

# MassSTEP Newsletter

## SKILLS • TRAINING • EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ADULT &amp; COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICES

75 PLEASANT STREET | MALDEN, MA 02148 | [HTTPS://WWW.DOE.MASS.EDU/ACLS/](https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/)

## LAUNCHING MassSTEP

By Michelle Perry, ACLS Program Specialist

On Friday September 24th, educational professionals from the Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Executive Office of Education (EOE), and other state agencies along with community colleges, adult education programs, and adult correctional institutions came together to celebrate and support the official launch of the MassSTEP brand.

Almost 100 people participated in the virtual MassSTEP launch. MassSTEP services offer adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Adult education students across Massachusetts learn ESOL and prepare for high school credentialing exams while participating in training areas such as culinary arts, bookkeeping, information technology, manufacturing, nurses aide, and water and waste management. We heard from such educational leaders as Robert LePage, Assistant Secretary for Career Education, Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner for the Center for Educational Options, and Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, State Director of Adult Education as well as program directors Jenna Gouin, Webster Adult Education and Susanne Campagna, Hampden County Sheriff's Department, and MassSTEP students Hereaude Gelin from the Center for New Americans and Lilian Thimotti from Mount Wachusett Community College.

This official launch was an exciting time to hear from programs and students about the education and training opportunities that exist throughout the state. The real highlight was listening to students share their enthusiasm and success as they discussed overcoming barriers and successfully graduating from MassSTEP.

If you would like to learn more about MassSTEP services visit our [MassSTEP webpage](#).

## SPOTLIGHT: SKILLS TRAINING AND EDUCATION

By Laurie Millman, Executive Director, Center for New Americans

**Cooley Dickinson Health Care**, a member of Mass General Brigham, is an acute care health care system that offers community-based health care services, 24-hour emergency care services including medical/surgical, orthopedic, obstetric/gynecologic, psychiatric, rehab, lab, imaging/radiology; and Mass General Cancer Center services at Cooley Dickinson. The VNA & Hospice center provides home health and hospice nursing and rehab visits. The Cooley Dickinson Medical Group offers an extensive network of primary and specialty care providers throughout Hampshire and southern Franklin counties.

Cooley Dickinson Health Care has long been a community-minded organization and Center for New Americans has participated with CDH in Community Health Needs Assessment initiatives. As a result, Cooley Dickinson Health

Care's HR department entered into a dialogue about hiring Center for New Americans' training graduates from the outset. The dialogue was direct and honest. CDH colleagues talked about their priorities and their need to ensure that students who might still have some limited English proficiency would be able to best support patients. Center for New Americans colleagues communicated that many of their students came from caregiving traditions and would make dedicated employees, but that CDH hiring managers would need to communicate clearly and slowly.

Over the past several years, Cooley Dickinson Health Care has hired five Center for New Americans nurse aide training graduates. What has made this program so successful is open channels of communication, the willingness of both organizations to touch base regularly, to address situations as they arise, and to assess which approaches are effective.



COOLEY DICKINSON  
HEALTH CARE  
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL AFFILIATE

## SPOTLIGHT, continued

Photo: Mohanad at Cooley Dickinson Health Care



**Center for New Americans** is a community-based organization located in Northampton, Massachusetts with additional program sites in Amherst and Greenfield. Center for New Americans welcomes immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants from more than 35 different countries including Haiti, El Salvador, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Moldova, Guatemala, Mexico, China, Cambodia, and many others.

Center for New Americans has offered a certified nurse aide training for the past four years. **The training is offered in partnership with Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School** which makes its newly renovated Health Technology Suite available to our program on Saturdays.

There are many benefits to this partnership including the fact that the Director of Smith Vocational School's Adult Education Program, Lorena Turner, also teaches a phlebotomy course. A few of our certified nurse aide graduates have taken this course.

Many of our students were nurses in their home countries and quite a few worked for Doctors without Borders. Some of these foreign-trained nurses appreciate the opportunity to obtain their certified nurse aide credential so that they can work in their chosen field while re-credentialing as nurses.

