

2014 Founders Celebration most successful to date

The Seventh Annual MBHP Founders Celebration was a record-breaking evening that was truly cause to celebrate.

The annual event is a chance to honor the contributions made by individuals and groups who advance the cause of affordable housing in Greater Boston. The 2014 honorees included Paul Grogan and Pam and Willie Jones. Sheila Dillon was presented with the Lowell Richards Award.

Thanks to the hard work of the event committee members, especially Leadership Committee Chair Robert Gallery, the 2014 event brought in more than \$200,000, more than has ever been raised at a previous Founders Celebration.



Founders Celebration honorees (left to right): Paul Grogan, Sheila Dillon, Pam Jones, and Willie Jones

At the event, Gallery thanked MBHP's committed supporters. "Anyone who has read the news over the past year will know that this has been a difficult year for Greater Boston residents living on low and moderate incomes," said Gallery. "But tonight you've helped make some of those lives a little easier and the struggles to make ends meet a little less difficult."

Several government officials were in attendance, including Aaron Gornstein, then-undersecretary for the Department of Housing and Community Development,

Sen. Jamie Eldridge, chair of the Joint Committee on Housing, and Rep. Russell Holmes.

The Founders Celebration was hosted for the seventh consecutive year by State Street Corporation.

SAVE THE DATE

Eighth Annual MBHP Founders Celebration

Thursday, November 12, 2015

State Street Financial Center
One Lincoln Street, Boston



Leadership Committee Chair, Robert Gallery



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

There are three different entry points for accessing our programs and services.

We help **homeless** families and individuals find and retain safe, affordable housing through rental assistance programs, including Section 8 and the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program.

We help families **on the brink of homelessness** stay in their homes or find other suitable living arrangements, rather than enter the shelter system. One way we do this is through administering the RAFT financial assistance program.

Once a family or individual is **stably housed** in a safe, affordable home, we help keep it that way. We conduct inspections to ensure apartments meet all health and safety standards and offer education, trainings, and counseling services to tenants and landlords.

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

MBHP kicks off Mass LEAP

MBHP has been designated as one of the lead agencies for Mass LEAP, a new five-year program to help people increase their incomes and become more self-sufficient.



Mass LEAP Coordinator Phoebe Mayor

Mass LEAP, which stands for the Massachusetts Learning, Employment and Asset Program, offers a base of supportive services including employment and career development, financial literacy and asset development, and post-secondary education.

For Mass LEAP, MBHP is once again partnering with Jewish Vocational Service. JVS has been a valuable partner in the Secure Jobs program and we are excited to work with them, along with our other partner

agencies: Watertown Housing Authority, Braintree Housing Authority, Quincy Housing Authority, and Crittenton Women's Union.

The program is open to tenants in state-aided public housing developments and/or MRVP participants. MBHP has begun enrolling participants in the program and Mass LEAP Coordinator Phoebe Mayor says the impact has been immediate.

"After I explain the program, I have seen an immediate wave of relief and hope," says Phoebe. "Mass LEAP incorporates the tools necessary to set the participant up for success even beyond the five-year period. I look forward to seeing the progress of these participants as they participate in this program."

MBHP Update has a new look!

To more effectively communicate with our audiences, MBHP has updated the look of our printed materials with new fonts, colors, and graphics. We will be gradually rolling out this new look throughout 2015 with redesigned fact sheets, flyers, reports, and more.

Tell us what you think! Send your feedback on our new look to info@mbhp.org or tweet us at @MBPHousing.

Social Innovation Financing

MBHP is proud to be a part of a groundbreaking new strategy from the state: social innovation financing.

Known as SIF, or “Pay for Success,” the new initiative aims at serving between 500 and 800 homeless individuals over the next six years. MBHP is the sole awardee for administering 145 new Massachusetts Rental Vouchers allocated for this program statewide.

What makes the program so innovative is how it is being funded: through third-party investors. The state is contracting with the Massachusetts Alliance for Supportive Housing to serve as an intermediary between investors, providers, and the state. Investors provide a portion of the program funds up front. Then, if the program is successful, the Commonwealth will reimburse the intermediary who will repay the investors.

SIF aims to provide housing to the costliest segment of the homeless population: chronically homeless and long-term homeless adults who are high users of emergency services. Through this program, MBHP and our partners hope to demonstrate how housing people first, then surrounding them with the services they need, can decrease their reliance on emergency rooms and other emergency services.

MBHP graduates largest FSS class

56 participants were recognized for completing the five-year program.



FSS graduate Donna Daly (center) with Rep. Russell Holmes and Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz

On January 22, MBHP celebrated the dedication, hard work, and commitment of the 56 graduates from our Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)—the largest graduating class in the history of the program. Several graduates attended the ceremony, including Nance Kasongo who addressed the attendees.

“Being a graduate of the FSS program shows that you want more for you and your family,” said Nance. “It shows that you are able to commit to a plan and see it through to its entirety. It signifies that you embrace change and growth. Possessing these qualities will secure success in any opportunity that you may find yourself in.”

Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz and Representative Russell Holmes were also in attendance to congratulate the graduates.

