



FISCAL YEAR 2023 OUTCOMES & IMPACT REPORT

TRADING VIOLENCE & POVERTY FOR
SOCIAL & ECONOMIC SUCCESS

Dear Friends,

Thank you for all your support of UTEC this year, one that has seen a diverse range of sustainable growth! More Young Adults than ever before moved up from our Transformational Beginnings program into our Workforce Development program. Our Mattress Recycling program expanded to meet increased demand when the state banned the disposal of mattresses in landfills. Our staff grew, allowing us to create a Re-Entry team whose work behind the walls of correctional facilities has a major impact on the success of returning citizens. In addition, we successfully advocated for policies and funding in the state budget.

You will read more about our growth inside this annual report. This year, we're also giving you an inside look at the path that Young Adults take during their time at UTEC. You'll get a better understanding of each element of our programming and how they all work together to break barriers and help Young Adults make positive changes in their lives.

As we look to the year ahead, we're excited for our 25th anniversary! This is a huge milestone for UTEC, and we're planning many opportunities to connect, collaborate, and celebrate with you. Please check out the sneak peek at the end of this report.

Our 25th anniversary will also coincide with my transition to Executive Chairperson of UTEC and our recently launched search for a new CEO. In this role, I will oversee fundraising and policy advocacy while supporting a new CEO in managing the day-to-day operations at UTEC.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the success of the Young Adults we serve. Your support ensures that we have the resources needed to make meaningful changes in our community. I'm excited about what's to come!

Madd love,



Gregg Croteau, MSW
Chief Executive Officer
UTEC, Inc.

A Young Adult's Journey Through UTEC

STREETWORK

Streetworkers are the foundation of UTEC’s model. They have a strong, consistent presence in the communities we serve. They connect with people in these neighborhoods to raise awareness about UTEC and the services we provide, while also engaging in peace-keeping and violence intervention work. This year, Streetworkers worked one-on-one with more than **240** young people to build relationships, facilitate gang peacemaking, respond to crisis situations, and encourage participation in UTEC’s programs.

Streetworkers also hosted or participated in **65** community events in Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill, ranging from cookouts to skateboard tournaments, to increase awareness of UTEC.

240

Young Adults

65

Community Events



UTEC Streetworkers responded to

183

Crisis Situations Last Year

We show up as a neutral resource at hospitals, police stations, courts, and now in the schools to gradually gain the trust of Young Adults who, in crisis, may consider a change.

RE-ENTRY

This year, we formed a dedicated Re-Entry team, an exciting evolution in UTEC’s outreach work. Longtime UTEC Streetworkers Carlos Collazo and Paul (Viengsamay) Chaleunphong build connections behind the walls of correctional facilities and with returning citizens.

Re-Entry staff worked with **167** Young Adults behind the walls (during incarceration) providing group work, mental health counseling, and transition planning. UTEC runs regular restorative justice circles in multiple correctional facilities and meets individually with Young Adults to plan their transition back to the community. UTEC staff pick up Young Adults on their release day, take them out for a meal, and then accompany them to a meeting with probation. We stay in touch, making sure the young person has housing and access to clothing and toiletries as well as every opportunity to join UTEC programming.

WE ARE PROUD TO PARTNER WITH THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS ON THIS WORK:

Middlesex Sheriff’s Office, Essex County Sheriff’s Department, MA Department of Correction, MA Probation Service, MA Parole Board, Department of Youth Services, and the police department and court systems serving Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill



Worked with

167

Young Adults Behind the Walls

Access to

9

Correctional Facilities

TRANSFORMATIONAL BEGINNINGS

Community Norms

- Safe Space
- Be Engaged
- Respect
- Use "I" Statement
- One Mic
- Confidentiality
- Respect Ones Boundaries
- Have Fun!!!

Welcome to UTEC! Transformational Beginnings is the first program Young Adults experience here. It's a transition-focused program that serves as an orientation and acclimation period for all new enrollees. During this time, Transitional Coaches (TCs) work closely with each Young Adult to provide wraparound support centered on relationship building. This includes connecting with families and probation officers, and providing paid work experience in our Mattress Recycling facility.

This year **70%** of Young Adults who completed the Transformational Beginnings orientation program moved up to our Workforce Development program. This success was possible thanks to increased staffing and a new curriculum that supports social and emotional learning, provides support for English language learners, addresses barriers to success, and introduces Young Adults to UTEC's core values.

