

News from the Institute

A message from Executive Director Johan E. Uvin

As we are in the holiday season, I'm taking a moment for reflection and appreciation. I am grateful for our staff and the passion and skills they bring to the institute's work. I am also grateful to our clients and partners. Without them, we would miss opportunities to realize our mission and help them to, in turn, realize their missions and goals. Without these opportunities, the institute would not be able to have the increasing equity, community, and policy impact it has enjoyed.



During 2025, federal actions affected our institute in significant ways. And, the most recent federal government shutdown and associated stop-work orders made running the institute challenging, as all these external circumstances were unpredictable. However, during these challenging times, I have been blessed to work with a new, temporary [Executive Leadership](#) team without whom navigating these choppy waters would have been impossible. Thank you to [Jen Gordon](#), [Jacqui Adams](#), [Suzanne Tanty](#), and our senior advisor, [Carol Anne McGowan](#). We are in a good place because of their commitment and effort.

The second half of the fiscal year also presents us with opportunities to re-bid on our large Head Start contracts. First, I'm happy to share that we successfully re-secured our [New England Head Start Training & Technical Assistance](#) contract. We are continuing to work hard to do the same for our other national Head Start programs that focus on technical assistance in [program operations, management](#), and [facilities](#). Finally, I am delighted to report our work on Massachusetts 2050, a future-visioning research project exploring the potential of our state's economy. We are grateful to Chancellor Javier Reyes for his vision and support.

Onward with passion, skill, and commitment to serve the people of the Commonwealth and drive policy decisions for the Common Good.



Our Newsletter Archive



Institute Evaluation and Innovative Practices Improve Community College STEM Student Outcomes

The STEM Starter Academy, an initiative launched in 2014 by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, was designed to increase access to STEM education and careers for underserved and underrepresented students. A key component of this program is case management, a strategy identified through evaluation by the Donahue Institute.

The Journal of the Massachusetts Economy

BENCHMARKS

Institute in the News

Associated Press: [Mass. economy, cost of living, and lower people moved, according to the 2020 census](#)

Bethany E. Mihelcic: [Mass. job losses: Why the 2020 census matters for the Boston area](#)

GWHT: [Taxes, but not jobs, continue in from across border](#)

Kerry Solter: [awarded for her outstanding contributions to the field of education](#)

Students Diverse

Donahue Impact: Organizational & Community Solutions Partners to Actualize Bold Ideas

The institute's work has profoundly impacted The Care Center in Holyoke, Massachusetts, a transformative program for young mothers and low-income women whose education was interrupted.

The institute helped reframe the center's mission for its students from simply obtaining a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) to enabling them to access and succeed in college as a pathway out of poverty. The institute's [Organizational and Community Services](#) group helped develop an enhanced curriculum, enriching the GED program with humanities, arts, and athletics, which boosted attendance and engagement.

Critically, the institute provided strategic grant development, supported the planning and funding for the creation of the Bard Microcollege Holyoke, a fully accredited, tuition-free associate degree program located within The Care Center.

[Read more](#)



Institute staff pictured: Alyssa Flemati, John Murray, Jeff Cahill, Andrea Kingman, and Bob Gallo

In Support of Brockton Area Businesses

For over 10 years, the institute has co-sponsored the [Metro South Chamber of Commerce's](#) Annual Meeting and B2B Expo. Held at the Multipurpose Auditorium at Adult & Teen Challenge, this year's event had approximately 400 attendees and featured awardees and speakers from the local business community.

The institute also operates the [MassHire Greater Brockton Career Center](#), serving job seekers and local businesses in ten cities. Additionally, Executive Director Johan Uvin is also active with the [Massire Greater Brockton Workforce Board](#), which provides the charter for the career center.

