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Happy Spring, from Community Capital of Vermont!

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Introducing Rich Grogan, Community Capital's Executive Director

Rich Grogan comes to Community Capital with a background of working in and with small businesses as an employee, academic, business advisor, and since 2015, State Director of the New Hampshire Small Business Development Center.

I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to introduce myself to you as the new Executive Director of Community Capital of Vermont! For the past six years, I've worked in New Hampshire as the Small Business Development Center's Keene Regional Director, and then State Director. What I see in Northern New England is tremendous opportunity across a diversity of entrepreneurial communities. What attracted me to Vermont - and to Community Capital in particular - is the opportunity to support our small businesses with capital and business advisory services under one roof.



As I type this message, I'm not even a week into the new job, but I already know that we have an incredibly talented staff at Community Capital who understand and move our mission forward every day. It is a privilege to be asked work as part of this team.

I look forward to learning more about your work across Vermont and understanding your experiences thus far with Community Capital. But, don't wait for me; feel free to get in touch soon, as I wouldn't want to miss out on any of the opportunities awaiting small businesses in our state.

[Read more about Rich and his background here](#)

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MBA Students Nationwide Tap Experts for the Community Finance Challenge: Community Capital Gets the Call

We're fired up about the people behind Vermont's small businesses. And when John Beatty, an MBA candidate at [M.I.T.'s Sloan School of Management](#) asked Community Capital for help defining the evolution of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Community Capital weighed in from its perspective as one of 1,100 CDFIs in the country. In the context of borrower demographics and how Community Capital helps underserved entrepreneurs in Vermont, Community Capital's David Parker focused on how technology and innovation can address economic opportunity and income inequality.



Beatty's ultimate goal was to collect data for a nationwide MBA-student competition among hundreds of universities, called the Community Finance Challenge. Their charge: "From Detroit to the Mississippi delta, from Rapid City to rural Tennessee, we're challenging MBAs and other graduate students to design new organizations capable of using finance to promote local economic growth, address income inequality, and catalyze a more prosperous future for our cities and towns." Organizers registered 60 teams from across the United States, and

teams submitted proposals within the short window of three weeks.

Last month, finalists from Loyola, Cornell, Harvard, Texas Christian, Arizona State, Columbia, MIT, Ross and Northwestern presented their best ideas on how to evolve the administration and financing of community development loans. David Parker attended the challenge exhibition at M.I.T. in Boston, where Northwestern University's Kellogg team came out on top. Parker noted that the event featured an uplifting cross-section of rising community-minded students with impressive proposals.

"Ten Years Feels Big": Jess Turner Celebrates a Decade in Business



Each morning, when Community Capital borrower Jess Turner of Montpelier's [Capital Kitchen](#) unlocks the doors to her shop, she feels grateful for what she calls the "most joyful, eventful, wonderful decade" of her life. After 10 years in business, she

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says that she still feels happy to be able to come to her boutique kitchen store every day: "I'm so grateful that Community Capital shared my vision for this store over ten years ago when I was in the planning phases, and they have continued to support me and believe in my ability to sustain this business. I hope that the joy I feel and the pride I take in my business is apparent every time someone comes into my store (or even walks by my window). I truly love what I do and there's no way I could have done it without the support of Community Capital." Jess is planning a [prize-filled champagne and dessert party](#) at Capital Kitchen on State Street, on Friday, May 4, from 5 – 8 pm. Stop by if you're in Central Vermont!

Follow us on [Facebook](#)
for borrower and lending updates.

Spring Cleaning for Your Website

Freshening up your website doesn't have to be a big project, but it's an important project. "Sweep in front of your own door," they say - in fact, here at Community Capital, we are working on a comprehensive relaunch of our website.

It's likely that your website is the face of your business, the hub of your work. Spring is a great time to take a look at your site, and make sure that it is the best reflection of what you do.

A new to-do: What do you want to accomplish with your site? If your goals, audience, or products or services have changed since you last made changes to the site, it's time to update the copy, navigation, or images.



Open the windows: When was the last time you went through your site, page by page? It's amazing how fast a website becomes outdated. If it's been a while since you pored through the pages or checked the outbound links, your copy, images, or URLs may have changed.

A new broom sweeps clean: You've seen it and done it a million times. Ask a friend, colleague or employee to take a look at the site. With a fresh set of eyes and a new perspective, peers can help you discover the weaker spots in your site.

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Many hands make light work: Ask for help in creating new copy or blog posts, sourcing images, or updating graphics. Chances are that friends would be willing to spend an hour or two helping give your site a fresh look.

Web work is never done – but a little bit of attention can go a long way to polishing up the site for a new start.

Business Leaders from Huntington, Shelburne, Lowell, Rutland and Montpelier Join Community Capital Board of Directors

Community Capital welcomes five new members of its board of directors for Fiscal Year 2018. (Top Row, left to right, Chris Bailey of [Vermont Smoke and Cure](#) and [Victory Hemp Foods](#); David Chevalier of [Northfield Savings Bank](#), Patricia Sears of [NEKTI Consulting](#). Bottom row, left to right, Tyler Richardson of the [Rutland Economic Development Corporation](#); Kate Whelley McCabe of [Vermont Evaporator Company, LLC](#).) [Read More about Community Capital's new board members here.](#)



Washington Electric Coop Members Support Small Business

As a non-profit, Community Capital relies on donations. Many thanks to [Washington Electric Coop](#) members and their Community Fund, who chose to contribute a portion of their capital credit refunds to Community Capital. It's electrifying to be chosen to receive support from our community.



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