Focus on Education

Most Young Adults do not have a high school credential when they join UTEC. On-site education helps prepare them to take the multi-part HiSET test. Small classes, tailored instruction, and extra support make a big difference for young people who have often been out of the classroom for several years before coming to UTEC.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

When Young Adults arrive at Workforce Development, they have the opportunity to develop real-world skills by rotating through various programs including woodworking, culinary, organizing, and HiSet (High School Equivalency Test). They also partner with their Transitional Coach to develop an Individual Service Plan to help them overcome the individual barriers they face.

WE KNOW THIS APPROACH WORKS!

Data from Massachusetts Probation shows that **70%** of Young Adults enrolled in UTEC's program last year avoided a new arraignment within one year. In contrast, **76%** of Young Adults statewide were re-arraigned within three years (CSG 2018 analysis of FY11-FY14 data).



1,245

Total mental health sessions for groups and individuals, including 409 individual sessions.

20+

Young Adults received emergency housing with the help of their Transitional Coaches.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Our Social Enterprises (Mattress Recycling, Food Services, and Woodworking) offer Young Adults a space where they can get paid work experience and progress at their own pace to develop the job and life skills required to achieve independent success. Social Enterprises also deliver direct benefits to the communities we serve.

UTEC SOCIAL ENTERPRISES HAVE

3 Main Goals

Have a positive impact on the communities we serve. All three Social Enterprises provide a community service, including Madd Love Meals, Mattress Recycling, and the rental of our event spaces. We also employ community members at our Mattress Recycling facility.

Provide work readiness training for program participants. Social Enterprises provide social and emotional learning opportunities and help Young Adults develop transferable skills to prepare them for professional jobs and their lives beyond UTEC.

Support the fiduciary sustainability of UTEC. Social Enterprises provide a source of income that has grown over time, allowing us to re-invest in each business and in our programs.



New Woodworking Facility Nears Completion

In 2019, UTEC acquired a 28,500 square foot facility located at 70-80 Church Street in downtown Lowell to accommodate our growing Woodworking Social Enterprise. Phase 1 renovations are complete and Phase 2 began in May 2023. Plans include installing a new HVAC system and elevator, and finishing exterior work. Additional classroom space will be built for social and emotional learning and other education to complement the woodshop's hands-on learning. Added retail space will provide a unique opportunity for the sustainability of the organizaion.



WOODWORKING

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

- Cost-accessible, branded gifts for non-profit partners, funders, corporate partners, etc.
- **75% of products made from salvaged lumber or repurposed scrap.**
- Nearing net-zero goal of 100% of material including scrap being repurposed to create other products, projects, etc.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY:

- Access point to highest paying job opportunities immediately within woodworking and other trades.
- Most transferable and marketable skills across a broad professional spectrum, including manufacturing & machining.
- Merrimack Valley is a Computer Numerical Control hub. Training on the CNC can position our Young Adults for incomes nearing 6 figures.

MATTRESS RECYCLING

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

- **Supporting 30 communities in the Merrimack Valley and beyond** with Mattress Recycling services including Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill.
- Alleviating the strain of mattresses from the solid waste stream, **recycling over 30,000 mattresses this year.**

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY:

- High-paying, CORI-friendly jobs.
- Marketable, transferable skills and certification possibilities.

CULINARY ENTERPRISE

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

- **Nearing 300K meals served** since the beginning of COVID through our food insecurity relief program, Madd Love Meals.
- Community-based event and catering rates for residents and nonprofit partners.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY:

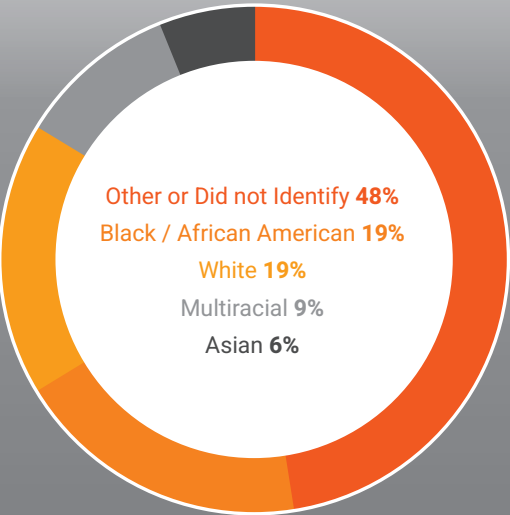
- Front-of-house and back-of-house skills.
- Training in food justice and understanding the needs of the community around them.
- Youth-led food truck coming in 2024.

