

The Naugatuck Valley Project

2010 Business Resource Directory

MAKING A NEW SOUND IN THE VALLEY!



26 Ludlow St., Waterbury, CT 06710
Email: nvp@conversent.net

Phone: 203.574.2410 Fax: 203.574.3545
Website: www.naugatuckvalleyproject.org

The Naugatuck Valley Project

The Naugatuck Valley Project (NVP) was created in 1983 by religious, labor and community leaders concerned about a wave of plant closings in the predominantly industrial, 45-mile-long Naugatuck Valley. NVP was organized as a multi-issue coalition of congregations, labor union locals, small business and neighborhood groups determined to shape the economic, social, and political destiny of the region.

Mission Statement

NVP is a dynamic coalition of diverse member groups which empowers its membership to make positive changes in the communities of the Naugatuck Valley region by building strong community, by training effective citizen leaders, and by moving people into responsible public action for the common good.



Our Funders

Our dues-paying member groups

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NVP Jobs for the Future Project

The Valley has lost thousands of skilled, union-represented manufacturing jobs during the past 30 years, as conglomerates acquired and then, relatively quickly, disinvested scores of decades-old, locally-owned firms. This job loss has left thousands of Valley residents, especially new immigrants and the unemployed and underemployed, with job choices increasingly limited to low-wage, low-skilled service sector jobs in retail and hospitality with no benefits and no path to financial security.

Facing the economic crisis as well as this long developing loss of jobs paying a family wage, NVP member groups identified the paramount importance of initiating a jobs organizing campaign through an organization-wide listening campaign this past year. More than 325 NVP leaders who participated in 25 house meetings told stories of their fear of unemployment and underemployment.

The NVP Jobs Committee decided to focus on healthcare and energy/environmental job sectors. The Valley's largest employers today are our four hospitals. Because the healthcare sector is one of a handful of sectors in the state with a projection of job growth leading to a potential career, NVP decided that organizing with immigrant and other underemployed and unemployed Valley residents to win healthcare jobs with a career ladder is of critical importance.

This campaign focuses on that goal, while also laying the groundwork for job training and career ladder programs for immigrants and other minorities in the Valley in the energy conservation sector.

The goal of the Naugatuck Valley Project (NVP) *Jobs for the Future Project* is to win jobs leading to careers for at least 150 unemployed and underemployed Valley residents over the next 3 years, with an initial focus on the healthcare sector.

As the result of a June 2nd Spring Public Action meeting and follow-up working meetings, NVP has helped secure the commitment of at least 3 of the Valley's 4 hospitals, the two workforce investment boards serving the Valley (The Workplace, Inc. in Bridgeport and Northwest Workforce Investment Board in Waterbury), Naugatuck Valley Community College, (and potentially Northwest Community College), the Connecticut Hospital Association and the State Allied Health Workforce Policy Board to work together and with NVP to:

- a) create a career ladder to enable current bilingual and other dietary, housekeeping and transport hospital employees to enter clinical training programs leading to clinical jobs in their hospitals;
- b) create a more coordinated and comprehensive system linking current hospital-based and other healthcare training programs with foundational training – such as

ESOL and remedial math – as well as wrap-around services, such as tuition, childcare and transportation to help unemployed and underemployed residents, including immigrants, people of color and women, enter the medical field; and

c) win commitments from the Valley’s elected federal and state representatives to seek federal job training funds to fund this Naugatuck Valley Healthcare Jobs Partnership.

Two Working Group meetings have led to substantial progress in developing a first-year program and goal for training and employment. Our next step is to finalize a specific initial career ladder program with our partners and to win support from the Valley’s congressional delegation and other public representatives for its funding.

At the June 2nd Action, Congressman Chris Murphy (D-CT), and a representative for Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), agreed to meet with NVP and its partners in the New Year to discuss their commitment to seek support for a specific program.



