

# THE NEIL AND LOUISE TILLOTSON FUND

2015 Report to the Community



NEW HAMPSHIRE  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION





# THE NEIL AND LOUISE TILLOTSON FUND

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund was established with the philosophy and principles of Neil Tillotson:

*“Be humble, be creative and be kind.”*

We are honored to carry on his legacy.

## THE NEIL AND LOUISE TILLOTSON FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Bob Wells, *Chair*, Hopkinton, NH

Steve Barba, Concord, NH

Gladys Bruun, Waterville, Quebec

Tom Deans, South Conway, NH

Betsy Hess, Randolph, NH

Ben Gayman, Manchester, NH

Pamela Laflamme, Gorham, NH

Chris Masson, Canaan, VT

Everett Pearson, Providence, RI

Jim Tibbetts, Colebrook, NH

Rick Tillotson, Colebrook, NH

# VISION AND PRIORITIES

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was established in 2006 with a bold vision: *“To serve as a catalyst for the region to move toward sustainable community and economic development in Coös County and surrounding communities in the U.S. and Canada.”*

In pursuit of that vision, the advisors of the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund have identified three priority areas for grantmaking:

**Economic development** initiatives that strengthen the region’s infrastructure and institutions, provide support for entrepreneurs and small business owners, and increase public use of the region’s rich natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

**Education** initiatives that emphasize project- and community-based learning, support smaller school communities and learning environments, emphasize the development of strong social networks within schools and between schools and communities, provide leadership development, and support North Country youth and young adults inside and outside the school environment.

**Community safety net** initiatives that increase access to quality health and mental health care services and healthy foods, provide support for families and children at risk, and expand opportunities for shelter and housing.

Neil and Louise Tillotson were world travelers and, at the same time, fiercely passionate about the North Country, especially their beloved Dixville Notch and surrounding communities in the U.S. and Canada. The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund seeks to carry on this legacy through grantmaking that supports local community efforts as well as initiatives that link the North Country to the wider region and the global economy.

*To learn more about the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund or apply for a grant, please visit [www.nhcf.org/tillotson](http://www.nhcf.org/tillotson).*

*For more information, please contact:*

**Jean Clarke**, Tillotson Senior Program Associate – [jc@nhcf.org](mailto:jc@nhcf.org) or 800-464-6641 ext. 238

**Kirsten Scobie**, Director, Tillotson Funds – [ks@nhcf.org](mailto:ks@nhcf.org) or 603-788-4522





Grantee Learning Community members gather in front of one of the historical figures on the Pioneer Trail, located near the Pavillon des arts in Coaticook, Quebec. Funded in part by the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund, the Table de concertation culturelle's walking trail is popular with tourists and local residents.

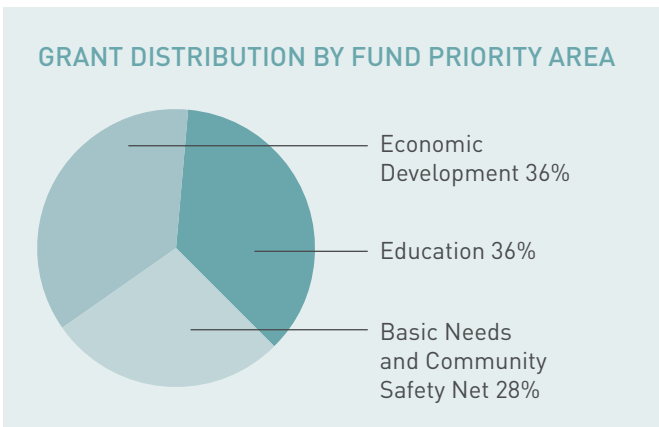
## Grant Highlights

This report showcases the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund's grant activities during 2015. The fund is guided by a long-term regional strategy and the following principles:

- Invest in strong organizations poised to take a leadership role in addressing regional priorities;
- Work to strengthen local and regional institutions;
- Focus on connecting local communities to regional initiatives; and
- Multiply the Tillotson Fund's investment by insisting on financial and sweat-equity leverage.