Demographics

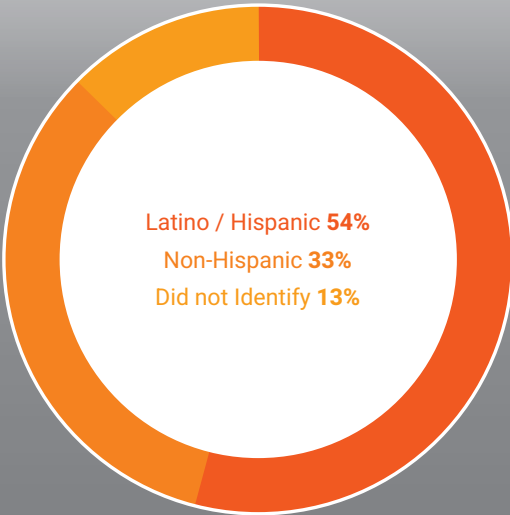
AVERAGE AGE

20

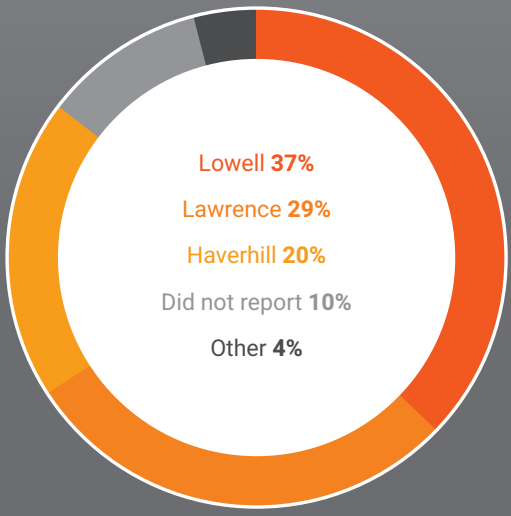
RACE



ETHNICITY



LOCATION



2GEN

Access to dependable, affordable childcare is a huge barrier for many of the Young Adults we serve. We remove this barrier by providing **free** daycare and preschool services for any young parent who is enrolled in our intensive program.

This year, we reopened our Infant Room, served **20** children from **18** families, and held a small graduation ceremony for 4 preschoolers who went off to kindergarten this fall. We welcomed two new teachers to the center and introduced a variety of STEM enrichment activities. The 2Gen center hosted **7** family events to engage young parents and their children. Young parents work closely with 2Gen staff to better understand their children’s development and daily needs.



The Director of the 2Gen Center, Rula Jaber, started a challenge to read 100 books in the first 100 days of the school year. They achieved the goal well before the 100-day deadline.

New this year, UTEC’s culinary team provides a healthy breakfast, lunch and snack each day, drawing upon recipes from a variety of cultures.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

UTEC’s Organizing Crew is a new way to encourage Young Adults interested in the process of policy and system change. They gain an understanding of social justice issues, key components related to grassroots organizing and policy making, and they have the opportunity to create action plans that best address systemic change in our communities. Young Adults in Organizing Crew earn a stipend similar to working in our Social Enterprises.

This year, our Organizing Crew participated in rallies, spoke to legislators, and advocated successfully for increased funding for services for Young Adults returning from incarceration. In May and June alone, Young Adults made multiple trips to the Massachusetts Statehouse to meet with legislators, testify at hearings, and deliver thank you notes.

UTEC’s Organizing Crew hosted a series of candidate forums leading up to this year’s Massachusetts Attorney General and Lieutenant Governor elections, as well as Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill City Council elections. They welcomed candidates, led a tour of UTEC programs, and drafted questions to ask candidates about many of the issues they advocate on, including housing, gun violence, emerging adult justice, and police accountability.

In terms of new legislation, our Organizing Crew (15 Young Adults involved this year) focused on issues that have a direct impact on the social and economic mobility of justice-involved Young Adults and their families. These included criminal justice reform, gun violence prevention, and the development of Social Enterprises. Specifically, Young Adults advocated to Raise the Age (H.1710 & S.942) which would gradually raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 18 - 20 year olds. They also supported a bill to reform current legislation around expungements.



“Our goal is for young people to obtain experience and confidence so that they are able to join the workforce without limits on what that looks like. We hope that they run campaigns, get hired by local municipalities and work daily toward improving their communities through a life of purpose and activism.”

