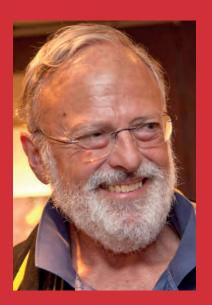




PEOPLE FIRST.
HOUSING ALWAYS.

2017 IMPACT REPORT



IN MEMORIAM STEVEN J. RIOFF

In January, 2018, Metro Housing Boston was deeply saddened by the passing of Steven J. Rioff, co-chair of our Board of Directors. Steven served on the Metro Housing Board of Directors for nearly thirty years, including the past eighteen as one of its co-chairs.

Steven was the founder of Metropolitan Housing Incorporated that merged with the Boston Housing Partnership in 1991 to become Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership. Under Steven's leadership, Metro Housing worked with partners throughout the affordable housing field and across many sectors to evolve into a multi-faceted regional housing organization that addresses the dynamic housing needs facing individuals and families in the region. His vision and generosity preserve the founding values that Steven held close and passed on to everyone he came in contact with — that every person in Greater Boston should always have a place to call home.

OUR MISSION

We mobilize wide-ranging resources to provide innovative and personalized services that lead families and individuals to housing stability, economic security, and an improved quality of life.

Metro Housing|Boston
2017 IMPACT REPORT

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Graphic Design: Stefan Peterson, Words by Design





Top: (L-R) Governor Charlie Baker, Executive Director Chris Norris, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh at 9th Annual Founders Celebration.

Center: Governor Baker chats with Lois Edgerly, wife of Metro Housing founder Bill Edgerly (L).

Bottom: Rodney, a Metro Housing participant, shares his story with the audience.

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to share Metro Housing|Boston's FY 2017 Impact Report.

This report highlights a dynamic year of change and success, but a year also touched by sadness. Just a few weeks before going to press, Metro Housing's Board co-chair and founder of Metropolitan Boston Housing, Inc., Steven Rioff, passed away. As we celebrate the impact we have had in our region, we honor Steven's commitment to Metro Housing and dedicate this report to his memory.

In the following pages, you will see firsthand how Metro Housing has impacted the lives of those who were close to homelessness. You will read about **Inez**, a mother of four who fell behind in her rent and was about to be evicted until she heard about the RAFT program at our colocation site in Chelsea. Inez was one of 1,474 families that Metro Housing helped stay in their homes and avoid shelter in FY 17.

You will read about **Roseann** and how our Specialized Intensive Program and Services (SIPS) team helped her avoid homelessness while she was battling cancer. SIPS, which works with the region's most vulnerable residents, assisted 195 households, preserving housing for 98% of them.

You will read the inspiring story of **Valerie**, who as a single mom and a voucher program participant gained economic security by enrolling in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. Valerie was one of 52 people who graduated last year.

Metro Housing's Inspections and Property Owner Services continued to strengthen relationships with the more than 4,300 property owners who ensure that renters live in safe, decent homes. Read about the impact that **Norman and Nancy** Daniel have had on hundreds of tenants by renting to voucher program participants for more than 20 years.

In addition to the thousands of families we worked with, the past year also witnessed Metro Housing reveal a new brand and move in to a new office in Roxbury Crossing – all to better serve our families and partners. We look forward to serving more families in 2018 and will continue to advocate to increase the amount of deeply affordable housing in our region. Please visit **metrohousingboston.org** to find out how you can help to ensure that everyone in Greater Boston has a place to call home. Thank you for your support.

Christopher T. Maria Cyntha facoure

Christopher T. Norris

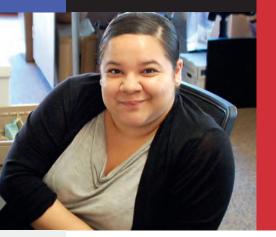
Executive Director

Cynthia LacasseChair of the Board



1

WIDE RANGING RESOURCES



Metro Housing|Boston's highly customized services address a wide range of housing related issues to help residents of Greater Boston who are homeless or at risk of losing their home navigate the public and private services available to them. Using our extended network of service providers, Metro Housing connects people with resources to help them in areas such as legal aid, housing search, and back rent.



HOUSING CONSUMER EDUCATION CENTER (HCEC)

Metro Housing|Boston serves as the HCEC for Greater Boston. Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, it is one of nine HCECs located throughout the state. There is no income limit to participate. Free and open to the public, HCECs educate and assist tenants and property owners and respond to constituent issues reported by elected officials.