In 2015, the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund awarded 53 grants totaling more than \$2.5 million through its competitive grant program. The grant awards ranged from \$2,000 to just under \$300,000. For a full grants list, see pages eight through 11.

In addition, the Tillotson Fund distributed \$373,800 to five organizations to continue strategic investments in entrepreneurship and business development and early childhood development. These grants are listed on page 11 of this report.



## Beyond Grantmaking

In concert with the grantmaking program, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation implements several strategic programs to advance the bold vision of the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund.

### Grantee Learning Community: Exploring leadership and building partnerships

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Grantee Learning Community was built on the premise that professionals are one another's best instructors. Now in its eighth year, the Tillotson Learning Community once again

demonstrated how seasoned professionals can both learn from and effectively teach one another how to best address community needs and deliver services.

The underlying goal of the program is to support and grow a diverse pool of leaders throughout the region who are actively engaged in all aspects of civic life. The 2015 cohort met four times over the course of six months — three two-day meetings and a one-day field trip to the Eastern Townships of Quebec. Presentation topics included volunteer recruitment, business partnerships and a panel discussion on board responsibilities. The 2015 cohort included:

Jamie Feinberg  
Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire  
Littleton, NH

Robin Henne  
Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire  
Littleton, NH

Becky Merrow  
Town of Colebrook  
Colebrook, NH

Kevin McKinnon  
Town of Colebrook  
Colebrook, NH

Helen Costello  
New Hampshire Food Bank  
Manchester, NH

Jasen Stock  
New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association  
Concord, NH

Mark Doty  
New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association  
Concord, NH

Marc Boudreau  
Radio Coopérative de Coaticook  
Coaticook, Quebec

Andréanne Sage  
Radio Coopérative de Coaticook  
Coaticook, Quebec

Monique Lavertu  
St. Kieran's Community Center for the Arts  
Berlin, NH

Anne M. Sullivan  
The Tillotson Center for the Arts  
Colebrook, NH

Charlie Jordan  
Great North Woods Committee for the Arts  
Colebrook, NH

Lyn Osborne Winter  
Weathervane Theatre  
Whitefield, NH

Steve Bissonnette  
Weathervane Theatre  
Whitefield, NH

### Northern Forest Regional Symposium: Addressing shared opportunities and challenges across the four-state region

In 2015, the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund partnered with the Northern Forest Center to bring together more than 130 nonprofit, business and government leaders from Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont to reflect on the state of the region. For more information, go to: <https://northernforest.org/programs/regional-strategy/northern-forest-symposium>.

The Northern Forest Regional Symposium is an expansion of the Coös Symposium, a gathering of leaders from across the North Country and surrounding communities in the U.S. and Canada for networking and professional development. This new, three-day conference had the specific goals of:

- Creating and building relationships across landscape, industry, experience and outlook
- Learning about innovative and revitalized communities
- Exploring how to balance the working economy with the working landscape so that both can endure
- Providing practical counsel and ideas for challenges or opportunities each leader is facing.





Photo by Kelly Short

Northern Forest Regional Symposium leaders gather on the front lawn of the OMNI Mount Washington Resort in Bretton Woods, NH. The event focused on connecting communities, economy and landscape by building relationships and examining success stories across the region.

The 2015 Symposium Planning Committee Members included:

- Ela Chapin, VT Housing & Conservation Board, VT
- Jean Clarke, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, NH
- Julie Renaud Evans, Northern Forest Center, NH
- Mark Hews, M E Hews and Company, LLC, ME
- Emma Marvin, Butternut Mountain Farm, VT
- Chris Morris, Adirondack Foundation, NY
- Mark Scarano, Northern Border Regional Commission, NH
- Kirsten Scobie, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, NH
- Joe Short, Northern Forest Center, NH
- Rob Riley, Northern Forest Center, NH
- Ross Whaley, Tupper Lake, NY
- Courtney Wrigley, North Country Listens, NH
- Robin Zinchuk, Bethel Chamber of Commerce, ME

## Tracking Changes in the North Country

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund has partnered with the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire to conduct longitudinal research to learn more about the attitudes and experiences of residents living in northern New Hampshire and bordering communities in the U.S. and Canada. Begun in 2007, these studies seek to better understand the ongoing hopes, beliefs and economic changes happening throughout the region. The three primary components of the research initiative include:

- Coös Youth Study: A ten-year research project focusing on Coös County youth and their aspirations about educational and employment opportunities.
- North Country Community and Environmental Survey: As part of its Community and Environment in Rural America (CERA) study, Carsey researchers have conducted surveys and interviews with adults about their communities and the region.