***Cooley Dickinson Health Care was one of the first employer partners to commit to collaborating with Center for New Americans in the MassSTEP skills training program.***



### Center for New Americans

A Community-Based Education and Resource Center for Immigrants and Refugees in Western Massachusetts

## MassSTEP STUDENT GRADUATES FROM COLLEGE

By Tonny Barua, Student & Stacy Randell-Shaheen, Director, Adult Education at North Shore Community College

Tonny Barua and her family moved to the United States in 2008 from their native country of Bangladesh. She joined the North Shore Community College Adult Learning Center's MassSTEP IT program in September 2020. Because the program was 100% remote due to Covid, Tonny was able to fully participate from her home in Stoneham. The program leaders knew from the start that she was an invaluable asset to the cohort. She supported other students, completed assignments with excellence, earned Cybersafe certification, completed training in Service Desk & Support Analyst, and passed the CompTIA ITF+ exam on her first attempt.

**Tonny earned her MA Bachelor of Arts, Communication and Journalism from Suffolk University in May 2019** with a concentration in Broadcast Journalism and a minor in International Business. She became both a student and employee during her college years in the Marketing and Communication department where she improved her skills in multimedia video production. After graduation, she

worked for a marketing department area business. During her work she became temporary tech for the company's virtual symposium which sparked an interest for her to learn more about the tech industry.

Tonny heard about the MassSTEP IT program and thought how it would be a great opportunity for her to pursue her interest and enter the ever growing industry that has much potential for growth.

Tonny was hired in February 2021 as an IT support contractor to assist all Adult Learning Center (ALC) students and staff with digital literacy skills and access. She created three versions of a marketing video for the MassSTEP IT program, featuring interviews with past graduates. Tonny collaborated on a Digital Resources' Google Classroom for both students and staff. She created the ALC's graduation video for the class of 2021. She has worked tirelessly with students at all levels to ensure their viable participation in Zoom classes and accessing Google Classroom resources. The one-on-one support has been an invaluable lifeline for many students. During FY22, Tonny will present monthly workshops to both staff and students to continue to hone digital fluency, help students develop new skills like website development, and introduce participants to the fun of coding to spark interest in STEM fields.

Tonny continues her role at the Adult Learning Center as the IT Support & Digital Media Specialist.

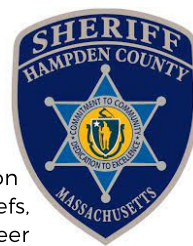


Photo: Tonny Barua at Graduation



# HAMPDEN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

By Susanne Campagna, Executive Director of Adult Education, Hampden County Sheriff's Department



The **Hampden County Sheriff's Department (HCSD)** was the first DESE funded Adult Education in Correctional Institutions' (AECI) program to receive MassSTEP funding (formerly IET) dating back to FY 17. The 15-week program design focuses on offering Hospitality/Culinary skills training with integrated HiSET preparation and digital literacy skills. HCSD partners with **Holyoke Community College (HCC)** to provide hands-on culinary training to students at the **HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute** in Holyoke, MA. The program is offered to residents incarcerated in a minimum security facility who will be released back to their communities within a year. The goal of the program is to help instill work readiness skills along with vocational training and education to ease the transition once released from custody.



Photo: Holyoke Community College MGM CAI

Just recently, HCSD's program received recognition from the **Advancing Innovations in Adult Education Project** which is supported by funding from the US Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). The Hampden County Sheriff's Department's program was one of just nine programs nationwide recognized this year. The recognition for innovation is due in part to the strong community partnership HCSD has established with our employment partners including MGM Springfield Resort and Casino.

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**"THIS IS WONDERFUL. I'M SO GLAD TO HEAR ABOUT THE RECOGNITION FROM SENATOR FATTMAN."**

Each of the HCSD MassSTEP programs culminates with a graduation celebration at the Culinary Arts Institute in Holyoke. The graduates are allowed to invite family and friends to the ceremony where they cook a delicious meal, serve their guests, and present their projects prior to receiving their certificates of completion. This is one of the most significant accomplishments for many of the graduates. While awaiting release, HCSD provides an opportunity to gain work experience at the Old Armory Grille in Springfield (a café operated by HCSD). Once released, assistance is available for job placement through HCSD's All Inclusive Support Services (AISS) center in Springfield.

