

*Environmental Business Council of New England, Inc.  
Sustainable Solutions Lab at the University of Massachusetts Boston*

## **Building Social Capital for Climate Resilient Communities**

Thursday, June 6, 2024

**Hosted by:**

**Foley Hoag LLP**

155 Seaport Boulevard  
Boston MA 02210

**and**

Streaming virtually on Zoom



EBC & Sustainable Solutions Lab at UMass Boston – Quarterly Climate Adaptation Forum

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[www.climateadaptationforum.org](http://www.climateadaptationforum.org)

## AGENDA

**9:00 a.m. Registration & Networking**

**9:30 a.m. Welcome:** Gabriela Boscio Santos, Forum Organizer  
Associate Director, Sustainable Solutions Lab  
University of Massachusetts Boston

**Program Introduction**

- Alex Papali, Forum Co-Chair  
Director of Regional Economies, Center for Economic Democracy

**9:50 a.m. The Critical Role of Social Capital and Social Infrastructure in Resilience**

- Dr. Daniel Aldrich, Professor, Political Science and Public Policy  
Director of the Resilience Studies Program  
Co-Director of the Global Resilience Institute  
Northeastern University

**10:10 a.m. From Loneliness to Connection: Why it matters**

- Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience  
Brigham Young University

**10:30 a.m. Break**

**10:50 a.m. Community Ownership and Partnership**

- Lydia Lowe, Executive Director, Chinatown Community Land Trust

**11:10 a.m. Strengthening Tribal Community Through Social Resilience**

- Troy Phillips, Enrolled member and Sub-Chief, Hassanamisco Nipmuc Tribe  
Chairperson and Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs

**11:30 a.m. Social Resilience through Local Climate Planning? Cohasset, MA's work through MVP 2.0**

- Peyton Siler Jones, Founder and Principal, Siler Climate Consulting
- Montanna Cassel, Sustainability Planner & Grant Coordinator, Town of Cohasset –  
*presenting virtually*

**11:50 a.m. Moderated Discussion**

**Panel Moderator:** Nasser Brahim, Forum Co-Chair  
Senior Climate Resiliency Specialist, Woods Hole Group

**Panelists:**

- Dr. Daniel Aldrich, Northeastern University
- Montanna Cassel, Town of Cohasset
- Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad, BYU
- Lydia Lowe, Chinatown Community Land Trust
- Troy Phillips, Hassanamisco Nipmuc Tribe; MA Commission on Indian Affairs
- Peyton Siler Jones, Siler Climate Consulting

**12:30 p.m. Adjourn**

## FORUM CO-CHAIRS

**Nasser Brahim**, Senior Climate Resiliency Specialist

Woods Hole Group

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Mr. Brahim is a Senior Climate Resiliency Specialist at Woods Hole Group, an integrated coastal engineering, science, and technology firm. He helps coastal communities build climate resilience through vulnerability assessments, resiliency plans, and design and operational improvements. Mr. Brahim has advised local, State, and non-profit partners on how to integrate climate resiliency considerations in policies and regulations, including Boston, Hingham, Hull, Gloucester, Oak Bluffs, Swampscott, Westport, Massport, and the Conservation Law Foundation. He has also led climate resiliency projects with municipalities, wastewater utilities, non-profit land conservancies, higher education institutions, and real estate property managers. His projects have earned numerous engineering, planning, and design awards and been covered by NPR, The Boston Globe, New York Times, The Washington Post, and PBS NewsHour. Mr. Brahim is the Board Vice-President of the Mystic River Watershed Association and a certified consultant under the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. He holds a Master of Environmental Management from Yale University and Bachelor of Arts from Florida International University.

**Alex Papali**, Director of Regional Economies

Center for Economic Democracy

434 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite #201, Boston, MA 02118

alex@economicdemocracy.us

Alex has lived in the Boston area 30 years, organizing locally since high school. His areas of focus have ranged from prison issues to immigrant rights to tenant organizing—with the common goal of addressing structural causes of injustice and obstacles to sustainability.

In prior roles, Alex has worked towards 'energy democracy' and fair access to the benefits of energy efficiency programs, clean local energy infrastructure through "community microgrids," and a robust green economy that empowers communities at the frontlines of climate disruption and systemic inequities. At CED, he supports municipal innovations like participatory budgeting, statewide worker-ownership infrastructure and federal-level interventions to ensure community control of new investments and democratic governance.

A perpetual student at the University of Life, Alex is actively plotting his next adventure off the grid.

## SPEAKERS

**Dr. Daniel Aldrich**, Professor, Political Science and Public Policy

Director of the Resilience Studies Program

Co-Director of the Global Resilience Institute

Northeastern University

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An award winning author, Aldrich has published five books including Building Resilience and Black Wave, more than 95 peer-reviewed articles, and written op-eds for the New York Times, CNN, HuffPost, and many other media outlets. He has spent more than 5 years in India, Japan, and Africa carrying out fieldwork and his work has been funded by the Fulbright Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the Abe Foundation, and the Japan Foundation, among other institutions and was the 2021 Klein Lecturer at Northeastern University.