In FY 17, Metro Housing's HCEC responded to:

12,089

housing inquiries, including

7,198

brief counseling walk-ins.

If people feel that they are at risk of being evicted or facing a situation that may result in homelessness, we encourage them to visit our HCEC to discuss their housing needs with a counselor.

RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES IN TRANSITION (RAFT)

The state-funded RAFT program is a tool used by the HCEC team to provide eligible households up to \$4,000 per 12-month period. RAFT lets families stay in their homes, helps them move out of homelessness into new apartments, keeps utilities on, and stabilizes families.

In FY 17:

1,474

families received RAFT assistance.

\$2,614

Average benefit received

\$3.85 million

Total funds distributed

"I would be living on the street. Matt made me feel like he wanted to help. I feel like I won the lottery." —INEZ



Inez received assistance from the RAFT program, enabling her to keep her apartment in East Boston.

A CONNECTION PREVENTS EVICTION

nez was the sole income earner in her family. As the mother of four children and the caretaker of her elderly mother, a reduction in her hours and income as a medical assistant in 2015 set Inez on a path that she feared would lead to homelessness.

As she fell further behind on rent while paying other household and medical bills, Inez's landlord brought her to housing court to begin eviction proceedings.

This is where most stories like Inez's do not end well. Instead, Inez was referred to CONNECT and Metro Housing|Boston, partners in a comprehensive effort to improve the financial mobility of families with low income based in Chelsea.

Inez acknowledges how lucky she was on the day she went to Housing Court. "If I hadn't been referred to CONNECT or Metro Housing, I probably would have been in the streets or a shelter," she said.

Working on Inez's behalf, Metro Housing case manager Matt Gibson negotiated with the apartment management company to find out what it would take to keep her family in their apartment. With this knowledge, Inez applied for RAFT, which stopped the eviction, paid off her rental arrears, and provided a stable home while she increased her hours so that she could pay rent on her own.

Inez is grateful for the work Matt did on her behalf. "Matt always made me feel like he wanted to help. Many people in my situation can be judged by others, but I never felt that way with Matt. He made me feel like I won the lottery!"

COLOCATIONS

Metro Housing|Boston partners with local agencies and uses their expertise to supply vital housing support services to residents who have low and moderate incomes. Through these collaborations with community organizations residents access multiple services convenient to where they live, in familiar locations that are physically and culturally accessible. With the generous support of Bank of America, Metro Housing had 12 colocation projects in six cities, including Chelsea, Somerville, Waltham, and Quincy.

Metro Housing had **430** referrals for RAFT assistance from those colocation sites during FY 17, an increase from 299 in FY 16.



WORKSHOPS

Metro Housing|Boston offers an array of trainings for tenants, property owners, and service providers to learn more about affordable housing. Most of these trainings are offered free of charge.

SAMPLE TOPICS INCLUDE:

Starting Right—Offers strategies to establish a good working relationship with your landlord and increase your chances of staying long-term.

Affordable Housing Basics—For tenants seeking information about affordable housing options. Learn about criteria, wait lists, and how to apply.

Housing Strategies—The topics in the clinic are housing search, utility resources, and fair housing.

PERSONALIZED SERVICES

Metro Housing Boston's broad array of programs and services, as well as our extensive network of property owners and fellow service providers, allow us to address a wide range of housingrelated issues, from preventing evictions and homelessness, to helping people find suitable homes, to making rent more affordable. Our personalized services help residents of Greater Boston bridge gaps in the homelessness prevention and affordable housing system. Working with individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes, we empower 25,000 households a year to move along the continuum from homelessness to housing stability.

FAIR HOUSING & CIVIL RIGHTS

Metro Housing|Boston is committed to equal opportunity and access to housing for all by incorporating fair housing principles into its services. We provide trainings to both tenants and property owners regarding their rights and responsibilities under the federal Fair Housing Act of 1988 and the state fair housing law, Chapter 151B. Staff members also provide technical assistance on fair housing and refer clients to other related services in Greater Boston.



HOUSING SEARCH

Metro Housing|Boston staff provide assistance with conducting an apartment search, navigating a sometimes complicated and confusing housing system, and understanding your rights.

As part of our mission to help individuals and families find and retain affordable housing, a listing service is also provided at no charge to both tenants and property owners.



HOARDING PREVENTION

Recognized as a best practice model in the field of compulsive hoarding intervention, the Center for Hoarding Intervention (CHI) provides intensive, hands-on case management support for low-income residents struggling with hoarding disorder and at risk of eviction. CHI also provides training in hoarding intervention for service providers, hoarding professionals, and first responders, and technical assistance to communities to improve hoarding intervention policies and procedures.