ANA VICTORIA MORALES
UTEC Senior Director of Policy

POLICY ADVOCACY

It was a very successful year for policy advocacy work at UTEC thanks to our partnerships with coalitions across the state! A few highlighted statewide budget advocacy wins include additional ARPA funding for gun violence prevention and re-entry programs across the state (nearly \$50M), an additional \$3M for the neighborhood-based gun violence prevention grant program serving 15 communities, and an additional \$1M for an emerging adult re-entry grant program funding non-profits who work within correctional facilities.



When I was younger, I made many mistakes. A few of them have gotten me to places I never wanted to be in. I’ve been incarcerated 3 times since my 18th birthday and I don’t wish that experience on anyone. Right now, I’m 25 years of age and I feel really lucky to have the opportunity that I have today to go to work, to go to school, and to be a part of UTEC.

MARY GOMEZ
Young Adult at UTEC



TRAINING CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

UTEC’s Training Center for Excellence (TC4E) provides training, technical assistance, networking opportunities, and coalition-building for community-based organizations involved in violence prevention and re-entry work. The TC4E is led by former Streetworkers Nichelle Sadler, Executive Director, and Leslie Rivera, Senior Director. Because they have similar life experiences to those they train, TC4E staff effectively break barriers, push for new opportunities for individuals and organizations, and advance street outreach as a profession.

2022 New England Streetworker Conference

250 Streetworkers representing more than 60 organizations across New England gathered to learn, network, and further legitimize the Streetwork profession. Guest speakers included United States Attorney Rachael Rollins, Author “Freeway” Rick Ross, Transformational Prison Project Executive Director, Armand Coleman, and New England Patriots Player Kyle Dugger. We’re grateful for these longstanding partnerships and the backing of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.



Emerging Leaders Program

In the Emerging Leaders Program, Streetworkers have the opportunity to develop personally and professionally. Streetwork can be overwhelming and emotional work at times. Having the opportunity to connect and build with others is essential to advancing Streetwork as a profession.



HOSTED

32

Trainings

19

Technical Assistance
Sessions

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is essential to UTEC’s success. We actively recruit staff who reflect the racial diversity and life experience of the Young Adults we serve. For example, approximately **75% of Young Adults served and more than 50% of UTEC staff are people of color.** UTEC has hired former gang members, refugees, immigrants, and the children of immigrants. For many roles at UTEC, lived experience is a qualification similar to professional experience and is important to building trusting relationships with the Young Adults we serve.

In 2020, we hired a DEI consultant to identify strengths and weaknesses across the organization. They also helped us develop a DEI vision and action plan, and facilitated DEI-related training for the entire staff.

As a direct result of this push, we:

- Formed both board- and staff-level DEI Committees.
- Conducted a full compensation analysis.
- Completed two staff equity surveys.
- Gradually changed the composition of our Leadership Team, which is now 85% people of color.
- Hired Amanda Kuffoh as UTEC’s Sr. Director of DEI and Professional Development.

WALK THE TALK

We recognize that, in order to advance racial and economic justice in our communities, we need to “walk the talk” within UTEC by investing in professional development and clear metrics to ensure accountability with our own DEI programming.

UTEC’s staff-driven DEI Committee meets on a bi-weekly basis to examine all organizational policies from an equity and shared leadership perspective, and to develop strategies to improve diversity and inclusion. This year, the committee instituted a policy whereby a member of the committee participates in all potential new employee interviews. They also created a professional development plan for Employee Growth Week, held two times per year.

In 2022, UTEC hired Amanda Kuffoh as our Sr. Director of DEI and Professional Development to help us invest more meaningfully in DEI and develop clear metrics to ensure accountability. She has already instituted several trainings, including a regularly occurring series of “Uncomfortable Conversations” with Young Adults and staff that creates a safe place to discuss topics like race, gang involvement, and relationships with law enforcement.