L-R:
Ken Roberts, Griffin Hospital
Lea Greco-Wilks, Waterbury Hospital
Jim Elliot, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital
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Association
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\$15K Catholic grant boosts co-op housing complex

BY MIKE PATRICK REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN WATERBURY —
11/7/10

Nestled in a cul-de-sac in an industrial section of the city is a place of hope, independence and em-powerment, where people who need just a little help receive it in kind from their friends and neighbors. And last week, this unusual place received a little extra help, too. The Brookside Cooperatives, a nearly two-decade-old low-income housing complex where neighbors work together on maintenance and sustenance, received a grant of \$15,000 from the Catholic Cam-paign for Human Development (CCHD), an anti-poverty, social justice program run by the U.S.



MIKE PATRICK REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

Michael Valuckas, 56, stands outside his unit at the Brookside Cooperatives. Valuckas, who has lived at the complex for almost 20 years, helped accept a \$15,000 grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

“CCHD’s motto is ‘helping people help themselves,’ and I think the Brookside Cooperatives certainly exemplifies that motto,” CCHD Executive Director Cori Thibodeau said.

“They have a viable, sustainable, affordable housing community where the residents care for each other,” she said. “They monitor and manage the facility. It’s providing a place for people to live with a lot of dignity, is a great place to raise your children, and it serves the needs of low-income people.” The

cooperative complex on Fulkerson Drive was born in 1991, when the Naugatuck Valley Project (NVP) used \$8.3 million in state Department of Housing money to build what is still the largest cooperative housing complex in the state. Resembling condominiums, there are 102 two-, three- and four-bedroom units within six individual co-ops.

Michael Valuckas, 56, was working for a nonprofit and was on the Brookside planning committee when the complex was first proposed.

“The more I learned about it, I thought that would be a nice place to live myself,” Valuckas said. “It’s affordable, which is a big thing.”

Eligibility for ownership is based, in large part, on income. A family of two can make no more than \$47,700 to be considered for Brookside.

If accepted, an “equity payment” of \$4,084, half of which is due immediately, is required. The balance is paid off over 12 months along with an additional monthly payment of \$460.

Paying into the equity may eventually benefit the resident. Since the intent is for members to eventually move on to traditional home ownership, the residents receive their entire equity payment back, plus interest, when they move out. They can then apply that money to a traditional mortgage down payment on a house.

“Some of my neighbors have been able to save up, move out and buy their own homes,” Valuckas said. “I don’t see that happening for myself, so I’ll probably be here long-term.”

Valuckas was born with diastrophic dysplasia, a form of dwarfism, which limits his mobility, and he uses crutches to get around. Valuckas lives in one of the cooperatives’ 10 handicapped-accessible units. “Accessibility, for me, is great. There are no steps, and my unit has a walk-in shower that’s easy to use,” he said. “I like being in kind of a mixed neighborhood. There’s disabled and non-disabled folks, young and old, and different ethnic groups.”

Valuckas has served as president of his co-op. All residents are expected to take on leadership roles as part of their responsibility to the complex. That’s one of the positive aspects that earned Brookside its \$15,000 grant, NVP organizer Janet Caggiano said.

“The [CCHD] is looking to fund projects that really are empowering to people in lower income groups to make them more self-sufficient and more powerful in their own world; that really is one of the basic tenets of their mission statement,” Caggiano said.

“One of the very important things to know about Brookside Cooperatives is that it is self-managed,” she said. “The members of the cooperatives meet once a month. They are able to make decisions in regard to the place they live. They need to take turns serving as officers. They are required to do basic maintenance. They are able to select their neighbors. It takes an awful lot of time. They don’t have an office that runs and does everything for them.”

She said the residents will likely use the grant to fund winterization and roofing at the complex.

Patricia Salovski, one of the original organizers of Brookside, still lives there after 20 years.

“My children grew up here and it was a very nice, safe environment,” she said. “You get to know your neighbors here.”

