



community development partnership

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

Supporter Spotlight: Michael Herman

“Anyone who is working fulltime in our communities should have the opportunity to find affordable housing here.”

-Michael Herman, Farmer and Orleans Select Board Member

At the CDP, we pride ourselves on the strength of our programs. Whether it's housing or business, our programs are focused on creating opportunities for people to live here, work here and thrive here.

For many supporters, their first introduction to the organization is a workshop, or a story from a friend who has benefited from our programs. One supporter, drawn in by the strength of the CDP's programs, is Michael Herman. Michael is a local farmer and member of the Orleans Select Board.



Michael Herman (right) at the CDP's 2022 Summer Evening on the Farm

Michael's family has deep ties to the Cape. His great grandfather moved to Orleans around the 1900s. He worked as chauffeur for the Winslow family from Boston whose summer home was on Pleasant Bay. Michael's great grandfather settled close by, on Tar Kiln Road where the family started the farm that Michael operates today.

During his childhood, Michael and his three siblings all spent lots of time at the Cape, including holidays and summers with family in Orleans. Michael has fond memories of summers spent above his grandparent's general store in East Orleans and working summer jobs such as lobstering, dishwashing, construction, and bartending. Despite growing up in Boston, the Cape has always felt like home to Michael. “I think my siblings and I all knew this is where we wanted to end up someday,” he says.

Michael moved to the Cape in 2020, during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many, he was initially unsure whether this was a temporary escape or a full-time move. Once his feet got in the sand and his hands hit the dirt, and it was clear the move would be permanent, Michael sought more involvement with the community.

Michael recognized housing as one of the greatest challenges facing Orleans, and the Lower and Outer Cape as a whole. He noted that the current prices some residents are paying for housing are not sustainable and not conducive to a healthy community. He says, “Anyone who is working fulltime in our communities should have

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the opportunity to find affordable housing here.” This commitment to more affordable housing options lead him to join the board of the Orleans Affordable Housing Trust.

Michael first became acquainted with the CDP through his work with the Affordable Housing Trust. The members of the trust attended the CDP’s annual [Housing 101 workshop](#), the introductory workshop to the [Lower Cape Housing Institute](#). “It was a great introduction to housing on the Cape,” says Michael, “with important information for anyone on Cape, municipal official or not, who is interested in understanding the issues our towns face.”

In 2021, Michael was elected to the Orleans Select Board, allowing him to continue his work for more affordable housing. Some of the issues the Board is currently working on include the Governor Prence Inn project, the town sewer project, and other creative solutions to promote year-round housing in town.

One thing Michael has learned in his experience with town government is the importance of education. According to him, “With the Town Meeting system, members of the community are the legislature. They need to be well informed, as much as town officials, so they can make educated decisions.” He recognizes the work the CDP has done to educate town officials and community members. He hopes these continued efforts will encourage more residents to get involved in the fight for housing that’s affordable.

In addition to being an advocate and supporter for the CDP’s work in the community, Michael hosted our annual Summer Evening on the Farm at his farm. “I was very honored to be able to host the event,” he says. “In the future I hope I can use the farm for more community events like that.” This year’s event was the CDP’s most successful to date raising nearly \$350,000 to support our programs.

We are grateful to have members of the community, like Michael, running a small business, engaged in town government and supporting our work to create a diverse community where people can live work and thrive.