Amanda was UTEC’s representative in a panel discussion organized by the Greater Lowell Community Foundation

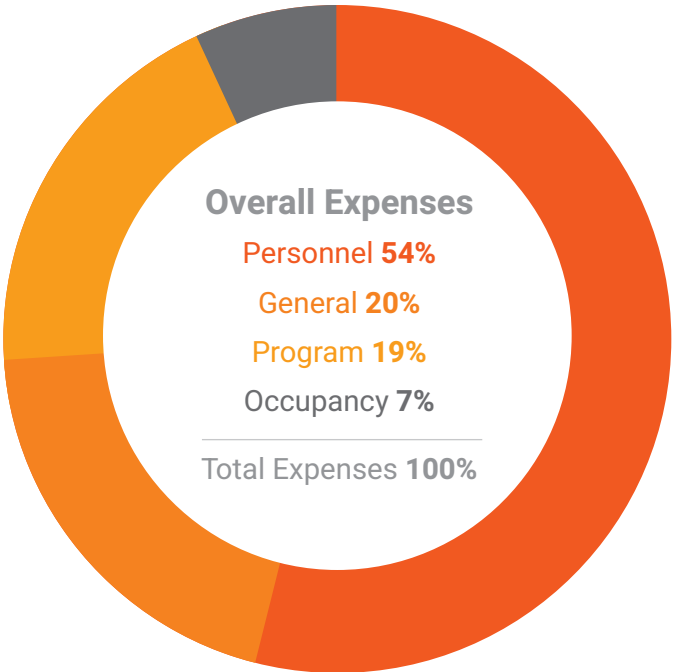
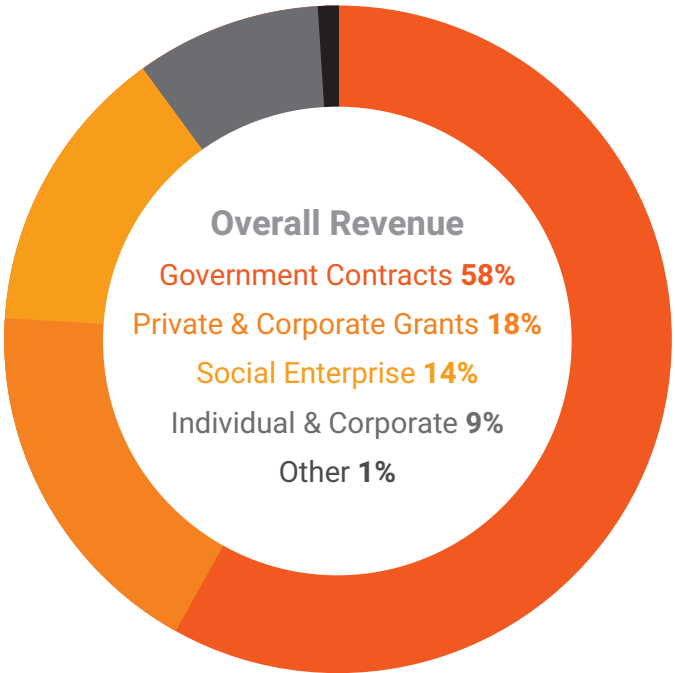
PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential to our work at UTEC! Our growth has allowed us to expand our partnerships from local community business and organizations to state and federal agencies. Our partners have also been essential as we begin to develop a new Theory of Change and Strategic Plan. We asked them to complete a community needs assessment survey to help guide the beginning stages of this work, and their feedback has been invaluable!

In January 2023, we hosted a Community Partners Appreciation Brunch where we welcomed **more than 30 partners** from Corrections, schools, law enforcement and community groups to UTEC. We provided the group with an update about UTEC’s programs and then held small group breakout sessions where attendees discussed their most urgent needs and how we can work together to address them.



FUNDING



UTEC’s annual audit is also available upon request.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS!

We are looking ahead to an exciting 2024, in which UTEC will celebrate its 25th anniversary and embark on a strategic planning process. To raise the funding necessary to continue meeting the needs of Young Adults in our community, we are launching UTEC25: a fundraising campaign to strengthen our foundation. Campaign donations are accepted online at www.utecinc.org/donate or via mail at P.O. Box 7066, Lowell, MA, 01852.



Campaign Focus

INVEST IN OUR TEAM

UTEC’s intensive programming is only possible with the dedication of people with the lived experience, unique skills, and expertise required to end violence in our communities.

EFFECT CHANGE NATIONALLY

UTEC’s Training Center for Excellence effects lasting systemic change through organizing and policy-making in partnership with the emerging adults we work alongside.

INNOVATE FOR THE FUTURE

To ensure future outcomes, we must invest in innovative programs that advance progress and empower individuals to break systematic barriers to success.

Learn More About Our Vision For The Next 25 Years!
Scan the QR code or visit www.utecinc.org/UTEC25



YEAR IN HEADLINES

Throughout the year, UTEC’s impact has been spotlighted in the news. From coverage of our HiSET graduation in the Lowell Sun to community outreach programs on WBUR and our Mattress Recycling program showcased on NBC 10 Boston, we are proud to spread the word and share UTEC’s growth and impact. Check out the highlights!