In FY 17, at the Center for Hoarding Intervention:

68

households were served.

100%

of households reduced clutter, passed inspection, and retained housing.

660

total homes were visited.

Panelists at a recent fair housing training for Metro Housing staff.

SPECIALIZED INTENSIVE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Specialized Intensive Programs & Services (SIPS) provides high-touch, timeunlimited, wrap-around case management services to the region's most vulnerable residents, including the elderly and disabled and those struggling with addiction, mental illness, and histories of chronic homelessness and incarceration. The intensive, personalized, and at-home focus is pivotal in engaging clients and stabilizing them in their homes and communities.

Specialized Intensive Programs & Services relies heavily on private contributions. It operates thanks to the generous support of corporations and individuals committed to preserving tenancies by providing services to those who need it most.



Roseann (L) was given just months to live, but Sylvia Kelly of Metro Housing provided her with the support she needed and she is now doing well in her new apartment in Chelsea.

HOUSING IS HEALTHCARE

o16 was not a good year for Roseann. After returning to Boston to care for her ill father, she thought she would be able to stay in his apartment after he died. However, because her name was not on the lease, the landlord asked her to leave.

Just days after her father passed away, Roseann received news that would again turn her world upside down. Her doctors told her she had terminal brain cancer and only a few months to live. Facing eviction and a terminal illness, no one would blame Roseann if she gave up hope. But a referral to Sylvia Kelly, SIPS Coordinator at Metro Housing|Boston, provided Roseann with the glimmer of hope she needed.

"I was very scared," said Roseann. "I thought I was going to wind up in the streets."

Sylvia was with Roseann every step of the way. While Roseann continued to get treatment for her cancer, hospital workers recommended that she move to an assisted care facility, but Roseann wanted none of it. She stuck with the plan Sylvia had laid out for her, resulting in a reprieve from eviction through housing court, and an emergency medical housing voucher to help her pay her rent. Even better, Roseann was in a building that could accommodate her mobility issue with a property owner who has a long relationship with Metro Housing, all while receiving chemotherapy.

"Sylvia told me not to worry. She said it was my job to take care of my health, and it would be her job to worry about my housing," said Roseann.

Roseann's fighting spirit has kept her going far

longer than her doctors expected. When they told her that her prognosis was not good, Roseann said, "I hear you, but you're wrong. I will be in my own apartment to watch the Super Bowl."

Sylvia is amazed at the progress that Roseann has made. "I believe that safe, affordable housing is healthcare. I am not a doctor, but I believe that the elimination of the stress around Roseann's housing situation is the reason why she is still with us a year and a half after her doctors told her she only had three to eight months to live."

Roseann is extremely grateful for what Metro Housing was able to do for her. "They gave me a new life. They really did. I got my dream house. Something I wanted all my life. I owe it all to Sylvia and Metro Housing."

HOUSING STABILITY & ECONOMIC SECURITY



An attorney from Lawyers Clearinghouse provides legal assistance to a Metro Housing participant.

VOUCHERS

The Housing Choice Voucher Program, commonly known as Section 8, is a federally funded program for assisting very low-income families, elders, and people with disabilities to afford decent and safe housing. The Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) is a similar program funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Metro Housing's Leased Housing program manages 9,650 Section 8 and MRVP vouchers.

In FY 17:

Metro Housing|Boston administered rental assistance to **9,650 households**.

This includes **6,350 Section 8 vouchers** and 3,300 state-funded subsidies.

Of families served, **56% had a member with a disability** and **39% had children**.

The housing challenges facing families who have low income are daunting. Families with low-incomes fall behind on rent and are in need of intervention to help them resolve the immediate crisis and avoid homelessness. **Metro Housing|Boston** provides programs to address the needs of people at risk of losing their homes and of those working to transition from homelessness to housing stability. Our staff is a source of support, information, and referrals for participants living in subsidized housing.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program is a voluntary program designed to help families achieve increased economic self-sufficiency over a five-year period. In partnership with Compass Working Capital, FSS participants are matched with an FSS advisor to provide one-on-one coaching and assistance with reaching their goals. This can include financial literacy, credit help, education, job skills, and career guidance. They also have the opportunity to build an escrow account as their earned income increases.



52 FSS participants completed the program.

FSS graduates had an average yearly earnings increase of \$18,630.

FSS distributed a total of **\$506,593 in escrow savings**.

