unemployed
- **46%** without post-secondary education
- **83%** identify as people of color
- More than **10** languages spoken

Participant Outcomes:

- **41** Residents trained in high-demand industries
- **100%** graduation rate
- **83%** Employed at time of report
- **\$24.05/hour** Average Placement Wage
- **18** Industry-Recognized Credentials earned, including **OSHA 10, Google IT Support, COMPTIA A+, and AWS**
- **Employers Include:** **Winn Companies, Naveo Credit Union, IBM, and Mass General Brigham**

STRATEGY 1 & 3 INVESTMENTS

CONTEXTUALIZED EDUCATION FOR ADULT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Learner Profile:

- **Largest Age Group:**
30-39 years old
- **Most Common Primary Languages:** **Spanish, Haitian Kreyol, Portuguese**
- **Most Common Zip Code:** **02145**
- **66% Female**
- **92% identify as people of color**

Participant Outcomes:

- **185 Residents** received contextualized education
- **99 participants** demonstrated learning gain of at least 1 ESL/EFL level
- **89% of ESOL students** surveyed indicate they “improved English for their life and job”
- **6 SCALE participants** received college credits

The JCRT continued to fund two organizations providing free contextualized education for adult and English language learners: Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), and SCALE, the Somerville Center for Adult Learning experiences.

BHCC partnered with local social service agencies, East Somerville Main Streets, the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) and The Welcome Project (TWP) and ultimately enrolled 136 participants in multiple levels of ESOL classes along with a contextualized course to teach essential customer service skills.

SCALE enrolled 49 participants across their newly created Healthcare IT, Cyber Security, and Cisco Networking courses that integrated English language learning and adult basic education with skill and career navigation.

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT



Krissia, **ABOVE RIGHT**, was encouraged by her boss, Gus Dacunha, **ABOVE LEFT** to participate in BHCC’s ESOL program.

“The [BHCC ESOL] classes are a really good help for people like me that our first language is Spanish. In other words, I feel more comfortable speaking with other people in English. I also speak English with my doctor now.”

- Krissia

“I think the [BHCC ESOL program] is very useful. Krissia has improved a lot around the cafe. She's always striving for new words. I'm all for the program. I think it's fantastic for the community and very essential for any non-English speaker. It's fundamental to gaining opportunity. I would like to see the program promote other skills like resume building as well.”

- Gus DaCunha, Owner of Ola Cafe

JOB QUALITY AND WORKERS' RIGHTS

Wage Theft and Workers Rights

In partnership with the Massachusetts Council on Occupational Safety and Health (MassCOSH) and the Brazilian Worker Center, the Welcome Project (TWP) revised and implemented a curriculum to educate Somerville residents about wage theft, worker's rights, organizing, and leadership.

TWP's programming included:

- "Know Your Rights" workshops, covering topics ranging from wage and hour laws to heat stress, which were attended by 127 Somerville residents;
- One-on-one worker rights coaching sessions resulting in the resolution of 29 workplace issue cases. Issues addressed included COVID-19 Paid Sick Time, Paid Family and Medical Leave, Unemployment, Wage Theft, and Workers' Compensation;
- A "train the trainer" Leadership Institute wherein participants learned about how to be effective community leaders, organize at work and advocate for improved working conditions.

Promoting Quality Jobs

Additionally, the JCRT has committed \$81,000 to support Somerville small businesses and entrepreneurs in understanding human resources requirements and job quality practices. The JCRT is currently in the process of surveying businesses to learn more about their interest and needs.

TWP Outcomes

- **127** residents completed Know Your Rights workshops
- **29** workplace issue cases resolved through one-on-one coaching sessions
- **4** Leadership Institute Graduates
- **13** Residents received financial assistance from the JCRT Student Emergency Fund

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

Olivia, **RIGHT**, received one-on-one support from The Welcome Project and its partners to apply for Paid Family and Medical Leave.



"I'm very grateful for the Somerville Workers Center! They have been very professional and kind, and it was truly a blessing to find them!"

- Olivia

STRATEGY 4 INVESTMENTS

RAPID RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE

Rapid Response Strategy for Worker Displacement

In April of 2020, the City of Somerville's Economic Development Division engaged the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to develop a workforce development rapid response plan. The resulting plan written during the COVID-19 pandemic provided a roadmap for the City of Somerville and the JCRT to respond to both the current pandemic as well as other negative economic shocks, such as individual business closures. As a result, the JCRT was able to reassign initially set aside funding to other investment priorities.

Businesses of any size facing staff challenges or potential layoffs can contact the City of Somerville's Economic Development Division who can connect these business owners to resources, including MassHire BizWorks. Individuals at risk of layoff can also be referred to City of Somerville's Health and Human Services division and other local community organizations that provide wraparound supports including job search assistance.

Student Emergency Fund

An ongoing priority of the JCRT has been to address the lingering negative impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on Somerville's most vulnerable communities. In addition to the more than \$77,000

that the JCRT awarded to local nonprofit organizations in 2020, over the past year, the Trust awarded approximately \$22,000 to residents currently enrolled in or recent graduates from JCRT-funded programs who were experiencing any sort of emergency-related need.

ADDITIONAL INVESTMENTS

Childcare Career Advancement Initiative (Strategies 1 & 3)

The JCRT has obligated \$300,000 to fund industry specific education and career advancement opportunities for low-income (80% household AMI or lower) Somerville adults (18 years old or older) to help them achieve certifications, credentials, and licenses that lead to gainful employment or career advancement in the childcare, daycare, out-of-school time and Pre-K settings in Somerville and the greater Boston region.

Coordinator Role (Strategy 1)

The JCRT and the City of Somerville continue to share the cost of a full-time Workforce Development Coordinator who serves as staff liaison to the JCRT and assists the Senior Planner in managing the City's workforce development portfolio. The JCRT is funding \$25,577 to cover its portion of the staff role through June 2023.

Outcomes

- **Rapid Response Plan created to combat worker displacement**
- **\$22,000 distributed to Somerville training participants to address emergency needs**
- **Obligation made to support career advancement in childcare industry**
- **Funding to support JCRT Coordination**

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many partners who make our work possible, including but not limited to:

East Somerville Main Streets

MassHire Metro North Workforce Board

RESPOND Inc.

Somerville Community Corporation

Somerville Housing Authority

Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs

**Somerville Office of Strategic Planning and Community
Development**

Somerville Public Schools

Union Square Main Streets