- Northern New England Indicators website: (<http://nne-indicators.unh.edu>). This new interactive website launched in fall 2015.

This nationally significant body of work focused on rural communities provides ongoing information and analysis to stakeholders in the public and private sectors. The data and reports developed by Carsey are available to the public on its website: <http://carsey.unh.edu/tracking-changes-north-country>.

### Targeted Investment in Early Childhood and Entrepreneurship

In 2014, following a \$10-million, five-year investment, the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund made a \$1.3 million, multiyear commitment to sustain and increase organizational impact in two sectors in the North Country: early childhood development and entrepreneurship and business development.

Investments in these areas reflected the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund's interest in building key

institutions for long-term regional transformation.

Grantees included:

- Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families
- New Hampshire Small Business Development Center
- Northern Community Investment Corporation
- Northern Human Services
- Northern Forest Center
- White Mountains Community College

In addition to receiving program and operating support, the organizations worked with the Carsey School of Public Policy of the University of New Hampshire to evaluate their progress toward identified goals and engage with each other in leadership development programs. See page 11 for a complete list of grants made in 2015.





Photo by Rachel Freierman

# 2015 GRANT AWARDS

Outdoor activities were offered to Gorham and Berlin families as part of a health and wellness initiative of Coös County Family Health Services in partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. In addition to summer and winter physical activity sessions, families attended nutrition and healthy cooking workshops.

The grants made by the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund respond to inspiring opportunities and challenges in Coös County and surrounding communities in New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, and southern Quebec, and support the overall activities of the fund.

## ANDROSCOGGIN RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

To improve river access and parking below the Errol and Seven Islands bridges on the Androscoggin River. \$17,655

## APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB

To support, over three years, the continuation of Building Sustainable Communities in Coös County, a comprehensive education program for youth pre-K through 12th grade. \$250,000

## ASSOCIATION DES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES DE LA MRC DE COATICOOK

To support general operations. \$20,000

## ASSOCIATION SPORTIVE DES JEUNES HANDICAPÉS DE L'ESTRIE

To offer a daily summer camp experience for youth with disabilities in 2015. \$4,725

To expand services and offer weekend programming for youth with disabilities. \$2,000

## CANAAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY (TOWN OF CANAAN)

To create a documentary video highlighting the history of the Town of Canaan, Vermont. \$5,000

## THE CARSEY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY (UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE)

To organize and support civic engagement work throughout the North Country over two years. \$90,000

To support the Tracking Changes in the North Country research project. \$131,226

## CENTRE D'INITIATIVES EN AGRICULTURE DE LA RÉGION DE COATICOOK

To purchase new greenhouse infrastructure and support farm apprentices in the Coaticook region. \$25,000

## CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER OF COÖS COUNTY

To support general operations over three years. \$30,000



**CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES  
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

To improve access to family health services for families in Coös County, NH.  
*\$20,000*

**CIRCUITS FRONTIÈRES**

To build a new 1-km, single-track cycling trail.  
*\$4,000*

**COHOS TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

To create and produce graphic displays for 10 trailhead kiosks.  
*\$3,280*

**CONNECTICUT RIVER  
ARTISAN GROUP**

To offer high-quality cultural activities to people visiting and living in the North Country.  
*\$10,000*

**COOPÉRATIVE DE SOLIDARITÉ  
DE DIXVILLE**

To support startup costs associated with the acquisition and renovation of a locally owned cooperative restaurant and general store in Dixville, Quebec.  
*\$40,000*

