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## **WALTHAM ALLIANCE TO CREATE HOUSING ACCEPTS GRANT OF \$37,000.00 FROM THE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BANK CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

**Waltham, Franklin, Medford MA** – Alex Marthews a resident of Medford and Executive Director of the Waltham Alliance to Create Housing (WATCH) in Waltham accepts a \$37,000 grant from the Benjamin Franklin Bank Charitable Foundation, headquartered in Franklin.

The ‘English for Employment’ program addresses the need to improve English language skills required in the common workplace. Graduates can advance in the job market and afford better housing and quality of life. The new ‘English for Life’ curriculum allows the students to achieve fluency to handle not only work situations, but also everyday activities – for example, accessing local services or receiving medical care. Students provide input into the curriculum. “This grant will allow us to offer our programs to more students. It will allow people to have real power over their lives, integrate more effectively into society, and build a better life,” said Marthews.

The Grant also allows WATCH to incorporate a full-time staff member to coordinate their two English Instruction programs, follow up program case management, and evaluate those programs more precisely. “English for Employment,’ created in 2002, and our new pilot program ‘English for Life,’ go beyond traditional ESL programs – they are unique curriculums to foster conversational fluency,” added Marthews.

“The Foundation focuses on four primary areas: education, health and human services, youth programs and community development. We understand that there is a very high demand throughout the state for English programs like this one. We are helping members of the immigrant population advance their careers and integrate the community,” said Thomas R. Venables, President of the Benjamin Franklin Bank Charitable Foundation.



Shown above from left to right: Thomas R. Venables, President & CEO of Benjamin Franklin Bank and the Benjamin Franklin Bank Charitable Foundation, Zepur Kahwajian, AVP/Commercial Banking Officer of Benjamin Franklin Bank, Marci Diamond, President of the Board of Directors of Waltham Alliance to Create Housing (WATCH), Alex Marthews, Executive Director of WATCH and John Sergi, VP/Commercial Lending and Regional Team Leader of Benjamin Franklin Bank.

**BOILERPLATE:** The Benjamin Franklin Bank Charitable Foundation services the communities of Bellingham, Blackstone, Foxboro, Franklin, Hopedale, Medfield, Medway, Mendon, Milford, Millis, Newton, Norfolk, Waltham and Wrentham. For more information about the Benjamin Franklin Bank Charitable Foundation, please contact Mariane E. Broadhurst, SVP Retail Banking for Benjamin Franklin Bank at (508) 528-7000 ext. 360 or [mbroadhurst@benfranklinbank.com](mailto:mbroadhurst@benfranklinbank.com).

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