

Name: Jacqueline LeBlanc

Department: CDAE

Advisor: Jane Kolodinsky

Email Address: jrleblan@uvm.edu

Type of Presentation: Poster

Abstract: LACE (Local Agricultural Community Exchange) was recently founded in Barre, Vt. with the mission of boosting the local economy, conserving local farm land and increasing the community's health and sense of unity. Barre, the self-acclaimed "Granite Capital of the World," was once a booming industrial center with a vibrant economy and community that attracted visitors from as far away as Boston to its once lavish opera house. The granite industry has not weathered the years economically as well as the granite itself has - the city has become economically depressed over the past decades. LACE serves as an incubator for start-up local businesses to help fill this gap and is a way for community members to connect with each other and with local growers. Through analysis of qualitative and quantitative information from resident and business surveys, the effectiveness of LACE in achieving its organizational mission will be evaluated. It is expected that results will show that LACE has fulfilled parts of its mission, with some areas standing out as needing further development. The implications of this research will be a recommendation of areas that LACE can focus further resources in and the development of "best practices" for use in other communities that could benefit from a similar organization.