SOME OF MY NEIGHBORS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SAVE UP, MOVE OUT AND BUY THEIR OWN HOMES. I DON'T SEE THAT HAPPENING FOR MYSELF, SO I'LL PROBABLY BE HERE LONG-TERM ... ACCESSIBILITY, FOR ME, IS GREAT. THERE ARE NO STEPS, AND MY UNIT HAS A WALK-IN SHOWER THAT'S EASY TO USE. I LIKE BEING IN KIND OF A MIXED NEIGHBORHOOD. THERE'S DISABLED AND NON-DISABLED FOLKS, YOUNG AND OLD, AND DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS.” MICHAEL VALUCKAS, 56 RESIDENT OF BROOKSIDE COOPERATIVES IN WATERBURY

HOW COOPERATIVE LIVINGWORKS AT BROOKSIDE: A cooperative is a form of home ownership. Residents purchase an interest in the property, called an “equity payment,” which gives them the right to live at the complex. New residents pay about 50 percent of that equity payment up front, then pay off the rest monthly, appended to an additional monthly payment. If they ever decide to move out, they are required to “sell” their unit back to the cooperative for their equity payment, plus interest. **While living at the complex, residents are expected to cooperate with their neighbors.**

Monthly meetings decide day-by-day upkeep procedures such as snow removal, lawn mowing, and other routine chores. They set their own budgets and decide how to spend the money. All residents have a say in these matters; they report needs and issues to chosen representatives. Each resident is also required to serve as president, vice president, secretary or treasurer at some point. Those who don’t participate in this manner risk eviction. — *Mike Patrick*

Archbishop Henry Mansell presents a check for \$15,000 from the Local Catholic Campaign for Human Development to the Naugatuck Valley Housing Development Corporation to continue its work with the Brookside Cooperatives.



Mike Valuckas, Member of Nilsa Marrero Cooperative
Most Reverend Henry J. Mansell, D.D., Archbishop, The Archdiocese of Hartford
Evelyn Lush, Member of Hillside View Cooperative



Mike Valuckas
Janet Caggiano, NVHDC Housing Consultant / NVP Organizer
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An Anonymous Friend

Brookside Housing Cooperatives News

This year at Brookside Cooperatives co-op members have taken the initiative to look through all their monthly expenses and see if there is a way in this difficult economy to save some money on their common monthly expenses, which are some of the largest portion of expenses paid out by each of the six cooperatives.

Because Brookside Cooperatives are located on private property, the members contract for services such as trash hauling and snowplowing. Both of these contracts were put out to bid, and there was a very considerable savings realized. The trash-hauling bill was reduced \$600 per month, or approximately \$100 per month, per co-op. In addition to saving money, a dumpster for recycling was added at no extra expense. Recycling was a service the co-ops had not used for a number of years, in part due to extra expense.

Members also are saving money and receiving some new services from the new snowplow contractor. Members have seen the reality of “strength in numbers” when it comes to negotiating power.

Another way for individuals as well as each co-op to save money is through weatherization of each unit, and every building. Brookside members and NVP staff have done research with New Opportunities, Environmental Northeast, Connecticut Housing Coalition, Lantern Energy, and Competitive Resources, Inc. and are moving forward to implement weatherization.

Brookside Cooperatives will be 20 years old in 2011! This is a very special milestone and speaks to the commitment and hard work of the Brookside members in this success for so many years. This also can present financial challenges in the way of maintenance, repairs, and replacements. One major replacement item that co-op members need to begin planning for is roof replacement. When Brookside was built 20 years ago, the roofs were expected to last for approximately twenty years. A plan has been outlined to assess each roof, seek bids, and find funds in the way of grants or loans for financing such a large and expensive undertaking. An ad hoc Roof Committee consisting of members from each co-op is in the process of being formed.

Action is also being taken to help keep Brookside a safe place to live. Members have identified safety issues and are planning a large community meeting with Waterbury Police representatives in late November 2010. Members will be educated on safety issues and will take the proactive steps necessary to keep their community safe for everyone.

For more specific information on Brookside Cooperatives, please see the advertisement for Brookside Cooperatives located in the blue pages of this book. Also, see the Waterbury Republican-American article on the \$15,000 grant award to Naugatuck Valley Housing Development Corporation from the Local Campaign for Human Development to continue working on the important issues affecting Brookside Cooperative members.



Herman Reid, NVP Treasurer, and Cynthia Vergauwen, NVP President, at NVP's June 2, 2010 Spring Action



Liz Rosa, NVP Staff; Cynthia Vergauwen, NVP President; Peter Lyons, former Board member; and Nelsida Collado, NVP Committee Chair at the Opening of NVP's History Exhibit at the Mattatuck Museum.



