Papitto Opportunity Connection

October 2026



HopeHealth℠ Touching Lives | 50 Years 1976-2026

HopeHealth Builds Community Connections To Expand Access To Care

Learn More

Images above courtesy of HopeHealth.

For more than 50 years, HopeHealth has supported individuals and families through some of life's most meaningful and vulnerable moments. With a longstanding commitment to providing compassionate care, HopeHealth recognizes that not every community has equal access to information, resources, or trusted conversations about serious illness, end-of-life care, grief support, and caregiving for loved ones as they age.

HopeHealth is working to change that narrative and rewrite the future of care.

With support from Papitto Opportunity Connection (POC), HopeHealth launched its Community Engagement Program to deepen relationships with communities that have historically faced barriers to care. Going beyond traditional outreach, the program aims to close gaps in care, build trust with Rhode Island's diverse communities, and ensure more individuals and families have access to critical end-of-life support –with dignity, respect, and a true sense of belonging.

"For many, the first meaningful conversation about hospice or palliative care happens during a crisis, when emotions are high and time feels limited. Making decisions can be overwhelming. We want to help change that. What if those conversations could begin earlier? What if they could happen in a more familiar, comfortable setting?" said Diana Franchitto, President & CEO of HopeHealth.

"With POC's support, HopeHealth is creating more opportunities for these conversations to happen and opening doors for individuals and families to learn that compassionate care, guidance, and support are available long before a moment of crisis."

Helena Moronta, who recently joined HopeHealth as Director of Community Engagement, is leading efforts to strengthen relationships with community health centers, faith communities, nonprofit and cultural organizations, healthcare providers, and other trusted organizations.

As the Community Engagement program grows, HopeHealth will expand its capacity to listen to the experiences of individuals and families, better understand the barriers and misconceptions surrounding serious illness and end-of-life care, and develop culturally and linguistically responsive education that meets people where they are.





Women’s Fund Of Rhode Island Marks 25 Years With A Call To Finish The Job

Learn More

Women’s Fund of Rhode Island Celebrates 25 years.

When the Women’s Fund of Rhode Island (WFRI) was founded in 2001, Rhode Island women earned about 73 cents for every dollar earned by men. Today, that figure is about 83 cents. This year’s Women Leading Change celebration drew more than 400 guests and the organization marked its 25th anniversary by celebrating that progress and making it clear that isn’t enough.

“Rhode Island has made real progress over the past 25 years, and that progress didn’t happen by accident,” said CEO Kelly Nevins.

WFRI and its partners have helped advance paid family, sick and safe leave; pay equity and workplace protections, and voting access. The organization has also invested more than $1.3 million in community organizations, produced research that identifies persistent inequities, and trained generations of advocates and civic leaders.

Progress is not goal completion.

Nevins warned against confusing momentum with victory. “What worries me is that we could mistake progress for completion,” she said. Women still face significant gaps in pay, wealth, health access, safety, and political and economic power, and those gaps are often wider for women of color and other historically marginalized communities.

New threats have also emerged that weren’t on anyone’s radar in 2001. Artificial Intelligence could displace workers in fields where women are heavily concentrated, and it is already being weaponized against women through deep-fakes, harassment, and other forms of technology-facilitated abuse.

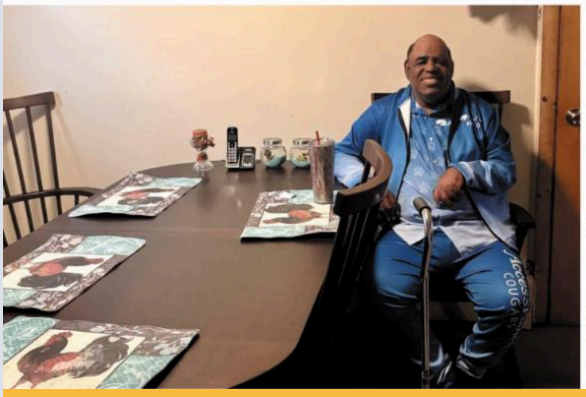
At the recent celebration, Nevins set a clear benchmark for the future. “When WFRI celebrates its 50th anniversary, I don’t want us celebrating that women have finally reached 90 cents on the dollar. I want the gap closed,” she said. “Our first 25 years demonstrated that systemic change is possible. The challenge for the next 25 is to build on that progress until gender and racial gaps aren’t simply smaller but gone.”

Choose your part in what comes next.

Nevins ended the evening with a challenge to every guest: “Choose how you will be part of what comes next.”

That could mean contacting a legislator about an issue affecting women and girls, volunteering, sharing professional expertise, introducing someone new to WFRI, or making a gift. It can also be as simple as noticing who has a voice in the rooms where you have influence. “Use your own power to open a door for someone else,” Nevins said. “Don’t just leave the celebration feeling inspired. Choose one way to turn that inspiration into action.”







AccessPoint RI Is Building Lives Without Limits

Learn More

AccessPoint residents enjoy new furniture, a new spot to socialize, good food, and a place to catch the football game together. Images courtesy of AccessPoint RI.

October marks National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the numbers show how much work remains. In Rhode Island, just 51.2% of working-age people with disabilities were employed in 2024, compared with 83.6% of people without disabilities.

Cranston-based AccessPoint RI is working to close that gap one person, one employer, and one opportunity at a time.

Its Workforce Development team pairs job coaching and vocational training with employer partnerships to help participants succeed in competitive, integrated jobs. Graduates of its RI Welcome Works culinary track showed what that training makes possible: they planned, prepared, and served a full Thanksgiving dinner for residents of two AccessPoint RI homes.

