

Hotels to Home: Helping families transition from shelter to stability

Experts discuss challenges and best practices at MBHP's first Housing Matters Forum

What do families who are homeless need to move out of shelter and into stable homes? On March 17, MBHP called together a panel of experts to discuss this question, and the resulting conversation was enlightening.

Moderated by The Boston Foundation's Becky Koepnick, the panel included Dr. Aura Obando of Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, Lanaii Tolentino of MBHP, Amy Nishman of Jewish Vocational Service, and Esther Shungu, an MBHP program participant who had recently moved out of shelter and into her new apartment.

The discussion revolved around how best to support families who need help finding and retaining permanent housing. All panelists agreed that, in order to stay stably housed, families need resources such as child care vouchers, job training and placement programs, health care services, and long-term rental subsidies.

One issue the panel identified was the need for better coordination of services, for example job and child care resources. "You



Panelists and MBHP board members at the MBHP Housing Matters Forum.

need child care in order to work, but as soon as you move from the shelter you're not eligible for your child care voucher anymore," said Nishman.

Obando agreed, calling for an infrastructure that would make it easier for people to make medical appointments to prevent interruptions in care.

Shungu pointed out the challenges that she experienced when she was transferred between shelter sites, resulting in either loss of her job or a difficult commute.

Responding to a question about evaluating the effort of families, Tolentino emphasized that each family had an individualized housing plan based on their situation. "Everyone is measured on a different scale," she said. "We ask, 'Are you achieving the goals that are attainable for your household?'"

MBHP's next Housing Matters Forum will take place this fall. Stay tuned to www.mbhp.org for details.



Mission statement

MBHP's mission is to ensure that the region's low- and moderate-income individuals and families have choice and mobility in finding and retaining decent affordable housing; all of our programs and initiatives are designed to encourage housing stability, increase economic self-sufficiency, and enhance the quality of the lives of those we serve. To achieve our mission and to promote efficient service delivery, we work collaboratively with a broad array of service providers and neighborhood-based organizations.

MBHP's programs

MBHP empowers families and individuals to move along the continuum from homelessness to housing stability. Serving more than 20,000 households annually, we work seamlessly to bridge the gaps among government, nonprofits, and corporations to continually increase our impact. With more than 30 years' experience piloting and implementing housing programs, we have solidified our position as an industry-leading expert on navigating the affordable housing field.

Our 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 housing-related issues, from preventing evictions and homelessness, to helping people find suitable homes, to making rent more affordable.

For more information on the many programs and services we administer, visit online us at www.mbhp.org or call our Housing Consumer Education Center at (617) 425-6700.

Property Owner Appreciation Evening

MBHP recognizes three outstanding property owners



Left to right: Property Owner Appreciation Award recipient Steve Bryan, keynote speaker Dion Irish, and the daughters of Vu Cuong who accepted the award on his behalf. Not pictured: Anthony Quiles.

On Thursday, April 23, MBHP gathered to celebrate the property owners who provide safe, affordable housing to MBHP's program participants. We also took the opportunity to recognize three outstanding property owners who went above and beyond this past year: Steve Bryan, Vu Cuong, and Anthony Quiles. The keynote speaker was Dion Irish, director of the Office of Fair Housing and Equity for the City of Boston.

In his speech, Irish reminded attendees that April was Fair Housing Month. "Fair housing is an issue that is close to my heart," said Irish. "I commend MBHP for the education and advocacy work they do with property owners and tenants to ensure that the residents of Greater Boston have equal access to safe, affordable homes."

Following in Lowell's footsteps

The 2015 Lowell Richards Fellows have been named

MBHP is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2015 Lowell Richards Fellowship for Leadership and Public Service: Callie Seltzer and Terra Richards. We are grateful to State Street Foundation, Massachusetts Port Authority, and all the funders whose support made this year's fellowship possible.

Callahan (Callie) Seltzer will be working in Massport's Economic Planning and Development Department where Lowell served as chief development officer for more than 10 years. Seltzer is also a Master of City Planning candidate at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the same degree Lowell earned from the same school.

Terra Richards will be hosted at DREAM, a youth-mentoring program Lowell was passionate about. Since enrolling in MBHP's Family Self-Sufficiency Program in 2012, Terra has completed her bachelor's degree from Cambridge College and is currently working on her master's, all while working full-time as a paraprofessional for Boston Public Schools and raising her three children.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Janet Frazier of Maloney Properties

Board member, donor, partner

As president and chief executive officer of Maloney Properties, Janet Frazier is a powerful ally. Managing 8,600 units, many of which are affordable and accessible homes, the firm is committed to improving the quality of life of the people they serve—so much so that they were recently awarded the 2015 Fair Housing Landlord Award from the City of Boston. All of which makes them a natural partner for MBHP.

Through our long-term relationship, MBHP and Maloney Properties have helped many families find safe, affordable homes where they can thrive. “MBHP understands that, beyond the need for housing, families also need a support system,” Frazier said. “Their programming is absolutely cutting edge, working with people in ways that go above and beyond just providing a rental voucher.”

Along with her professional ties to the organization, Frazier is also a donor. In addition to her personal contributions, as well as donations



Janet Frazier with MBHP Board of Directors Co-Chair Cynthia Lacasse and Executive Director Chris Norris at the 2014 Marathon Celebration.

from Maloney Properties, she has also given in unique ways, stepping up to donate the space for the 2014 Marathon Celebration at Hotel 140, managed by Maloney Properties.

