

50 Projects – 50 States: Washington

FareStart Adult Culinary Academy Seattle, Washington

FareStart is a social enterprise in Seattle dedicated to transforming the lives of homeless men and women through job training and placement in the food service industry. Students receive job training in the food service area that generates revenue through the daily preparation and distribution of over 2,000 meals.

By 2004, FareStart had outgrown the space it rented and needed a larger facility. The organization purchased a 33,000 square foot building in a severely distressed New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC)-qualified low-income community in Seattle to expand their training, social services, and business capacity. However, they did not have the funding necessary to renovate and upgrade the facility to make it fully operational. Community Development Funding, LLC made a \$17 million NMTC loan and equity investment in FareStart to renovate and upgrade their facility, transforming it into a culinary vocational training academy and restaurant. In the new facility, kitchen and classroom space will be doubled, providing for quality and safe training areas and increase in business capacity. A family resource area will provide a safe, “child friendly” space for use by students who are parents of young children. The organization’s management and administrative staff will be located in the same building.

The new facility provides FareStart the capacity to increase to 575 the number of people served each year and increase by 80 percent the revenue generated through the organization’s food service businesses. Self-generated revenues will support the majority of FareStart’s business operations growth, and hungry children and families will consume 21 million nutritious meals, prepared and delivered by FareStart.

New Markets and Historic Tax Credits were combined to provide below-market financing with equity-like terms to make this project feasible. Conventional lenders had declined to make an investment, but with the addition of NMTCs the project was able to move forward and is now complete. The project team included Community Development Funding, LLC, US Bank Corporation, FareStart, the architectural firm of Stickney, Murphy & Romine and construction management by Sellen Construction

NMTC Allocatee

**Community Development
Funding LLC
Clarksville, MD
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Community Profile

- Severely distressed NMTC-qualified low-income community census tract
- 40.3% poverty rate
- Median income 55.3% of area median income



Project Highlights

- Real Estate: culinary school for homeless
- Total Project Cost: \$17.2 million
- NMTC: \$17.2 million
- Investor: US Bank Corporation
- Jobs: 93 construction and 24 permanent