HCSD provides contextualized HiSET instruction that includes but is not limited to Math for Chefs, English Language Arts, digital literacy, and career counseling. Students create and present a Food Truck project that includes a business plan, truck design, menu with costing sheets for some items and a "signature dish". The chef instructor and other teachers from HCC deliver culinary arts instruction, including kitchen etiquette, food terminology, cooking basics, food preparation, knife skills, and dining service skills at its state-of-the-art Culinary Arts Institute. The academic curriculum includes using the *ServSafe for Managers* text to teach reading and vocabulary skills that focus on the safe handling of food, cleanliness and sanitation, hygiene and health, and nutrition. In the math class, students work with fractions and decimals to learn portion costs, yield percentages, functions of ingredients, measurement, recipe costing, mark up percentages, and inventory control. The ELA curriculum includes reading the book *Cooked* by Jeff Henderson and practicing essay writing skills based on some of the "situations" that are discussed in the text.



Photo: Students doing food prep

The outcomes for the program are measured by improvement on the MAPT assessment as well as the portfolio of stackable credentials the students earn. These **credentials include ServSafe for Managers, ServSafe Allergen Training, a Certified Kitchen Cook credential from the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute, and an OSHA-10 card.** Graduates also receive a HCC Certificate of Completion from the Adult Education and Workforce Development Program. For students who are working toward earning their high school equivalency, another outcome includes successfully passing the HiSET exam. In addition, students are able to earn five college credits that will go toward a certificate or degree program in Culinary Arts if they choose to enroll at HCC.

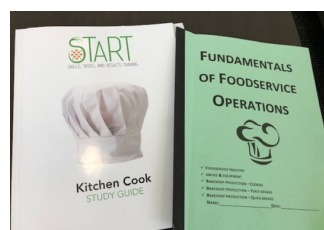


Photo (L to R): Student foodservice manuals, & student food truck concept

# WEBSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS LAUNCHES MassSTEP

By Jenny Gouin, Director of Operations/MassSTEP Project Coordinator,  
Webster Adult Basic Education *Linkages* Program

On Monday October 25, 2021, Webster Public Schools officially launched the rebranding of MassSTEP. Webster's MassSTEP program is focused on Introduction to Machine Shop/Manufacturing Technology and this is the fifth year of the grant. **Webster has exclusively partnered with Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School** in Charlton, Massachusetts to offer this extremely successful program.

The event not only served as the local launch of the newly rebranded program, but also a networking event for current students and local employers. In attendance were area employers, which included: North American Tool Corp., Incom, Inc., and Hyde Tools, Inc. All three



Photo (L to R): Ava Landry, Asst. Director of Curriculum Instruction, Dr. Ruthann Petrino-Goguen, Superintendent, Webster Public Schools, Mike Farma, ACLS Program Specialist, Jenna Gouin, Director of Operations, Webster Adult Basic Education *Linkages* Program, and Kyle Brenner, Superintendent, Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School

organizations sent employees who were not only able to speak about the organization and what they do, but also discussed open positions and the qualifications needed. A representative from MassHIRE Career Center was also present and discussed services that MassHIRE offers to those seeking employment; the representative was also able to speak with the local employers present and offer support in their recruitment efforts.

In addition to the local employers, Webster Adult Basic Education *Linkages* and Bay Path staff and Superintendents, Senator Ryan Fattman's Director of Communications, William Fredericks, was also present. The night ended with Mr.

Fredericks providing a Massachusetts Senate Citation to the program for its successful rebranding and exceptional work in the community.



Photo: William Fredericks, Director of Communications - Senator Ryan Fattman's Office



Photo: Webster Public Schools at the Launch

This was a very successful event and Webster Public Schools is very grateful for all of the support from ACLS and Program Specialists, Mike Farma and Derek Kalchbrenner.

## CTE: SHIFTING THE SKILLS CONVERSATION

By ACLS

**Shifting the Skills Conversation: Employer Attitudes and Outcomes of Career Technical Education report**, released in October 2021, supports with data that contextualized workforce training programs leading to certification and employment are the best way for potential employees and employers to work together to meet industry needs. The main findings highlighted in the report are: (1) employers view career technical education (CTE) very positively and see CTE as a value-add, (2) employers value skills over degrees and believe CTE will help meet their skill-based hiring needs, (3) employers overwhelmingly want to expand their partnerships with CTE programs, and (4) businesses strongly favor increased public funding for CTE. Seventy-seven percent of employers reported hiring an employee in part because of their CTE experience. It was also noted that ninety-two percent of employers favored increased public funding for CTE.



**Web** | [www.doe.mass.edu/acls/](https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/)

**Email** | [derek.kalchbrenner@mass.gov](mailto:derek.kalchbrenner@mass.gov)

**Phone** | 781-338-3812

**Address** | 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

