



community development partnership

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

Supporter Spotlight...Chris Ward shares his hopes for the Cape

“You work tirelessly to get the message out that if we cannot have affordable housing we cannot have a viable and young workforce. “

Chris Ward, Eastham



Chris Ward knows firsthand the difficulties of the housing crisis on Cape Cod and its ramifications on business owners. A Trust & Estates and Tax lawyer, Chris is a Managing Partner at Latanzi, Spaulding & Landreth in Orleans and has served on the CDP's Advisory Council for over five years.

A native of Granby Massachusetts, Chris had an aunt who lived in Eastham, which became the family's summer gathering place. He spent countless hours on Thumpertown Beach and worked at the Orleans Inn as a dishwasher. After college he traveled and then pursued his law degree at Western New England College and an LLM in Taxation at Georgetown University. In 2002 he was

first hired by a law firm in Hyannis and settled on the Cape for good. He began working at Latanzi in 2007 and commuted from his home in Centerville but recently moved to Eastham to be closer to work.

Chris first learned about the CDP from CEO Jay Coburn. They had served on a couple of boards together and Jay asked him if he would join the CDP's Advisory Council. "I was thrilled. It is such a smart and talented group of people. There is an extraordinary amount of talent, experience and knowledge. This is a truly unique group of people" He also notes that what really stands out is that "No one is there for their ego. They are all on the Advisory Council to help their community and make it a better place for people to live."

A member of the Cape Cod Young Professionals during its formative years, Chris met another member who was working for the CDP. She told him about the CDP's First Time Home Buyer program. At the time, Chris was giving presentations to CCYP on how to buy a home, and found the CDP's program to be a great resource to which he could refer members.

The housing crisis is very real for Chris and he appreciates the work the CDP is doing on this issue. He says housing tops the list of challenges to the hiring process. "We have plenty of clients, but we

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cannot hire enough people because of the lack of housing,” Chris says. “Young people are not staying on the Cape which makes it difficult to find the talent needed.” At times he has to go off Cape to fill positions. Yet these new hires still face their own housing challenges. “We just hired a litigator in his 30s and he can’t find anything to rent so he’s temporarily renting from another attorney at our firm.” Another new hire took five months before she finally found something affordable in Yarmouth. Chris is concerned about “the depletion of the younger workforce on Cape Cod because they are getting priced out of the market.” Chris notes that in the next ten years over 35% of the population on Cape Cod will be over 65 years old. “This is not a sustainable model. People have to think about our future and recognize that this is a major issue.”

Chris is also a fan of the work the CDP does to support local businesses. As an estate planner and tax lawyer he serves a number of business clients. He notes that “The micro loans that the CDP provides are really important, providing an infusion of cash into businesses that they normally wouldn’t be able to access.”

“What I love about the CDP, is that you are out in front of the issues,” he says. “We really appreciate the work that you guys do to educate the public and dispel myths. No one else is doing this.”

Is he hopeful about the future of The Cape? “I am,” says Chris. “It comes from the fact that there are groups like the CDP and the important partnerships that you are making that is keeping these issues front and center. You work tirelessly to get the message out that if we cannot have affordable housing we cannot have a viable and young workforce.”

Chris has also been supporting the CDP through its Community Investment Tax Program, which provides donors with a 50% refundable credit on their state taxes for any gift over \$1000. “It’s a complete no brainer for individuals and business,” Chris says. “You’re able to help an organization and get a return from the state. You are helping the community, the organization, and yourself. It is just a win-win win.”