

# CONTACT FUND

## The Real Deal – Funding the Disability Opportunity Fund

How we select our borrower organizations is one of the most frequently asked questions we receive. Contact Fund's most recent loan to the [Disability Opportunity Fund \(DOF\)](http://thedof.org) ([thedof.org](http://thedof.org)) in July provides a wonderful opportunity to share our loan selection process.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, Contact Fund made a \$100k loan to the Disability Opportunity Fund, which is a New York based 501c(3) tax exempt organization dedicated to providing opportunity for advancing the needs of people with disabilities and their families. Their mission is to serve people with disabilities and their families so that they are able to obtain affordable, accessible and supportive housing through a seamless and rewarding process.

Contact Fund's ability to form productive partnerships with community development finance institutions (CDFI's) that are providing critical capital to high-impact community development projects is a vital part of our work. Financial intermediaries are able to efficiently provide financial services and make loans and investments to a network of 'on-the-ground' providers. Contact Fund's business strategy includes a mix of loans that leverage the infrastructure of established CDFI's as well as direct loans to individual community development corporations (CDC's), nonprofits and social enterprises (for-profit ventures with a social mission).

Contact Fund was introduced to DOF through one of its partners, Urban Oasis, who knew of DOF and had recently attended a conference that DOF co-hosted with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston in Washington, DC in January titled [\*Opportunities for Community Development Finance in the Disability Market\*](#).

The disability market presents some very exciting new opportunities for Contact Fund. Not only does this market serve low-income and low-wealth populations, but there are opportunities to channel private investor capital from families and organizations that care deeply about creating opportunities for disabled persons.

The loan that Contact Fund made to DOF is syndicating a piece of an existing construction loan that DOF made to build [Imagine Academy \(imagineacademyforautism.org\)](http://imagineacademyforautism.org), a school serving autistic children in Brooklyn. Since DOF is a young and emerging CDFI, Contact Fund capital provides an important source of liquidity as the fund continues to grow. As Mark Reed puts it, "this loan was the perfect fit for Contact Fund. It provides critical capital to an emerging CDFI serving a market that matches our mission, and is being leveraged to expand an existing school that will now be able to serve 75 autistic children in our community."

For more information about Contact Fund's loan to DOF and the Imagine Academy, please contact Jennifer Trepinski, Contact Fund's Analyst, at [jennifer@contactfund.com](mailto:jennifer@contactfund.com) or 212-209-3826.