TO SUCCEED

rowing up in a Boston suburb, Valerie never imagined a life with many starts and stops, leaving her wondering if she would ever find a stable home.

As a teen Valerie lived with her father after her parents had separated. A month before her eighteenth birthday, she gave birth to her first child. Shuttling back and forth between her father's house and her boyfriend's parents' house was not providing the emotionally stable environment Valerie desired for her daughter, so she made the difficult decision to move to a homeless shelter. After receiving a Section 8 rental voucher Valerie was able to move out of the shelter but was soon on the move again — this time due to an abusive relationship — and moved near



"My FSS advisors made me want to do good because they treated you like real people." — VALERIE

Valerie, a recent FSS graduate, now owns her own home and runs two businesses.

Boston to get her life in order.

Determined to keep her family in a stable situation, she remained in the area despite being forced to move due to rent increases. This constant change was emotionally exhausting and wanting desperately to become self-sufficient, Valerie reached out to Metro Housing|Boston to learn more about the FSS Program. It was a turning point in her life.

"I wanted to get out of the system. I was tired of having to tell my life story, having to show pay stubs, having to beg people to rent to me," says Valerie. She met with her FSS advisor, David Kelley, to set her goals — an integral part of the program. "I wanted to do the best that I could living in the situation that I was in. I set high goals for myself."

Because she increased her income while in the program, Valerie was able to save more

in her escrow account, totaling \$25,000 over the five-year program. At the same time, and with the ongoing encouragement of David, she earned an Associate's Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, both through grants and scholarships.

"Dealing with my FSS advisors made me want to do good because they treated you like real people. They gave you all the support you needed and guided you through it. If you needed anything, they were there for you. It was an amazing experience and I will be forever grateful."

"In my 15 years here, few participants have shown as much determination and worked as hard to get ahead as Valerie," said David. "With our guidance, she was able to purchase her own home and is now an entrepreneur and business owner."

MASS LEAP

Massachusetts Learning, Education, and Asset Program (Mass LEAP) is a five-year program that allows eligible participants of the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) access to services needed to support meaningful and sustainable earned income growth. Mass LEAP works with housing agencies in Braintree, Quincy, and Watertown, and with service providers Economic Mobility Pathways (EmPath) and Jewish Vocational Service (JVS). Participants are connected with job training programs, credit repair resources, assistance with enrolling in or finishing a degree program, and securing employment to increase their earned income.

In FY 17, Mass LEAP:

Enrolled 88 participants: 47 JVS participants, 41 EmPath participants.

Had **38 active escrow accounts**, representing a total of \$130,861.

HOMEBASE & STABILIZATION

HomeBASE is a program of the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) designed to reduce the need for motels and shelters. The goal is to assist families who are facing homelessness to find alternative solutions to entering shelter and/or motels. Additionally, it seeks to reduce the number of families already in shelters and motels by providing financial assistance, resources, and services to quickly re-house these families. HomeBASE services include assessment. housing search, placement, and case management and stabilization services.



In FY 17, Metro
Housing provided
12 months of
stabilization
services for 1,627
families to ease
their transition into
permanent housing.

Helped 639
families who
were homeless
move out of
shelter and into
new homes.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Metro Housing Boston provides educational programming for more than 4,300 property owners with the intention of improving the quality of life for our participants. We help property owners obtain the resources they need to make repairs and to complete modifications for residents with disabilities.



PROPERTY OWNER SERVICES

Metro Housing|Boston conducts more than 19,000 inspections each year to ensure that renters in subsidized apartments live in safe, decent homes. We also partner with more than 4,300 property owners to offer a variety of programs and services.

A CALL TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

"It makes
no sense to
me not to
provide help
to those that
need it most"
—NORMAN





2017 Property Owner honorees flanked by State Senator Joseph Boncore (L) and The Honorable Jeffrey M. Winik, First Justice, Boston Housing Court (R)

mong Metro Housing|Boston's 4,300 property owners there are many that have partnered with us for a long time. These strong partnerships are the foundation of our ability to help the families we serve in preventing evictions and homelessness.

However, there are not many that have been working with us for more than two decades. The owners of eight apartments in Mattapan and Roxbury, Norman and Nancy Daniel have been renting to Metro Housing participants for more than 20 years. The reason is simple, says Norman. "I've been blessed with good health, a loving wife

and family, and success in business. It makes no sense to me not to provide help to those that need it the most."

