



Does Financial Literacy Change Lives? Yes!

An important step toward developing church financial leadership among clergy is to support the financial well-being of clergy and to provide access to relevant financial education. To date, our work expanding opportunities to increase financial literacy among pastors has impacted more than 2,000 individuals and congregations. Join the leaders highlighted below who have taken steps to change lives through financial literacy education and empowerment.

We are equipping stronger leaders and congregations to transform their own lives, their communities and the world.



Clergy Financial Literacy Education: Conference Funding Partnerships Continue Across the Connection

Since 2017, our pilot projects have tested diverse training models. From conference to district events, to retreats, webinars and incentives, we celebrate the creativity and impact of our 25 projects

completed or in process. Each project requires significant partnerships with conferences, foundations, districts or churches.

Below are inspiring highlights from project participants and scholarship recipients funded through the Clergy Financial Well-Being Initiative:

- **West Virginia participants** at a conference-wide financial literacy event in 2018 reflected that:
“It helped renew my thoughts about funding.”
“Learn new and remember (skills) in a very relaxed but well-defined training.”
“I wish more people from my church had come to this institute!”
- **Participant at a Wespath Clergy Benefits Academy:**
“My passive decisions were escapist, and spending was an unhealthy stress response.”
- **The Kentucky United Methodist Foundation:** Lexington Kentucky’s First UMC Fellows Project offers participants practical training and debt avoidance in the form of work exchange for seminary tuition and housing. **One participant wrote:**
“David [Bowles] well demonstrates how today’s church competes with myriad organizations dependent on charitable giving, and how church stewardship may again be instilled as an elemental aspect of discipleship. I expect this training to be immediately beneficial to my ministry.”
- A project participant implemented a creative and aggressive strategy for eliminating debt and has now paid it off.

Contact us for information about grant funding for a project in your conference.



Financial Literacy Grants: Board of Ordained Ministry—Residence in Ministry Focus

We are pleased to welcome new conference project partners in New Jersey, Peninsula-Delaware, and New England, who are offering financial education to their provisional members during residency. Consider including financial literacy content to your provisional members training. Ensure your future clergy receive the financial education needed to become financial stewardship leaders.

Review the [Project Guidelines](#) and [contact](#) for grant information.



SPOTLIGHT

Preacher's Aid Society of New England

Preachers' Aid has been assisting New England Conference clergy through their Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) since 2003. HELP is a student loan debt refinancing program offering a 1.25% interest rate to help clergy pay off residual undergraduate and seminary loans. Since 2003, clergy have repaid over \$500,000 which is reinvested in this revolving loan program for future participants.

The Clergy Financial Well-Being Initiative is seeking partnerships with conferences and United Methodist-related financial institutions interested in expanding clergy debt refinancing opportunities.

[Contact](#) for information about funds to support new debt refinancing programs.



Debt Refinancing

On November 5, the Clergy Financial Well-Being Initiative sponsored a webinar featuring three conference-based clergy debt refinancing programs. The webinar features Katharine Yarnell, Executive Director of the Iowa Foundation, Wes Palmer, Executive Director of the Preacher's Aid Society of New England and Brad Crossley, Director of Financial Services of the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina. Learn from these leaders about the impact and administration of current debt refinancing programs. Click [here](#) to see a recording of the presentation.



Financial Well-Being Supports Total Well-Being

HealthFlex Well-Being Grants

On October 14, 2019, HealthFlex began accepting applications for well-being grants.

Who Is Eligible to Apply

Any UMC conference or employer who has adopted HealthFlex for 2020.

Requirements for the Grant

Design and implement a plan to improve well-being in your conference and share ideas, plans and any outcomes at the HealthFlex Mini-Summit the following year.

Application Deadline

December 31, 2019

Need More Information

Contact welnessteam@wespath.org

[APPLY HERE!](#)

Successfully expanding financial literacy depends on strategic collaboration. We look forward to hearing from you!

Connected in Christian Service,

Dale Jones, Wespith Project Director

Bonnie Marden, Project Manager

David Bell, Project Chair

Lisa Greenwood, NAUMF Executive Director

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