



community development partnership

Creating opportunities for people to live, work, and thrive on the Lower Cape

First Time Home Buyer Education: Helping to make a lifelong dream into a reality

"The course was really helpful. We learned how to make a budget, how to determine what you can save and how to prioritize your bills."

Jessica Looney, W. Yarmouth
First Time Home Buyer graduate



First Time Home Buyer graduate Jessica Looney, proudly stands on the front step of the family home she recently purchased.

For many of us, purchasing a home will be the single largest investment we will make. Ironically, it is an investment and process that we enter into with little knowledge or guidance. This lack of understanding can at times have serious consequences. New home owners may find themselves over extended, or there may be issues with the house that a home inspection would have identified had one been conducted.

Recognizing this, the CDP developed a First Time Home Buyer education course 12 years ago to help potential home owners navigate the process and budget appropriately. To date, over 550 individuals have graduated from our in person and online First Time Home Buyer workshops.

This past spring 41 people graduated from our first-time homebuyer class. One of those graduates was Jessica Looney, who recently purchased her grandparent's house in West Yarmouth.

Originally from Brockton, Jess' grandfather built a modest ranch on a quiet neighborhood street in West Yarmouth in 1965 that became the family summer home. "I summered there my entire life and even lifeguarded at Nauset beach." In 1983 Jess' grandmother died and although her grandfather kept the house he was never able to return for more than a day trip.

Shortly after Jess graduated from UMass Dartmouth in 2000, her brother was in a near fatal car accident and she returned home to Brockton to help take care of him. After taking care of her

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brother she was eager to start the next phase of her life and she moved into her grandfather's house, keeping it up while it still served as the family's summer house. "It was always my dream to live here."

Jess wanted to stay on the Cape and was hired as a math teacher at Mattakeese Middle School, but she needed a permanent place to stay. "I did not know that this was going to work out and over the years I had looked for other houses. But it was very hard and extremely competitive. Houses would spend virtually no time on the market. It was difficult, but in the end, it was a blessing in disguise."

So when Jess decided to ask her grandfather if she could buy the house and he said yes, she was thrilled.

Jess was unsure of the home buying process, so when a friend who was a real estate agent told her about the CDP's First Time Home Buyer program she seized the opportunity and joined 12 other people in the December 2018 class. The instructors walk participants through the process so that they know how to plan and shop around. Participants are also advised to explore additional ways they can save money on their monthly bills, such as energy assessments. "The course was really helpful and helping you to make a budget, helping you determine what you can save, and prioritizing your bills and helping you realize what was discretionary and what was necessary."

Instructors also encourage participants to get a home inspection and according to Jess, "it was money well spent." When Jess had her inspection, it was discovered that the support columns in the basement were actually temporary and needed to be replaced.

On July 31 Jess closed on her dream house. "I would absolutely recommend that people take the course. Some of the information is dry but the benefits are great. There are opportunities for 0% financing, and a reduced rate on your closing costs. "

We want to congratulate Jess on the purchase of her first home and wish her many years of happiness.