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Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation and UMass Boston McCormack Graduate School Center for Social Policy Announce New Commonwealth Workforce Coalition Partnership

Boston, Mass. (September 29, 2016) – The Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC) and the University of Massachusetts Boston McCormack Graduate School Center for Social Policy (CSP) are announcing a new partnership to manage the Commonwealth Workforce Coalition (CWC). The partnership began in July 2016 and will extend for one year, after which the Center for Social Policy will operate the program so critical to the state’s workforce development system.

“We are excited to be working with the Center for Social Policy to help support the state’s workforce development system,” said Roger Herzog, CEDAC’s executive director. “CWC is an important resource for workforce professionals across Massachusetts, and we’re pleased to be launching this new partnership with CSP to continue to provide that support.”

The Commonwealth Workforce Coalition (CWC) is a statewide initiative that seeks to strengthen the capacity of Massachusetts’ education, training, and workforce system to produce better employment and earnings outcomes for unemployed and underemployed residents. CWC’s services and activities include: partnering with statewide agencies, businesses, and community based organizations; promoting professional networking and sharing through convening 5 Regional Peer Learning Networks and organizing the annual *Sharing Skills~Building Connections* Conference; developing and facilitating customized professional development workshops; supporting organizational development through technical assistance; connecting organizations and staff with resources, tools, and best practices; and responding to the needs of the field with new and flexible offerings.

CWC serves a membership of more than 5,500 workforce professionals, providing 20 to 25 training and networking events every year across the state along with the annual conference. Funders have included the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimac Valley, SkillWorks, State Street Foundation, the Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation, The Hyams Foundation, the City of Boston Office of Workforce Development, Boston Private Bank & Trust Company, Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) and The Paul & Phyllis Fireman Charitable Foundation, among others.

“Both CSP and CEDAC are committed to ensuring that the state’s workforce development professionals receive the professional development and technical assistance they need to serve their clients and strengthen communities,” said Susan Crandall, CSP’s director. “We are also committed to ensuring as smooth a transition as possible, especially for the individuals who are a part of the education, training and workforce system in Massachusetts and who look to CWC for innovative trainings and networking opportunities.”

CWC has been an affiliate program of CEDAC since 2000. CEDAC is a public-private community development finance institution that provides financial resources and technical expertise for community-based and other non-profit organizations engaged in effective community development in Massachusetts. The agency primarily focuses on providing early stage capital financing for affordable housing and child care facilities development.

The Center for Social Policy (CSP) is based at the McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston. CSP is a research and evaluation center for policy makers, funders, and business leaders focused on researching the root causes of economic hardship and examining the impact of public policies and business practices in order to boost economic well-being. The center’s team brings with them a wealth of workforce and community development experience that matches CWC’s mission.

After achieving years of CWC’s success, CEDAC and CSP reached an agreement to transfer this workforce development program to CSP. CWC’s efforts to strengthen the workforce development system – and by extension, low- and moderate-income communities – is an excellent match for CSP’s mission and work. The transfer will enable CSP to strengthen its community partnerships and extend its impact across the state. So as to make sure that the transition is as smooth and orderly as possible, CEDAC and CSP have agreed to enter into a partnership for one year. CEDAC will work with CSP to transition CWC’s operations over the next 12 months. The 14th annual *Sharing Skills~Building Connections* conference will take place in Spring 2017.

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About CEDAC

CEDAC is a public-private community development finance institution that provides financial resources and technical expertise for community-based and other non-profit organizations engaged in effective community development in Massachusetts. CEDAC’s work supports three key building blocks of community development: affordable housing, workforce development, and early care and education. CEDAC is also active in state and national housing preservation policy research and development and is widely recognized as a leader in the non-profit community development industry. For additional information on CEDAC and its current projects, please visit www.cedac.org.

About the Center for Social Policy

The Center for Social Policy at University of Massachusetts Boston McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies researches the root causes of economic hardship and examines the impact of

public policies and business practices in order to boost economic well-being. For additional information, please visit www.umb.edu/csp.