



Financial Empowerment Services support low to moderate income households in developing the spending, credit and savings management skills needed to build financial security and access financial opportunities.

## **CVOEO & CAPSTONE FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT SERVICES**

### **Services:**

Teaching Vermonters to define financial goals ● track and budget spending ● begin or increase savings ● understand their credit reports and scores ● reduce debt ● build credit (and the credit score) ● increase access to banking services ● increase assets.

### **Approach:**

We teach regular financial education classes to share key financial concepts and use 1:1 financial coaching to encourage and support individuals in creating personalized plans. Our focus is education that leads to action.

**# Served:** (10/1/13 to 9/30/14) — 991 households

### **What Participants Say:**

*“Very informative, insightful and motivating. You are given clear tools and knowledge of steps to take to help you get out of debt and grow your money in a positive light.”*

*“I still have all my paperwork and read it. I thought, ‘Oh, this is going to be boring.’ Instead, it was great and really informative.”*

*“This class was very beneficial to me! Although I haven't been able to save a lot..., I did pay off a huge back debt and was able to keep my housing (something that I nearly lost).”*

### **Examples of 2014 Partnerships**

- **Spectrum Youth Services to serve at risk youth**
- **Barre “Reach Ahead” Office to help Welfare to Work participants open savings accounts and save**
- **United Way’s Working Bridges to bring financial education to the workplace**

### ***Respondents to an October 2014 Survey of Financial Empowerment Services participants indicates ...***

#### ***Successes:***

88% took news steps to achieve some household financial goals

60% brought bills more current

93% budgeted

48% started or increased savings

53% got help reducing their debt

#### ***Challenges:***

80% of participant households have debt, with \$23,724 as an average, and \$8,000 as a median, amount.

51% have debt in collections

Median credit score is 553

#### ***Other Data:***

Average credit card debt for a Vermont household is \$9,667 (CFED)

46.7% of Vermonters use more expensive subprime credit (CFED)