**COÖS CYCLING CLUB  
(TOWN OF GORHAM)**

To build a 5- to 10-mile trail for non-motorized recreational use in Gorham, NH.  
*\$20,000*

**CORPORATION DE  
DÉVELOPPEMENT  
COMMUNAUTAIRE DE LA MRC DE  
COATICOOK**

To improve communication and collaboration between the CDC and other organizations in Coaticook.  
*\$20,000*

**ÉCOLE GENDREAU**

To purchase and install a climbing wall in the school gymnasium.  
*\$6,000*

**ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE LA  
FRONTALIÈRE**

To upgrade sound and lighting equipment for the school-based auditorium.  
*\$20,000*

**EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF  
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

To provide 4,000 hot, nutritious meals for residents in the communities of Berlin, Groveton and Woodsville, NH.  
*\$15,000*

**ESSEX COUNTY NATURAL  
RESOURCES CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

To support a native tree and shrub nursery serving the communities along the Upper Connecticut River Watershed.  
*\$10,000*

**FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER**

To support operations for the afterschool, home visiting and parenting programs in the Berlin and Gorham, NH school systems.  
*\$60,000*

**GOVERNOR'S INSTITUTES  
OF VERMONT**

To provide partial scholarship funds for youth to participate in a residential, academic, and artistic education program in 2016.  
*\$3,500*

**KISMET ROCK FOUNDATION**

To support 25 Berlin and Gorham students to attend summer programming in 2016.  
*\$25,000*

**LES COMPTONALES**

To construct 20 permanent and weatherproof kiosks for the Public Market in Compton, Quebec.  
*\$20,000*

**L'ÉVEIL, RESSOURCE  
COMMUNAUTAIRE EN  
SANTÉ MENTALE**

To provide mental health services in Coaticook, Quebec.  
*\$20,000*

**LITTLETON REGIONAL  
HEALTHCARE CHARITABLE  
FOUNDATION**

To expand and renovate the birthing center at Littleton Regional Healthcare.  
*\$15,000*

**LA MRC DE COATICOOK**

To develop and implement a workforce retention and regional agriculture development plan over three years.  
*\$296,740*

**NANSEN SKI CLUB**

To build a warming hut and provide storage for club equipment at Milan Hill State Park.  
*\$19,500*

**NEW HAMPSHIRE CENTER FOR  
PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES**

To develop a comprehensive education dashboard and convene regional leaders to address interrelated education, health and workforce opportunities in the North Country.  
*\$55,792*



The Great North Woods Committee for the Arts brought the award-winning Cape Breton band Còig to the Tillotson Center in Colebrook, NH. The five-member band played new and traditional holiday music to a sold-out crowd.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST**

To support an education and public awareness campaign, My Voice Matters, focused on families and service providers in Coös County. \$20,000

**NEW HAMPSHIRE LAKES ASSOCIATION**

To continue supporting the summer youth employment program for six participants in the Colebrook community. \$15,000

**NEW HAMPSHIRE TEEN INSTITUTE**

To provide leadership and empowerment training for 40 Coös County youth. \$19,475

**NEW HAMPSHIRE TIMBERLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION (GRANITE STATE WOODLAND INSTITUTE)**

To support an economic impact study of New Hampshire's sawmill industry. \$17,500

**NORTH COUNTRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

To support operations and capacity-building over three years. \$60,000

**NORTH COUNTRY CHARTER ACADEMY**

To purchase new computers and curriculum software licenses to sustain alternative middle and high school educational programming in the North Country. \$32,125

**NORTH COUNTRY COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER**

To support capacity-building and general operations over three years. \$150,000

**NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH CONSORTIUM**

To provide capacity-building and general operations over three years. \$210,000

**NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH CONSORTIUM**

To continue supporting the Youth Leadership Through Adventure prevention network and leadership

strategies throughout North Country middle and high schools. \$75,000

**NORTHERN FOREST CANOE TRAIL**

To support general operations. \$50,000

**NORTHUMBERLAND ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM (NORTHUMBERLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT)**