Supported by POC, the organization builds pathways at every stage. Its Gaining Adult Perspectives (GAP) program helps young adults ages 22 to 26 develop independence and life skills. Its new DSP Career Pathways program offers Direct Support Professionals free education, certifications, and licensure.

The reach is significant. From January to June 2026, AccessPoint RI served 733 individuals through 59 programs and services, delivering more than 385,000 hours of support across education, clinical care, housing, and employment.

“I have the extraordinary privilege of witnessing moments that most people will never see" said Jennifer McAuslin, director of development. "They are rarely grand or headline worthy. Instead, they are quiet, deeply human moments that have the power to change a life forever. These moments don't happen because of one person. They happen because an entire community chooses to believe that every individual deserves dignity, respect, equality, and the opportunity to build a life of their own choosing.”





Providence Promise Is Creating Affordable Pathways To College

Learn More

Photo left above: Providence Promise Executive Director Madalyn Ciampi. Photo right: Promise Promise celebrates growth and success.

This year, 70 Providence students crossed the graduation stage with more than $230,000 in combined college savings, and 91% of them are now enrolled in a two- or four-year college or trade school program. Supporting them along the way was Providence Promise.

For many Providence Promise families, college is uncharted territory. According to the nonprofit, 77% of students served will be the first in their families to complete college, and 19% will be the first to finish high school.

That's why PVD Promise works directly with families to expand equitable opportunities for students in Providence's public and charter schools. It starts by opening a 529 Collegebound Saver Account (CSA) for each child. Students can then earn up to $3,000 per year through the Early Scholarship Program and other incentivized activities. Families also have access to Family Engagement and Youth Engagement Programs offering workshops, tools, and community-responsive programming.

The impact adds up. In 2026 alone, PVD Promise supported 1,598 students with college savings, deposited $148,475 in earned incentive awards into their accounts, and hosted 107 programs that drew more than 3,200 attendees.

The program is growing. Executive Director Madalyn Ciampi said she was "thrilled to share" the launch of Central Falls Promise, which welcomed 147 Central Falls kindergarteners with 529 CSAs and up to $50 in incentives each year. With support from the Warren Alpert Foundation, the program will expand to the next class of Central Falls kindergarteners.

From kindergarten savings accounts to college acceptance letters, PVD Promise is turning college into a more affordable pathway for families in Providence and Central Falls.

Read the full 2026 Annual Report to learn more.



Kwadwo “Kojo” Asare

Victor Capellan

POC Offers Complimentary Services In Critical Areas

As part of POC’s commitment to strengthening Rhode Island’s nonprofit community, POC provides grantees with complimentary support in essential areas such as financial services and board management. Meet two consultants ready to help.

Kwadwo “Kojo” Asare, PhD, CPA

If the financial side of running your organization feels overwhelming, Kwadwo “Kojo” Asare can help. Asare offers financial guidance to POC grantees, with each complimentary session tailored to your organization’s needs.

A certified public accountant and accounting professor at Bryant University, Asare made history as the first recipient of a doctoral degree from Bentley University, earning his PhD in accounting. He has helped POC grantees build forecasts and budgets, figure out what their programs and services really cost, keep their books accurate, and prepare financial statements. He has also supported work in treasury management, variance analysis, and documenting financial procedures.

Whether you’re building your first budget or preparing financial reports for your board, Asare can help. Ready to get started? Email ***kasare@pocfoundation.com*** or ***kasare@bryant.edu*** to schedule your session.

Victor Capellan

If your board needs new members, a clearer purpose, or a reason to get excited for the next meeting, you don't have to figure it out alone. Victor Capellan is POC's organizational development consultant.

Capellan brings deep experience to the work. The Founder and CEO of the Rhode Island Education Collective and The Capellan Group, Capellan is a former Central Falls School Superintendent, and a former Senior Advisor to the Rhode Island Education Commissioner. He has also chaired the boards of Rhode Island Kids Count and Rhode Island Housing, so he knows board work from the inside.

Through his consulting firm, The Capellan Group, Capellan provides capacity-building support to grantees. His work focuses primarily on smaller organizations that need additional guidance to strengthen their operations and governance. From recruiting new board members to facilitating retreats that sharpen your mission, Capellan helps to get everyone on the same page. From formation to maintenance, he can help your board at every stage.

He also hosts quarterly learning events on key nonprofit topics, including an annual "Brown Bag Lunch" workshop on assessing your organization's health and meeting legal, financial, and compliance requirements.

Ready to get started? Email him at ***victor@rieducationcollective.org*** to schedule your complimentary session.



FLY FINANCIAL LITERACY YOUTH INITIATIVE

ESPERANZA HOPE
Great Acts Of Kindness

News & Notes

Financial Literacy Youth Initiative Seeks Your Help

The FLY Initiative's inaugural Career Readiness Event will be held Thursday, November 12.

Every young person deserves to feel confident and prepared when pursuing professional opportunities. How can you help? FLY is collecting new or gently used professional clothing and accessories, including:

- Dress shirts, blouses, and professional tops
- Dress pants, skirts, and dresses
- Blazers, suits, cardigans, and sweaters
- Dress shoes, loafers, ties, and belts
- Professional bags, briefcases, and accessories

Items can be dropped off at CIC Providence at 225 Dyer Street, Providence, RI. Organizations and workplaces interested in coordinating larger donations or clothing drives can contact cmitchell@flyinitiative.org.



Esperanza Hope's 10th Annual Art Exhibit: Create. Express. Inspire.

Esperanza Hope will hold its 10th Annual Art Exhibition & Graduation, Saturday Oct. 31 at Highlander Charter School in Providence from 10am to 12pm. The event which is free and open to the public, will showcase the incredible masterpieces created by children aged 7–14 during the Esperanza-Hope Free Art Program!

To register, call or text 401-536-2151

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