Sen. Chang-Diaz challenged the graduates with the words of Eleanor Roosevelt. “As you’re planning your next steps, do one thing every day that scares you,” she said. “It could be a social ill you will help cure over the next 10 years, or something you want to do on behalf of yourself or your family.”

Rep. Holmes reflected on his experience growing up in a large family in Mattapan, and acknowledged all of the programs he benefitted from as a child. Quoting Stan Salett, former staffer of the Johnson administration who was involved in the War on Poverty, he encouraged graduates to use their new skills to help others, saying, “We have been drinking from wells that we did not dig. It is time to dig new wells.”

Rethinking hoarding

MBHP is helping people with hoarding behavior stay safe at home.

In January, MBHP released a report on the first three years of the Hoarding Intervention and Tenancy Preservation Project, or HI/TPP. The report, entitled *Rethinking Hoarding Intervention: MBHP's analysis of the Hoarding Intervention and Tenancy Preservation Project*, includes analysis of program data as well as recommendations for future programming. It complements the preliminary data that was released at our October 30 forum.

Supported by the Oak Foundation, the groundbreaking joint-program with Bay Cove Human Service's Tenancy Preservation Project saw an overwhelming success rate: 98 percent of participants avoided losing their housing due to hoarding issues. The report is available online, read more at www.mbhp.org/policy-reports.

MBHP and Senator Jehlen partner on hoarding legislation

MBHP is working with Senator Patricia Jehlen to equip elder service agencies across the state to better serve elders with hoarding disorder.

On January 16, Senator Jehlen re-filed SD734: An Act Relative to Protect the Health and Safety of Elders with Hoarding Disorder. MBHP worked closely with Senator Jehlen's office to draft this legislation which mirrors a similar law already in place in Illinois.

The bill mandates that elder service agencies in Massachusetts investigate self-neglect due to hoarding disorder. Currently, the response to hoarding situations involving elders varies greatly and health and safety concerns involving elders with hoarding disorder are not being properly screened and assessed. If enacted, this legislation would bring more consistency in how hoarding is assessed and addressed by elder service agencies throughout the Commonwealth.

The legislation was originally filed in January 2013. Its co-sponsors included Rep. Denise Andrews, Rep. Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera, and Rep. James M. Murphy and it received a favorable report from the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs.

MBHP and Sen. Jehlen are now engaged in recruiting co-sponsors for the current bill. MBHP is joined by Boston University School of Social Work Hoarding Project and Cambridge Council on Aging in supporting this legislation.



In October 2014, MBHP convened a panel of experts on hoarding issues to discuss preliminary findings from the HI/TPP report. The panel included MBHP Hoarding Intervention Coordinator Jesse Edsell-Vetter and was moderated by Dr. Gail Steketee, dean of the Boston University School of Social Work.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: John Hancock

It's difficult to capture the true value of a charitable gift. A donation can have a ripple effect—one donation is made and it inspires and encourages others to give. And sometimes, the very nature of a gift creates new ways for supporters to engage with an organization. For the past eight years, John Hancock has given MBHP this kind of gift.

Since 2007, John Hancock has allowed MBHP to leverage their corporate support to reach hundreds of individual donors, thanks to their Boston Marathon Nonprofit Program. Through the program, John Hancock donates hundreds of guaranteed entries each year to select nonprofits. Nearly 30 volunteers have run the Boston Marathon to raise money and awareness for MBHP. All told, Team MBHP runners have raised more than \$250,000 and raised the profile of our agency in Boston and beyond. 2015 marks the thirtieth year of



John Hancock's landmark sponsorship of the Boston Marathon and the ninth year that MBHP has been selected to participate.

Beyond the marathon, John Hancock has been a long-time supporter of the Founders Celebration. In October, they also hosted our Fall Forum in their beautiful atrium (see Page 4).

"There are many byproducts of John Hancock's sponsorship of the Boston Marathon," said Yasmin Cruz, senior manager, corporate responsibility at John Hancock. "The ability to provide the sponsorship as vehicle for nonprofits to galvanize support for their missions is one of the most meaningful. We are very pleased to partner again with MBHP and in turn help strengthen Boston."

MBHP is also fortunate to benefit from John Hancock's leadership, past and present, on our board of directors. Jeffrey G. Packard, vice president and senior managing director of John Hancock's Real Estate Finance Group, sits on MBHP's board, and current co-chair Cynthia Lacasse spent more than 20 years at John Hancock, most recently as president, John Hancock Realty Advisors and vice president, John Hancock Financial Services.

"John Hancock has a strong commitment to building communities by supporting those most in need," said Packard. "Partnering with MBHP is a perfect match."

"MBHP is one of Greater Boston's most innovative and effective organizations working to prevent homelessness and help families improve their lives," said Lacasse. "I am grateful for John Hancock's support over the years."

Introducing Team MBHP 2015

Thanks to John Hancock's Nonprofit Boston Marathon Program, MBHP has been awarded five bibs for the 2015 Boston Marathon on Monday, April 20. Team MBHP 2015 includes one returning runner, Rus Lodi, and one MBHP staff member, Amy Mullen. Other runners include Trang Pham, Heidi Porter, and Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello.