Crowd shot from NVP's June 2, 2010 Spring Action



Al Coles, member of Dottie Dewar Cooperative, videotaping NVP's June 2, 2010 Spring Action

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The School of Allied Health Careers at Griffin Hospital is now accepting applications for its popular 12-week Phlebotomy Course, which begins February 15, 2011. Both morning and evening sessions are offered to accommodate our students' busy schedules.

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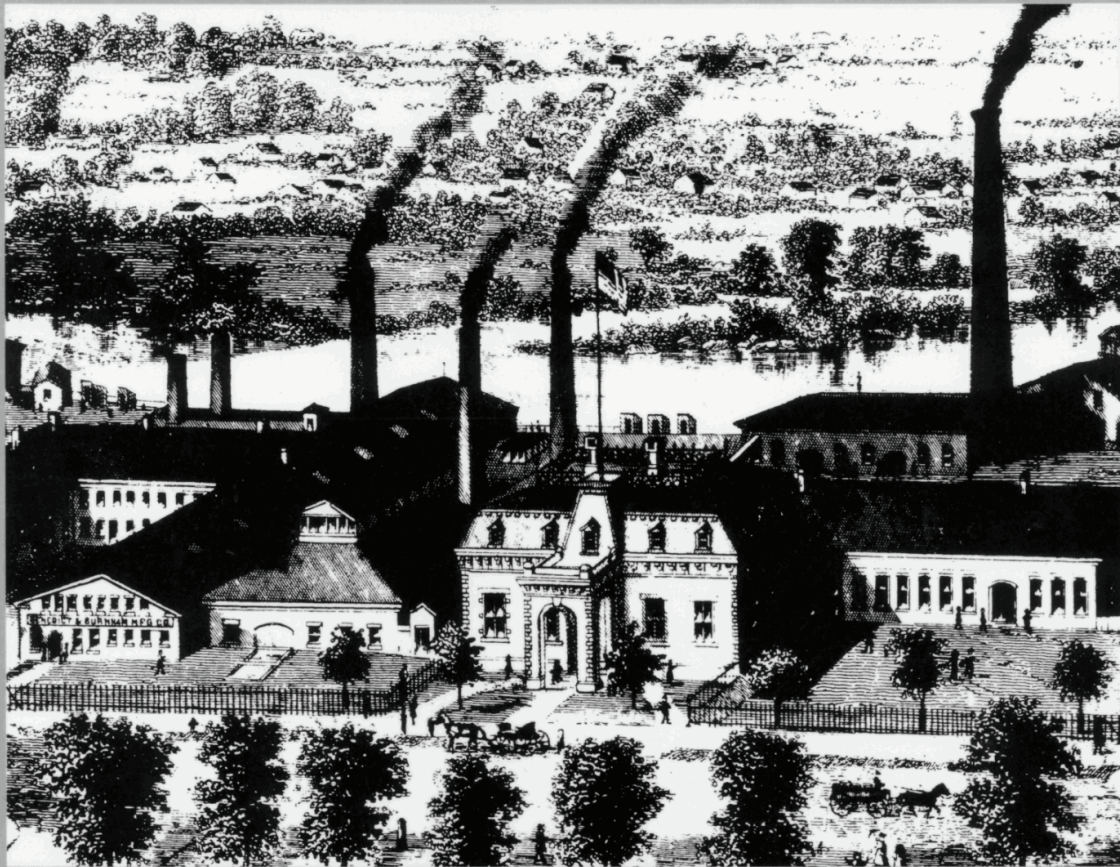
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Eligibility for ownership is based on income and availability. Section 8 vouchers are not accepted, but those with disability and earned income may apply. Brookside complies with all Fair Housing anti-discrimination laws. Selection is done based on completed applications and interviews by a Selection Committee of Brookside residents as units become available.

