Bridging the Gap: Empowering Underbanked Communities with Instant Payments

November 5, 2026

3:00 to 4:00 PM ET

Connecting Communities

Today’s moderator



Sergio Galeano
Community and Economic Development Advisor
Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

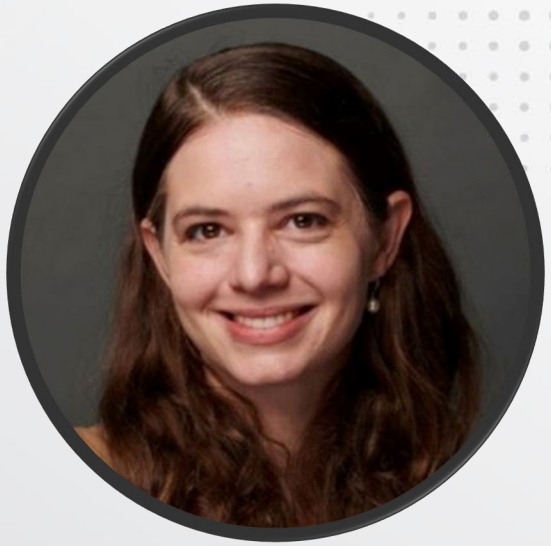
Connecting Communities

Today’s speakers



Jason Andrade
Director of Research and Membership Engagement

Partnership for Financial Equity



Nerissa Aslantas
Senior Product Manager

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston



Brian Clarke
Deputy Director

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Connecting Communities

Housekeeping items

- Views expressed during this session are those of the speakers and are intended for informational purposes. They do not necessarily represent the views of Fed Communities or the Federal Reserve System.
- Microphones have been muted. Please use the **Q&A** feature to submit questions.
- Engage with us on social media using the hashtag #connectingcommunities.
- Visit fedcommunities.org for articles, resources, and data from the Federal Reserve System.
- This session, including the presentation, video, and podcast, will be available on fedcommunities.org within two weeks of today's event.

Connecting Communities

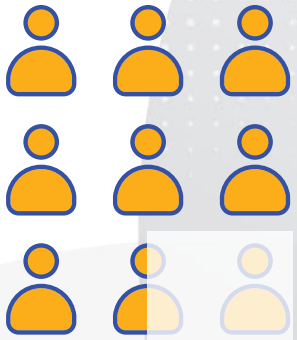


Nerissa Aslantas
Senior Product Manager
Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Connecting Communities


GAS
66
GARAGE

Payroll / earned wage access

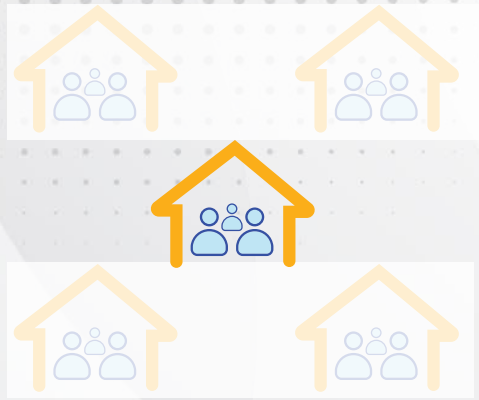


85%

of employees across all industries report feeling stress about money



of households reported difficulty paying at least one bill in the past year



1 in 5

families has less than two weeks of liquid savings

Instant payment **characteristics**

Faster Payments

- **Only appear** instant
- Funds provided before settlement
- Additional steps to transfer funds
- Potential fees, delays

FedNow Service ***Instant Payments***

- Available 24x7x365
- Settled in seconds
- Immediate funds availability
- Irrevocable & secure
- Credit push only
- Data-rich messages

Why FedNow Matters for Financial Inclusion

Instant payments use cases

- Off-cycle payroll & earned wage access
- Instant Bill pay
- Rent payments
- Small business payments
- Insurance disbursements
- Disaster relief payments
- Public sector transactions
- Online marketplace seller payouts

Industries Poised for Instant Payment Growth

- Health Care
- Insurance
- Public Sector
- Brokerage
- Small Business
- Real Estate

FedNow Service now part of U.S. Treasury's Digital Payout program

FedNow Service participants can now receive instant disaster relief disbursements for their customers

- Differentiator for financial institutions enabling instant access to these funds
- These disbursements clear and settle like other FedNow transactions
- Other federal payments might be made via the FedNow Service in the future

> *"We believe these immediate disbursements will have a positive impact on our customers and the community."*

Max Raybon, AAP, ACH/Treasury Management Support Manager
CB&S Bank



PARTNERSHIP for FINANCIAL EQUITY



Jason Andrade

Director of Research and Membership Engagement

Partnership for Financial Equity

Connecting Communities

WHO WE ARE

A community development nonprofit, built as a partnership

Financial industry professionals, community leaders and government officials working together to close racial wealth gaps and improve the financial futures of low- and moderate-income households.