**Montanna Cassel**, Sustainability Planner & Grant Coordinator  
Town of Cohasset  
41 Highland Avenue, Cohasset, MA 02025  
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Montanna Cassel (She/Her) is the Sustainability Planner and Grant Coordinator for the Town of Cohasset, a small, coastal community in South Shore Massachusetts. She studied Environmental Public Policy during her undergrad at Towson University and is currently pursuing her Master's in Sustainability at Harvard University's Extension School. As Cohasset's Sustainability Planner, Montanna has focused on flood mitigation efforts, community engagement surrounding climate event preparation, and sustainable waste management practices. Montanna has increased the Town's engagement capacity through the MVP 2.0 grant process and hosting various activities such as stakeholder forums, site walks, and coffee discussions for other grants.

**Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad**, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience  
Brigham Young University  
1132 KMBL Provo, UT 84602  
801-422-1324 | [julianne.holt-lunstad@byu.edu](mailto:julianne.holt-lunstad@byu.edu)

Julianne Holt-Lunstad is a professor of psychology and neuroscience and director of the Social Connection & Health Lab at Brigham Young University. She is also the founding scientific chair and board member for the U.S. Foundation for Social Connection and the Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection.

Dr. Holt-Lunstad is an international scientific expert whose research focuses on the individual and population health effects, biological mechanisms, and effective strategies to mitigate risk and promote protection associated with social connection. Her research has been seminal in the recognition of social isolation and loneliness as risk factors for early mortality. As the lead scientific editor for a US Surgeon General's [Advisory and Framework for a National Strategy](#), her work also focuses on translating evidence into practice and policy. She serves as a scientific advisor and regularly consults for organizations across sectors aimed at addressing this issue. She has provided [expert testimony](#) in a [US Congressional Hearing](#), served as a member of multiple National Academy of Sciences [consensus committees](#), the UK Cross Departmental Loneliness Team, European Joint Research Council, World Health Organization, and a subject matter expert for the [Gravity Project](#), Commit to Connect the national clearinghouse of interventions and the CDC. Her work has been widely recognized within her discipline, including several awards, and is regularly highlighted in major media outlets.

**Lydia Lowe**, Executive Director  
Chinatown Community Land Trust  
28 Ash Street, Boston, MA 02111  
617-259-1503 | [lydia@chinatownclt.org](mailto:lydia@chinatownclt.org)

Lydia Lowe led the staff of the Chinese Progressive Association for 30 years before becoming the executive director of Chinatown CLT. She has helped Chinatown residents organize for a voice in the neighborhood, to preserve more than a thousand units of subsidized housing, to secure public parcels for community development, and to win bilingual ballots for Chinese-speaking voters.

Lydia is a co-founder of the Chinatown Master Plan Committee, Asian and Pacific Islanders Civic Action Network (APIs CAN!), the Homes for All campaign, Chinese Progressive Political Action, and Right to the City VOTE! She serves on the state's EJ Advisory Council, the City of Boston's Commemoration Commission, and the Community Advisory Board of UMass/Boston's Institute for Asian American Studies.

**Troy Phillips**, Enrolled member and Sub-Chief of the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Tribe,  
Chairperson and Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs  
[t3runwolf@aol.com](mailto:t3runwolf@aol.com)

Troy Running Wolf Phillips is an enrolled citizen of the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band. He is considered a sub-chief within his tribe to assist or Sosqua (Chief) in tribal affairs. He also holds a seat on the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs. The Commission's rolls are to assist Native American individuals, tribes and organizations in their relationship with the state and local government agencies and to advise the Commonwealth in matters pertaining to Native American.

**Peyton Siler Jones**, Founder and Principal  
Siler Climate Consulting  
PO Box 2455, South Portland, ME 04116  
siler.climate.consulting@gmail.com

Peyton Siler Jones (she/her) is a local climate planner with expertise in municipal climate policy and resilience planning. She's committed to facilitating and supporting community-driven solutions for decarbonized, resilient, and racially equitable cities.

Peyton brings 10 years of experience supporting climate solutions with a focus facilitation, equitable community engagement, local climate planning, program management and evaluation, policy analysis, project management, and strategic communications. Peyton started Siler Climate Consulting in 2023 with the purpose of working on local climate solutions through the lens of social justice. Peyton served as the Sustainability Program Director at the National League of Cities (NLC) Center for Municipal Practice. Prior to joining NLC, she worked as a consultant at Linnean Solutions, where she designed local resilience plans in Massachusetts and Maine.

Peyton also bring experience in the public sector with the City of Boston. Peyton worked both as a Climate Resilience Project Manager where she led community engagement for neighborhood scale resilience planning and as a Communications Manager. Peyton holds a Masters from Tufts University in Urban Planning and Environmental Policy. Her research and masters thesis at Tufts focused on centering the voices and demands of movements for climate justice in local and regional climate policy and planning.