



*Leaders Engaged and Activated  
to Drive System-wide change*

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## **LEADS Launches South Coast Fellowship in Collaboration with Leadership SouthCoast (LSC) and other Regional Partners**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5th, 2024

After many months of planning, a coalition of regional partners led by Leadership SouthCoast have announced the launch of the LEADS Fellowship for high-impact leaders in the South Coast. The 9-month Fellowship is delivered in partnership with faculty from Harvard Business School and serves as a platform for advancing and connecting diverse, cross-sectoral leaders in pursuit of making positive systems-level change at the local and regional level. Supporting leadership development throughout the region for over 20 years, Leadership SouthCoast's continued growth into new program areas served as a catalyst to bring the LEADS Fellowship to the region, as it adds a complementary component to the numerous programs under LSC's portfolio. Donna Criscuolo, Executive Director of Leadership SouthCoast, noted "Investing in our leaders today will impact the outcomes for tomorrow. The south coast is undergoing tremendous change, and we want those changes to be stewarded through representative local leaders who understand the challenges and embrace the opportunities with a solution seeking mindset."

First piloted in Lawrence in 2018, the LEADS Fellowship has since expanded to gateway cities north of Boston, ranging from Lowell to Lynn, serving nearly 250 leaders. The current cohort is comprised of 47 Fellows from the North Shore and is scheduled to culminate in June of '24. "Southeastern MA is a region teeming with unique opportunities and, like many other areas, struggles with persistent challenges. By integrating the strengths and expertise of each sector, we can develop comprehensive, holistic solutions that address complex issues and pave the way for a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous region," according to Melanie Tavares, the President/CEO of the South Coast Community foundation and another member of the coalition working with LEADS.

The determination to expand into the South Coast builds on the momentum playing out in the region and the opportunity for the LEADS Fellowship to support community-centric outcomes. Beyond just a leadership development program, the Fellowship uniquely breaks down siloes and builds trust across different segments of a community and creates a platform to have necessary conversations. Tony Sapienza, the chair of the New Bedford Regeneration Committee and the New Bedford Whaling Museum, states, "New Bedford and Fall River have experienced profound demographic changes in the last decade and the advent of commuter rail to Boston will precipitate even more. The next decade will require a new generation of community leaders and LEADS is the perfect vehicle to develop those leaders".



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Fellows will be nominated and selected by area partners and a South Coast-based selection/steering committee over the winter and spring of 2024, with the first of two cohorts scheduled to kick off in the fall of 2024, followed by a second cohort in the fall of 2025. Leaders will be drawn from New Bedford, Fall River and the communities surrounding them with a priority made for LSC Alum.

The 9-month fellowship consists of programming delivered in the South Coast and Greater Boston and culminates with the creation of actionable project teams working on priority issues at the local and regional level. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates of the Fellowship join the LEADS Network, a robust and growing network of changemakers working across organizations and regions to scale their impact. “Often the resources available to larger markets and corporate entities such as Harvard Business School executive education programs —are not accessible to gateway cities like Fall River and New Bedford and the leaders in those communities,” says Pam Hallagan, LEADS co-founder and the organization’s Executive Director, “But we know these interventions work and have transformational impact for the individuals involved, the organizations and institutions they run, and the communities they serve. We could not be more excited to be working in collaboration with our partners in the South Coast to leverage the LEADS programming to make real and lasting impact here.”

Learn more about LEADS and the partners in the North Shore at [www.LEADSMA.org](http://www.LEADSMA.org)

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The coalition of regional partners working to bring LEADS to the South Coast is led by Leadership SouthCoast and includes:

- EforAll
- Latinas of the South Coast
- One South Coast Chamber
- New Bedford Regeneration Committee
- South Coast Community Foundation
- South Coast Hispanic Chamber
- UMass Dartmouth
- United Way of Fall River
- United Way of New Bedford
- Vineyard Offshore
- Viva Fall River