To continue support of an adult high school program over three years. \$19,500

**OFFICE MUNICIPAL D'HABITATION DE COATICOOK**

To support the new construction of a multifunctional residential and commercial building in downtown Coaticook, Quebec. \$100,000

**PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTH COUNTRY TEACHER EDUCATION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

To provide teaching stipends for students in the 2015-2016 North Country Teacher Education Certification Program. \$49,713

**SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

To provide weekend meals to 100 elementary school children during the 2015-2016 school year. \$21,600

**SERVICE D'AIDE DOMESTIQUE DE LA RÉGION DE COATICOOK**

To pilot a new respite program for caregivers. \$22,062

**TOWN OF CANAAN**

To develop a multiyear strategic plan for the Town of Canaan, Vermont. \$18,675



### TOWN OF PITTSBURG

To support construction of a gazebo and walking path within the town park.  
\$25,000

### THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

To support the creation of a 1,342-acre community forest in Milan, NH over two years.  
\$200,000

### VERMONT FOODBANK

To support the Backpack Program for 50 students at the Lunenburg and Gilman School during the 2014-2015 school year.  
\$10,000

### WHITEFIELD LIONS CLUB

To purchase gas grills and upgrade signage used for the Lions Club's pancake breakfasts on Whitefield Common.  
\$2,500

### WHOLESOME WAVE

To continue building a coordinated system of affordable access to locally grown fruits and vegetables in Coös County and throughout New Hampshire.  
\$50,000

### WINTERKIDS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

To train early education teachers in Berlin, Colebrook, Lancaster and Whitefield to deliver outdoor education programs.  
\$10,000

### WOMEN'S RURAL ENTREPRENEURIAL NETWORK

To support general operations at the WREN Berlin site over two years.  
\$50,000

*The following grant awards represent the second installment in a 3 ½ year targeted investment strategy.*

### Early Childhood Development

#### COÖS COALITION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (NORTHERN HUMAN SERVICES)

To sustain and strengthen a coordinated system that encourages optimal child development in Coös County, New Hampshire.  
\$78,800

#### NORTHERN HUMAN SERVICES

To provide high-quality early intervention mental health services to families and children 0-6 throughout Coös County.  
\$110,000

### Entrepreneurship and Business Development

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

To provide North Country businesses with professional technical assistance.  
\$35,000

#### NORTHERN COMMUNITY INVESTMENT CORPORATION

To support the Business Resource Management program which provides technical assistance to area businesses.  
\$75,000

#### NORTHERN FOREST CENTER

For general operating support to pursue forest- and energy-related initiatives benefiting Coös County and surrounding communities.  
\$75,000



Photo by Kara Hunter

*A biker tests the new single-track trail near the "River Road" section in Gorham, NH. In coordination with the Gorham Land Company, Coös Cycling Club volunteers designed, constructed, and provided signage for mountain bikers, runners and hikers.*



## NEW HAMPSHIRE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

UP TO THE PROMISE

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was created in 1962 by and for the people of New Hampshire, and is dedicated to strengthening communities across the Granite State. The Foundation manages a growing collection of 1,700 philanthropic funds created by generous families, individuals and businesses, and awards more than \$30 million in grants and scholarships every year. The Foundation invests charitable assets for today and tomorrow; works with generous and visionary citizens to maximize the power of their giving; supports critical work happening in New Hampshire communities; and leads and collaborates on high-impact initiatives. For more information, please visit [www.nhcf.org](http://www.nhcf.org) or call 603-225-6641.

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was established in 2006 with a bold vision:

*“To serve as a catalyst for the region to move toward sustainable community and economic development in Coös County and surrounding communities in the U.S. and Canada.”*

37 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301-4005  
800-464-6641 [info@nhcf.org](mailto:info@nhcf.org) [www.nhcf.org](http://www.nhcf.org)



Confirmed in Compliance with National Standards for US Community Foundations



Printed on 100% recycled paper made in NH with soy-based inks.

Cover photo: North Country students, Youth Leadership Through Adventure program taken by Cheryl Senter

©2016 New Hampshire Charitable Foundation