**For more information or a pre-application, please
contact the Naugatuck Valley Project office
26 Ludlow St., Waterbury, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
(203) 574-2410.**

*He has told you, O
man, what is good;
And what does the
Lord require of you
But to do justice, to
love kindness,
And to walk humbly
with your God?*

(Micah 6:8)

Anonymous

Consider this:

Taxes are not just a means of raising revenue for the government. They are also a price. Income taxes are a price paid for working; taxes on profits are the price paid for being successful in business; taxes on capital gains are the price paid for taking risks. In light of this, the importance of low taxes is easy to see: When you lower the price of good things - things like work, success and risk-taking - you tend to get more of them. Raise the price of these good things and you get less.

Steve Forbes
Editor-in-Chief, Forbes

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**Best wishes and continued success
to the leaders and staff of the
Naugatuck Valley Project on their
work on the issues that affect their
lives.**

**Congratulations to all the members
of the Brookside Cooperatives on
your upcoming 20th year
anniversary!**

**Remember.... “NEVER DOUBT that a
small group of Thoughtful Committed
Citizens CAN CHANGE THE
WORLD...INDEED IT’S THE ONLY
THING THAT EVER HAS”.**

-Margaret Mead

Friend of NVP

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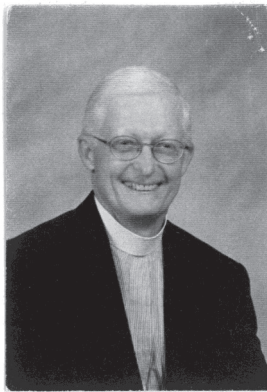
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Ray Gagne', Jr.

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**Great Job Naugatuck Valley
Project, Staff and
Executive Board on Another
Successful Year!**

**Keep up the Good Work on
the Jobs Campaign.**

Cyndi & John Vergauwen

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IVP supports NVP in its critical work --
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InterValley Project

The Organizing Network of the:

Granite State Organizing Project, Manchester, NH
Kennebec Valley Organization, Waterville, Maine
Merrimack Valley Project, Lowell, MA
Naugatuck Valley Project, Waterbury, CT
Pioneer Valley Project, Springfield, MA
Rhode Island Organizing Project, Providence, RI
United Valley Interfaith Project Lebanon, NH

**Congratulations to the
Naugatuck Valley Project for
making a difference in the
lives of so many. Keep up the
good work!**

*Members of the Hillside View
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**GOD'S BLESSINGS
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Ari French and Gabrielle French singing at NVP's 25th Annual Convention



Kristyn Vergauwen at NVP's June 2, 2010 Spring Action



Jonathan French, Ari French and others at NVP's June 2, 2010 Spring Action

What Makes Naugatuck Valley Project Different From Other Organizations?

Naugatuck Valley Project (NVP) is not a direct service agency. The only direct service NVP provides is leadership training. NVP is a non-profit, organizing organization. We organize and empower people, bring them and decision-makers to the table to work on issues that affect the lives of our families, and together we make changes for a better quality of life.

Naugatuck Valley Project questions authority; and NVP's effectiveness comes from *power*. The *power* demonstrated in the public arena is people organized at any given action meeting. When NVP does Organizational or Congregational Development, we teach *power* through building *relationships*, cultivating *leadership*, and *action*. Other groups may only turn out one or two people to meetings with targeted officials. NVP encourages *power* in numbers. If an institution can turn out *numbers* to a public action meeting, it can turn out numbers within its own institution. The demonstration of that kind of *power* means that you can strengthen your own institution. *Why would you strengthen your own institution* -- because you are committed to your institution and its values. *How do you know when someone is committed and what their values are* -- by doing one-to-one meetings and making relationships with people on a regular basis and watching them act on their values.

The kind of *power* NVP practices is the *power* in organized money—our dues are our organized money. Organized money shows that one will commit its resources to justice through action. It will “put its money where its mouth is”, so to speak. It is a way for us to be accountable to each other. If we are accountable to each other, we have the righteous expectation to expect others to be accountable. Accountability in helping the poor, the marginalized, or the disenfranchised is a way to seek justice.

Do you know of anyone who would like to put his or her faith and resources into action?

If you do, contact us.
For more information about NVP, visit our website.

Naugatuck Valley Project * 26 Ludlow St., Waterbury, CT 06710
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