



Opportunities for Your Business and Immigrant Workforce: Hear from the experts

English Works Business Council

Convening

January 26th, 2022

EVENT AGENDA

Welcome by Claudia Green, Executive Director

Panel Discussion led by Michel Bamani, Board President

Panelists:

- **Christine Abrams**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth Corporation
- **Dan Rivera**, President and CEO, MassDevelopment
- **Wyvonne Stevens-Carter**, Director of Adult Education at MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Questions from our Audience

Closing Remarks

Host



Michel Bamani
Assistant Vice President and Assistant General
Counsel, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Michel Bamani is an assistant vice president and assistant general counsel in the legal department at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. He is responsible for rendering legal advice on a broad range of complex banking, regulatory, and corporate law matters, including the FedNowSM Service. Michel was previously assistant counsel at the Bank from September 2012 to July 2015.

Prior to returning to the Bank, Michel worked at State Street Corporation where served as vice president and counsel. In that role, his duties included negotiating and reviewing various agreements related to administrative services, custody services, performance analytics, and others. He also advised business units on various strategic issues, such as fund structure, processes, and issues when onboarding new clients, LIBOR, and product offerings.

Michel received a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology from Bowdoin College and a J.D. from Boston University School of Law. He teaches at Northeastern Law School and he is the president of the board of directors for English for New Bostonians.

Panelists



Christine Abrams
President and Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth
Corporation.

Christine serves as the President and CEO of Commonwealth Corporation. She has more than thirty years of progressive financial and organizational leadership experience with Fortune 100 companies, startups and non-profit organizations. Previously, Christine was Senior Director of Sales, Americas and Australia for Instant Services at IGT. In this role, she helped build key partnerships and worked collaboratively with manufacturing, operations, R&D, finance and IGT corporate to achieve profit and market share goals significantly outpacing the industry averages.

Prior to that, Christine served as the SVP of Sales and Marketing Chelsea based Signature Bread and as Director of Sales at General Mills Inc where she was named a Women of Influence in the Consumer Foods Industry. Christine was elected by her peers as the Chair

of the Northeast Network of Executive Women. She served on the board for the Garden of Peace and was recently elected to the Garden's Advisory Committee and served as Vice President of DOVE's Board of Directors. Christine has travelled to 48 states and 27 countries, but her favorite place is at home with her husband, children and grandchildren.



Dan Rivera

President and CEO, MassDevelopment

Dan Rivera comes to MassDevelopment after serving seven years as Mayor of the City of Lawrence, Mass. During his time as Mayor, the city saw significant commercial development, record new units of housing, and tens of millions of dollars invested in economic development planning and projects. Dan's focus on economic and community development as Mayor included investments in housing, job creation, downtown redevelopment, transit-oriented development and equity, infrastructure, brownfields redevelopment, placemaking, and quality-of-life improvements, and establishing professional, transparent, modern, and streamlined permitting and licensing processes.

Dan was an invaluable member of the Baker-Polito Administration's Reopening Advisory Board, bringing the municipal viewpoint to the group tasked with developing the Commonwealth's strategy to reopen the economy during COVID-19, and the COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Group. In 2017, Governor Baker tapped Rivera to serve on the newly established Latino Advisory Commission charged with addressing concerns of the Massachusetts Latino community and promoting economic prosperity and well-being.

Prior to his two terms as Mayor of Lawrence, Dan held various positions in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Dan is a veteran of the U.S. Army, where he served in the first Gulf War, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and a graduate of the UMass Amherst and Suffolk University's Sawyer School of Management, where he earned his MBA. Dan lives in Lawrence with his wife, Paula, and their children, Daniel and Charlotte.



Wyvonne Stevens-Carter

Director Of Adult Education at MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Wyvonne Stevens-Carter is the Adult Education State Director for the Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) unit at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). As the state director, she oversees and supports a range of adult education services including transitions to college, workplace education, integrated education and training, and adult education in the community and correctional settings.



Resources for businesses:

Loans & Guarantees

- [Brownfields Remediation Loan Program](#): flexible loans up to \$500,000 for environmental cleanup of brownfields
- [Commercial Real Estate Loans](#): facility acquisition, renovation, and construction with loans or bank loan participations up to \$7.5 million
- [Equipment Loans](#): loans or bank loan participations up to \$2 million
- [Emerging Technology Fund](#): designed to help growing companies find needed capital at the earliest stages (pre-revenue)
- [Export Financing](#): helps companies that export or anticipate exporting products or services internationally
- [Mortgage Insurance Guarantees](#): guarantees of up to \$2 million on a portion of a bank real estate loan or tax-exempt bond
- [Manufacturing Planning Loans](#): loans for growth strategies that allows manufacturers to hire consultants
- [TechDollars](#): loans to help 501(c)(3) nonprofits buy and install technology equipment

Bonds

- [Tax-Exempt Bonds](#): Exempt from federal taxes and in certain cases Massachusetts state taxes, usually the lowest interest rate option for real estate projects and new equipment purchases

Grants

- [Collaborative Workspace Program](#): funds to accelerate the pace of new business formation, job creation, and entrepreneurial activity through support of collaborative workspaces operators
- [Commonwealth Places](#): competitive opportunity to advance locally driven placemaking in downtown and neighborhood commercial districts
- [Taxi & Livery Business Support](#): financial assistance for taxi, livery, and hackney operators
- [Transformative Development Initiative](#): program to accelerate economic development in Gateway Cities, with grant opportunities available in those communities:
 - [TDI Creative Catalyst](#): supports public-facing projects that serve to enhance local arts and cultural infrastructure
 - [TDI Local](#): flexible block grants to launch local programs that support small businesses
- [Underutilized Properties Program](#): funds for capital building improvements

MassDevelopment has strategically located offices [in regions across the state](#). For assistance, contact:

- Greater Boston: Kelly Arvidson, 774-312-3733, karvidson@massdevelopment.com
- Central Region: Rob Anderson, 978-459-6100 x1401, randerson@massdevelopment.com
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- West Region: Julie Cowan, 413-731-8848 x1359, jcowan@massdevelopment.com

- COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

<https://commcorp.org/>



- Department of Elementary and Adult Education (DESE) / Adult and Community Learning Center (ACLS)

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/>