Institute in the News

[WWLP "InFocus" with Kerry Spitzer, re: Western MA/Berkshires housing](#)

[New York Times: Massachusetts Offered a Solution to Housing Shortages. Is It Working?](#)

["It's never happened here" – 2025 could be the first time in history the U.S. population shrinks \(Boston 25 News\)](#)

[Associated Press: Income inequality dipped and fewer people moved, according to the largest survey of U.S. life](#)

[Boston Globe: Health insurance premiums just keep going up, worsening the affordability crisis](#)

All Donahue News

Our Services

Applied Research & Program Evaluation

Civic Initiative

Connected Beginnings

Economic & Public Policy Research

Head Start National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations

Head Start Real Property Facilities Initiative

MassHire Greater Brockton Career Center

New England Head Start Training & Technical Assistance

Organizational & Community Solutions

[More about our services](#)

Town Hall: How Do We Support Emerging Leaders for the Common Good?

The institute and its partners recently hosted a second town hall for the **Emerging Leaders for the Common Good Initiative**, an effort directly confronting the severe underrepresentation of public policy and service leaders from underserved communities. Citing data that shows individuals from BIPOC communities hold only about 10% of government leadership roles despite comprising 40% of the U.S. population, Executive Director Johan Uvin stressed the complexity of the barriers involved. Participants representing the wider campus community helped prioritize key programmatic elements, envisioning a central "Leadership Academy" focused on democratic ideals and policy.



[Read the full article to learn about the high-priority next steps, the planned discovery timeline, and how this initiative aims to create tangible change in public leadership representation.](#)

Suffolk University panel: Public service in a time of uncertainty

Institute Executive Director Johan Uvin shared his expertise and thoughts as a panelist for "The Call of Public Service: Meet Democracy's Challenges, and Sustain Devoted Governmental and Nonprofit Workers", hosted by Suffolk University's Moakley Center for Public Management and Sawyer Business School. Dr. Uvin was joined by leaders in state and local government as well as the nonprofit sector. Dr. Uvin's remarks focused on the added stress on public service workers and how to survive.



[Read more about Dr. Uvin's remarks.](#)

Our Most-read 2025 Articles

We looked at the numbers from 2025 and thought we'd share the most-read institute news articles. Enjoy!

1. [Proposed Changes to Current Federal Research and Development Funding in Massachusetts Put More than \\$16 Billion in Economic Activity at Risk](#)
2. [WWLP: Massachusetts sees largest population increase in 60 years](#)
3. [The First Year Economic Impacts of Legalized Sports Betting in Massachusetts](#)
4. [Quaboag Connector Shuttle Service Drives Nearly \\$45 Million in Benefits and Fills Transit Gaps](#)
5. [Released: New Population Estimates For Towns and Cities in Massachusetts, 81% of Mass. municipalities increased between 2023 and 2024](#)
6. [Dr. Mark Melnik appointed by Gov. Healey to Cultural Policy Development Advisory Council](#)
7. [Institute Evaluation and Innovative Practices Improve Community College STEM Program Outcomes](#)
8. [Kerry Spitzer, research manager, is recognized for outstanding work](#)

9. [Report: Diverse Participation within the Massachusetts Sports Betting Industry](#)
10. [Healey seeks controls as home care costs soar for personal care assistants](#)

Featured Publications

[New England Power Generators study](#): Power generation is a cornerstone of New England's economy while underpinning modern life. Our report quantifies the sector's economic contributions and highlights the challenges and opportunities in the transition to a cleaner, more electrified future. The economic contributions of the electric generation sector in New England total 29,200 well-paying jobs and \$16.65 billion in total economic output.

[R&D Economic Impact Study](#): Massachusetts is a national leader in research and development (R&D), home to one in every ten R&D jobs in the U.S., and regularly a top recipient of federal funding from agencies like the NIH and NSF. However, the report also warns of the potential negative impact of proposed federal funding cuts.

[Newton Thrive Evaluation](#): In 2023, the city of Newton, Massachusetts, selected Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) to implement the city's Economic Mobility Initiative. EMPath was awarded \$1.5 million to implement "Newton Thrive". Newton Thrive supports low-income residents of Newton who were impacted negatively by the COVID-19 pandemic. The institute conducted several evaluations of the program.

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