LOCAL IMPACT

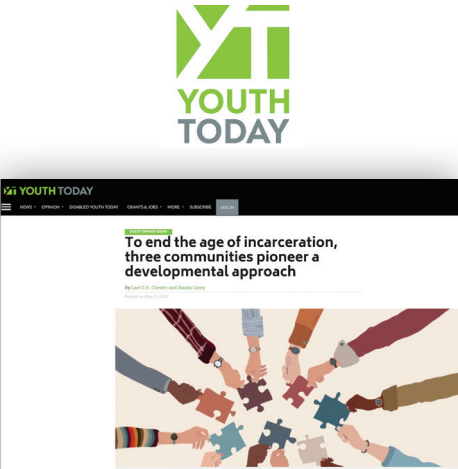


Lowell Sun: UTEC CEO Gregg Croteau to transition to new executive chair role, search to begin for new CEO

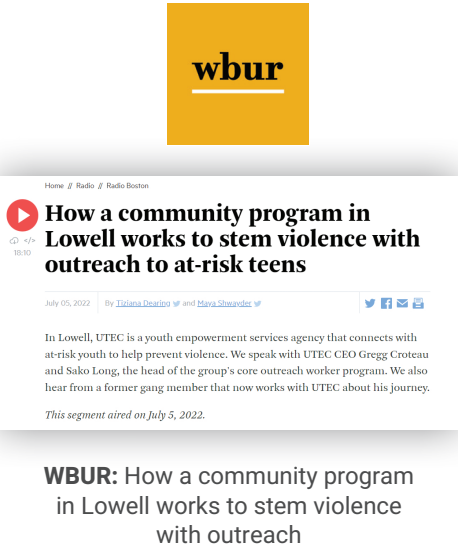


Lowell Sun: Making the Grade

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION



Youth Today: To end the age of incarceration, three communities pioneer a developmental approach

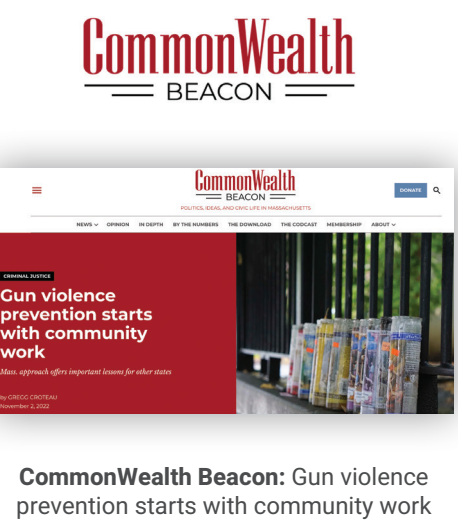


WBUR: How a community program in Lowell works to stem violence with outreach

POLICY AND ADVOCACY WORK

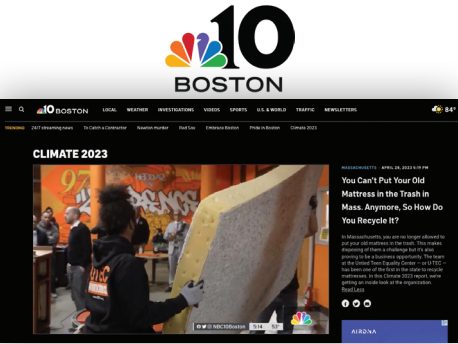


Lowell Sun: Attorney General Andrea Campbell visits UTEC, wants young leaders ‘at the table’ to make a difference



CommonWealth Beacon: Gun violence prevention starts with community work

MATTRESS RECYCLING ENTERPRISE



NBC10 Boston: You Can't Put Your Old Mattress in the Trash in Mass. Anymore, So How Do You Recycle It?



The Eagle-Tribune: Officials recognize Earth Day at UTEC mattress recycling plant in Lawrence



Lowell Sun: With mattress landfill ban looming, Kennedy bill aims to preserve recycling niche for nonprofits like UTEC

UTEC BOARD MEMBERS*

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Fred Conover President, CTP Boston		

* Members as of June 2023

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WAYS TO SUPPORT

DONATE

To invest in Young Adults
and UTEC's many programs,
visit UTECInc.org/donate

**SHOP**

To shop products made
by Young Adults in UTEC's
social enterprises,
visit UTECinc.org/shop

