
WATERBURY OIC

VOL. 2, NO.8



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AUGUST 2026

OUR STORIES ARE ECONOMIC POWER

Building Skills. Supporting Businesses. Strengthening Waterbury.

Every business has a story. Behind every storefront is an idea. Behind every entrepreneur is a reason they started. Behind every nonprofit is a mission. Behind every neighborhood organization are people working to make their community stronger.

The challenge is making sure people hear those stories.

Today, digital communication is no longer optional for businesses and organizations trying to reach customers, supporters, employees, and the community.

Photography. Video. Social media. Websites. Podcasts. Digital marketing.

These tools have become part of how business gets done.

That means they are also workforce skills.

This month, Waterbury OIC launched Voices of Waterbury, a six-session media training program that introduces residents to storytelling, communications, and digital content creation. But the larger vision goes beyond a single training program.

WOIC sees an opportunity to connect workforce development with community and economic development. Imagine Waterbury residents learning marketable media skills and then using those skills to help Waterbury businesses, nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and community organizations tell their stories.

- Residents gain experience.
- Businesses gain visibility.
- Organizations gain content.

And dollars, talent, and opportunity remain connected to the community. That is what community-based workforce development can look like.

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RINGING THE BELL: THEN & NOW

THEN — August 2016: Building Community Without Building Walls

In August 2016, Ringing the Bell reflected on a world experiencing fear, violence, division, and growing concerns about safety. Against that backdrop, Reggie returned to Reverend Leon Sullivan's belief in OIC as a community institution grounded in faith, openness, opportunity, and inclusion.

The column challenged communities not to allow fear to become a barrier between people. Instead, it called for greater unity, participation, and collective responsibility—reminding readers that meaningful change requires people who are willing not only to talk about solutions, but to act on them.

NOW — August 2026: Creating a Place to Connect, Learn & Create

A decade later, that philosophy continues at Waterbury OIC. Our doors remain open to residents looking for skills, resources, connections, and opportunities to move forward. And this month, those doors are opening to a new kind of training through Voices of Waterbury.

Participants are coming together to learn storytelling, digital communications, and media skills that can be used to strengthen their careers while helping local businesses, nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and community organizations become more visible.

That connection matters. When local people gain skills and use those skills to support local organizations and businesses, workforce development becomes community development.

We're still ringing the bell—for inclusion, connection, opportunity, and people willing to turn ideas into action.