Norman, involved in real estate for 60 years, purchased his first home in Dorchester at the age of 19. However it was through his experience helping others at his church that opened Norman's eyes to the needs of those less fortunate. "I felt a calling that I was meant to help others in need. My experience with Metro Housing has allowed me to do that."

The Daniels have met some wonderful tenants during their years as property owners. "Seeing a single mom with young children looking for a place to live breaks our heart," said Nancy. "If a child doesn't have a warm bed to sleep in and a place to have a warm meal, how can they expect to do well in school? Renting to voucher holder families is a way for us to try to break the cycle of poverty."



Property owners Nancy and Norman Daniel have been renting to Metro Housing participants for over 20 years.

HOME MODIFICATION LOAN PROGRAM

The Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) is an innovative state lending program that helps qualifying participants finance home modifications.

The HMLP assists seniors, individuals, and families with children with disabilities to finance the cost of renovations to their primary residence, allowing individuals to remain at home. Typical modifications include installation of ramps and lifts, widening of doorways, and alteration of kitchens and bathrooms.

In FY 17, Metro Housing|Boston made homes safer by:

Closing 27 loans, valued at \$708,037, to help elders and people with disabilities stay in their homes.



PARTNERSHIPS



"Without the experience of working with Jesse, we wouldn't be able to address the underlying issues of the problem in a more creative way." — LARA

People living in Greater Boston can improve their lives by participating in **Metro Housing|Boston**'s programs and services. With our experienced and knowledgeable staff, effective collaborations with government, business, and nonprofit partners, and support from generous funders, we are there to help residents with all their housing needs.

PARTNERING FOR IMPACT

merican author and journalist Stephen Kinzer once said, "Alliances and partnerships produce stability when they reflect realities and interests." Nothing can be closer to the truth when it comes to our work with our community partners.

Metro Housing's collaborative relationships with service providers, community development corporations, shelters and other partners providing homelessness services has multiplied its impact on individuals and families across the region. Working with Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services (SCES) — a non-profit elder services agency that's dedicated to helping people maintain independence and well-being at home — has helped prevent multiple evictions due to dangerous hoarding situations.

Jesse Edsell-Vetter, Center for Hoarding Intervention Manager at Metro Housing, says "We are lucky to have an agency that really gets that there is never going to be a single discipline that can do all of the things that a person with hoarding needs. We have the technical expertise, the research partnerships, and the experience, but it doesn't do a lot without organizations like SCES that are open to doing business differently,

and trying new things, willing to see what works."

Metro Housing has provided training to the staff at SCES and imbedded the core tenets of Metro Housing's hoarding techniques with the staff. Lara Collins, Senior Protective Services Worker at SCES says, "Without the experience of working with Jesse, we wouldn't be able to address the underlying issues of the problem in a more creative way."

The benefits to Metro Housing flow both ways. "We've trained Lara and others about hoarding, but we get a lot back because I know more about other services than I did before," said Jesse. "Having those partnerships where we can say 'this works' is very important."

The biggest benefit that SCES has learned from their relationship with Metro Housing is the importance of trust. "Previously with hoarding cases I would be very focused on just getting inside an apartment to evaluate," said Lara. "Working with Metro Housing taught me that you need to have the trust of the client before you begin to help them. Even if it takes more than ten home visits to be allowed in, our work won't succeed without the client's trust."

Donations received by Metro Housing|Boston between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017

FINANCIALS

OPERATING BUDGET*	FY 17
Revenue:	
Program Services & Reimbursements	\$11,967,558
Foundations	617,300
Corporations	330,011
Individuals	355,746
Unrealized Gains	349,207
Realized Gains	0
Investment Income	54,305
Total Revenue & Support	\$13,674,127

Expense

Program Services	11,634,319
General Administrative	815,699
Fundraising	682,117
Total Expense	\$13,132,135

Net Assests, beginning of year	\$11,391,231
Excess/(Deficit) of Revenue Over Expenses	541,992
Net Assets, end of year	\$11,933,223

^{*}Does not include funds which are passed on as rental asistance payments or direct client support.

\$100,000

Santander Bank Foundation

DONORS

\$50,000-\$99,999

Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc. State Street Foundation, Inc. Tufts Health Plan Foundation

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\$500-\$999

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Edsell-Vetter



Members of the Regional Housing Network, including Metro Housing|Boston, with Massachusetts Senator Ed Markey at his Washington D.C. office.

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Jesse Edsell-Vetter, Program Manager for Hoarding Intervention, proudly shows off his medal after completing the 2017 Boston Marathon for Team Metro Housing.

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