



## community development partnership

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

### Helping Local Artists with the Art of Business

**“I am not the most technologically savvy. Pam was there to hold my hand through the whole process.”**

*- Maureen McCarron, Artist, Provincetown*

Provincetown is renowned for its art scene. For over a century, talented artists have flocked to the small town on the end of our peninsula, with many settling for good. While most are passionate about their creative medium, many need help turning their art into a business. The Community Development Partnership helps local artists like Maureen McCarron improve their business skills.



Maureen says she has always been an artist. She recalls visiting her ceramicist grandmother and playing with the clay as a child. Her paintings were featured in high school and college galleries and won many awards. While painting was not always her primary source of income, she always enjoyed doing it for the over thirty years she lived in New York City.

In 2011, Maureen relocated to Provincetown. Painting, for the most part, had taken a back seat as her creative outlet. She began working on several different writing projects instead, including a memoir. However, after the 2016 presidential election, her writing became a vent for her frustrations. It was no longer productive, so she decided to try something new.



Maureen began painting again. Angels had been a primary focus in her prior work, but now birds have become her muse. According to Maureen, birds play a similar archetypal role as angels. They watch over us and can be harbingers of events like bad weather. Her paintings quickly took off in town. Within six months, she began showing her work in a gallery where she sold multiple pieces.

After that, she began looking for ways to increase her exposure. Soon, she learned about the artist workshop series at the Provincetown Commons, co-hosted by the CDP. She found the workshops helpful, especially *Writing and Talking About Your Art*, taught by local artist Peter Hocking. She also connected with Pam Andersen, the CDP's Director of Business and Credit Programs, and learned more about our small business technical assistance. She aimed to figure out how to make money without relying on a gallery. Galleries typically take a portion of the sale proceeds and reserve rights to the piece while it is displayed. Maureen wanted to try and do as much as she could independently.

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Maureen and Pam brainstormed ideas to improve the business, including expanding the products she offered. “Most people aren’t going to spend hundreds of dollars on a painting, but many will buy a print or a mug, and they still get a unique piece of art,” Maureen said.

Maureen’s website is another item the pair worked on. The site was functional but not optimal. It did not have an online shop for her to sell her art. With Pam’s help, Maureen applied for and received a grant from the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation’s Digital Empower Grant Program. This program provides small businesses with funds to pay for digital services to increase their digital capacity, including professional services and training or hardware and equipment.

With the funds, she first purchased a new computer for her business. She also hired a web developer, and at Pam’s suggestion, Maureen connected with Josiah Cole of [Colewebdev](#), an Eastham based web-design firm focusing on small local businesses. She has found working with Josiah very rewarding, noting his commitment to teaching her the skills needed to manage the website.

While the website development is on brief hold during the busy summer season, Maureen is excited about the progress she has already made and for what is to come. “If you had told me this winter I would be undertaking a project like this, I would have said you were crazy.”

You can learn more about Maureen’s art by visiting her website [maurenmccarron.com](http://maurenmccarron.com), or on Instagram [@MaureenMcCarronArts](#). She is also can be found at the Gallery Garage all summer, behind the Packard Gallery at 372 Commercial Street in Provincetown.

To learn more about the CDP’s Business and Credit Programs, visit [capecdp.org/local-business](http://capecdp.org/local-business).