Convene

Financial Equity Summit each fall since 2022, 2022, bringing bankers, nonprofits and government together

Research

25+ years of mortgage and small business lending reports, and the 2025 Trust in Banking Banking survey

Connect

Bank On Massachusetts coalition and Elevating Equity Awards for partnerships that work

1990

Founded as the Massachusetts Community & Banking Council

1994

Basic Banking for Massachusetts, the first statewide low-cost account program

1996

Massachusetts Homeownership Collaborative

1999

Don’t Borrow Trouble anti-predatory lending campaign

2007

Our research leads to the Mortgage Lender Community Investment law

TRUST IN BANKING · 2025

What we set out to understand

01 **What does “trust” actually mean to consumers?**

FDIC data names lack of trust as a top reason people are unbanked, yet little research explains what trust means or how it is sustained.

02 **How much do people with accounts trust banks?**

Earlier work studied trust only as a reason for being unbanked. We also measured it among the banked, who were largely overlooked.

03 **Can we fill a federal data gap?**

The OCC proposed an annual trust-in-banking survey in 2022, but it saw little movement, so PFE ran its own.

04 **What can Massachusetts act on?**

Local, actionable insight for banks and community organizations, beyond national statistics.

642

Massachusetts residents with household income under $80,000

200

Latino respondents, through an oversample

Sept 2025

Online survey in English and Spanish

±4.9 pts

Margin of error, conducted by The MassINC Polling Group

PFE Trust in Banking survey, conducted by The MassINC Polling Group, September 2–19, 2025

BARRIERS TO FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Trust is broad but shallow, and services decide it

25%
strongly trust banks, though 85% trust them at least somewhat

8%
of lower-income residents are unbanked, 3× the state average

50%+
use alternative financial services, rising to 75% of Latino households

34%
of unbanked residents say account fees are too high



Technology

47% prefer to bank by mobile app, 59% of Latino residents, vs. 28% in person.



Speed

24% of the unbanked need quick access to cash; 12% say checks clear too slowly.



Transparency

Clear, honest information drives trust. Fees and poor service top reasons for distrust.



Service gaps

Latino residents use check cashers at 4× the rate of white residents (32% vs. 8%).

Source: PFE Trust in Banking survey, MassINC Polling Group, Sept 2025 (n=642, MA residents, household income under $80K)

INSTANT PAYMENTS

Where instant payments matter most

53%

keep an account to receive paychecks

Getting paid

Wages, gig earnings, tax refunds, and benefits available in seconds remove a core reason to pay a check casher.

48%

keep an account to pay bills

Paying bills on time

Confirmed, same-moment payments help avoid late fees and overdrafts, the costs that most drive distrust.

59%

of Latino residents prefer to bank by app

Sending money to people

Instant, low-cost transfers to family and friends compete with money orders and prepaid cards.

What builds trust

Flat, upfront pricing

Match the clarity that draws people to check cashers

Fraud protection and recourse

“When my bank account was hacked, they did nothing to help me.”

Built into no-fee accounts

Bank On–certified: no overdraft fees, low or no monthly fees

Source: PFE Trust in Banking survey, MassINC Polling Group, Sept 2025 (n=642, MA residents, household income under $80K)

Closing remarks and requests

- Please complete the post-event survey.
- Materials from today's event will be available on YouTube and the Connecting Communities website within two weeks of today's event.
- Visit **www.fedcommunities.org** for more Fed resources on community development topics.
- Follow Fed Communities on social media. We're on LinkedIn, X, Instagram, and Facebook.
- Subscribe to the Fed Communities monthly newsletter at fedcommunities.org/About Us/Subscribe.
- View previous Connecting Communities events on fedcommunities.org/connecting-communities.