“I remember being surprised when I was first asked to donate,” said Frazier. “I thought of MBHP as being more of a voucher-provider. It made me wonder what other kinds of programs they offered. As I looked into MBHP, I became more and more impressed.”

In December 2012, Frazier joined the board of directors, providing

a much-needed property management perspective. Since then, she has been a regular presence at MBHP events and a valuable member of the board. “I’m incredibly impressed by the board and the people involved,” she said. “I’m happy to contribute in any way I can.”

Frazier’s appreciation for MBHP’s work makes her a natural ambassador for the organization. “I’m always singing their praises wherever I go,” she said. “It’s a tremendous agency that deserves our support. We’re very lucky to have MBHP.”

Thank you to our recent grant funders

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People’s United Community Foundation • Sailors’ Snug Harbor of Boston

Blue Hills Bank Charitable Foundation • Lawrence Model Lodging Houses Trust • Leader Bank

Building Bridges to Better Health

Planning Grant from The Boston Foundation

In April, a project proposed by MBHP was one of four selected to receive a planning grant from The Boston Foundation's Health Starts at Home to address the health care and housing needs of families who are homeless or who lack secure housing.

As the lead organization, MBHP will collaborate with our partners Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program and Urban Edge to assess the physical and behavioral health challenges of families who are homeless, assist clients in applying for those services they are eligible for but not yet receiving, and pave the way for continuity of care once the families are rehoused.

The demonstration program will take place at Home Suites Inn in Waltham, where MBHP and BHCHP have both established a solid and effective service presence. The project kicked off on May 11 and will run through January 2016.

MBHP is also helping to launch a similar program in Chelsea. Through the Chelsea Homes for Health program, Massachusetts General Hospital's Chelsea HealthCare Center will screen clients for housing instability and refer them to existing, robust services offered by MBHP, The Neighborhood Developers, CONNECT, and Roca.

MBHP in the South Shore

New colocation at Quincy College



MBHP Colocation Coordinator Tim Synan explains MBHP's services to students at Quincy College.

This spring, MBHP started a new colocation to serve our program participants in the South Shore. Our Outreach Team has been traveling to Interfaith Social Services in Quincy since March to meet residents close to where they live and address their housing-related issues. On April 28, MBHP also kicked off a partnership with Quincy College where we are now holding regular office hours. Thanks in part to support from Bank of America, MBHP also has colocations in Chelsea and Somerville, as well as Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury in Boston.

"Quincy College is pleased to partner with MBHP," said Susan Bossa, associate vice president of Student Development, noting that the partnership has already been beneficial to students as well as faculty members. "We look forward to a successful partnership."

RAFT wrapped for 2015

As of April 15, MBHP has distributed more than \$2.7 million this year to help more than 1,000 families in Boston and 35 surrounding communities, many of whom were at risk of homelessness, stay stably housed. With an average assistance of \$2,765 per family, and the average stay for a family in shelter costing approximately \$24,000 annually, this represents a potential estimated savings of \$21 million for the Commonwealth.

The Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) program helps families experiencing a financial crisis cover expenses such as rent arrears, moving costs, and basic furniture. MBHP will begin accepting RAFT applications again when the fiscal year 2016 funds are available, most likely in July.

Marathon update

On April 20, tens of thousands of runners took part in the 119th annual Boston Marathon. Five of those runners were also running for a very special cause: to help families and individuals find safe, decent homes they can afford.

Team MBHP 2015 finished the race strong, and their fundraising efforts even stronger. Each runner surpassed their \$5,000 fundraising requirement. Special recognition goes to Rus Lodi who raised more than \$12,700, a new Team MBHP individual record. Altogether, Team MBHP raised more than \$41,000 for MBHP's work, dramatically exceeding the \$25,000 minimum expectation.

For the second year in a row, MBHP held an event to celebrate the achievements of our runners and to thank their donors for supporting them in their goals. The MBHP Marathon Celebration was held at District Hall in the Seaport District on April 29.

More photos are on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/mbhphome.



MBHP staff members Steve Farrell, Lisa Hacker, and Mary Jo Kane (left) and board member Elizabeth Gruber (right) cheer on Team MBHP on race day.



MBHP Boston Marathon runner and staff member Amy Mullen in the 2015 Boston Marathon.

Thank you to our Marathon Celebration 2015 Event sponsors

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Team MBHP runners, past and present, with MBHP Executive Director Chris Norris at the 2015 Marathon Celebration.



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*Founders
Celebration*

Honoring **Amy Anthony**, *President & Chief Executive Officer, Preservation of Affordable Housing*
and Lowell Richards Award Recipient **Helene Solomon**, *Chief Executive Officer, Solomon McCown & Company, Inc.*
Leadership committee under the guidance of **Lawrence H. Curtis, Joseph L. Flatley, Marvin Siflinger**

Thursday, November 12, 2015, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Awards Ceremony and Cocktail Reception with Heavy Hors d'oeuvres

State Street Financial Center, One Lincoln Street, 36th Floor, Boston

For information regarding sponsorship opportunities, contact Mary Jo Kane at (617) 425-6705 or maryjo.kane@mbhp.org