Meet this year's team members, make a donation to your favorite runner, or support the whole team at www.crowdrise.com/MBHPBoston2015.



Team MBHP 2015 (left to right): Trang Pham, Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, Heidi Porter, and Ruston Lodi. Not pictured: MBHP RAFT Manager Amy Mullen.

MRVP Waiting List

More than 10,000 applications received for 73 vouchers.

Through the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), MBHP helps make rent affordable for more than 1,500 residents of Greater Boston. Between October 6 and November 3, MBHP was one of eight agencies across the state accepting MRVP applications on behalf of the Department of Housing and Community Development to create a program waiting list.

In keeping with fair marketing standards, MBHP advertised this application period widely: it ran in nine newspapers, including the *Boston Globe*, and appeared in five languages. We also reached out to our network of service providers and shared the information on our website and social media accounts.

As reported in the *Boston Globe* on November 28, MBHP was inundated with applicants. Thanks to the hard work of all our staff, especially our MRVP team, the agency was able to process all these applications in advance of DHCD's deadline. The lottery was conducted by DHCD and MBHP began issuing vouchers in December.

MBHP helps BHA preserve affordable housing in Brookline

At the end of 2014, 307 affordable homes in Brookline could have disappeared. That is, if not for the efforts of the Brookline Housing Authority and MBHP.

In fall 2014, Brookline Housing Authority Executive Director Patrick Dober reached out to MBHP to discuss the problem: A housing development in Brookline had received federal funds in exchange for committing to serving tenants with low incomes for the life of the mortgage. The mortgage was scheduled to be paid off in December and 307 affordable homes were in danger of disappearing.

MBHP, which has previously preserved affordable housing in Allston-Brighton and Milton, met with Dober to discuss converting these apartments into longer-term affordable housing. As a result of an influx of Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) vouchers, the Brookline Housing Authority's portfolio was being increased by 50 percent, which would strain the housing authority's resources. Through a competitive proposal process, MBHP was awarded a contract to help them through the process.

MBHP staff members conducted file reviews, eligibility screenings, and rent calculations, as well as assisting with data entry and training. MBHP also conducted in-person presentations with current residents to address their questions and concerns.

Thanks to MBHP's efforts, 100 of the 307 apartments are being converted to project-based units with vouchers attached. The remaining 207 households will receive "enhanced" vouchers, which will protect the current residents from rent increases as long as they live in the unit. If these tenants choose to move, the units will convert to market rate, but the tenant will be able to take the voucher, which will convert to a standard voucher, with them.

"There is no way we could have gotten to this point without the professional, pragmatic, and flexible hard work of MBHP," said Dober. "They have provided a great and invaluable service."

Thank you to our recent grant funders

Citizens Bank Foundation • Linde Foundation • Santander • Krokidas & Bluestein • Blue Hills Bank

2015 Lowell Richards Student Fellowship

In January, MBHP began accepting applications for the 2015 student fellow.

The student fellow will be hosted for the third consecutive year by the Massachusetts Port Authority, assigned to the Economic Planning and Development Department where Lowell Richards was Director for more than 10 years.

Fellowship experiences aim to encourage high-performing graduate and undergraduate students to consider careers in public service. Applicants will be judged according to the candidate's qualifications and how his/

her skills, schedules, and goals fit with the host site and project.

The Lowell Richards Fellowship was established in 2012 to honor our late longtime board chair Lowell Richards. Last year, thanks to the generosity of our funders, the fellowship was expanded to include two fellows, including one MBHP program participant. At the 2014 Founders Celebration, donors stepped up once again, raising more than \$7,000 in Lowell's memory.



Karen Richards (center) with 2014 Lowell Richards Fellows Marioly Brito and Stephen Donovan.

The application is now available. Visit www.mbhp.org or contact maryjo.kane@mbhp.org.

RAFT funds help families avoid homelessness

MBHP is proud to administer the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition program (RAFT), one of our tools to help families experiencing a housing crisis.

Through RAFT, families can access financial assistance of up to \$4,000 over a 12-month period to help cover expenses such as first or last month's rent and security deposits, rent and utility arrearage, or basic furniture.

MBHP team members meet with RAFT applicants to conduct an assessment and discuss options for programs for which they qualify—this may include RAFT, but could also include other programs administered by MBHP and our network of partner agencies.

There are eligibility requirements for the program. For more



MBHP RAFT Case Manager Jamila Aden meets with RAFT applicants at MBHP's office.

information on RAFT, visit our website at www.mbhp.org or contact MBHP's HCEC team

at (800) 425-6700 or ResourceLine@mbhp.org to schedule an appointment.



125 Lincoln Street, 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02111-2503
(617) 859-0400 • www.mbhp.org

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOSTON, MA
PERMIT # 55356

everyone deserves a place to call home

MBHP Board of Directors

Co-Chairs	Janet Frazier
Steven J. Rioff	Elizabeth Gruber
Cynthia Lacasse	Langley C. Keyes
Treasurer	Terry Saunders Lane
Anne Rousseau	Mary-Anne Morrison
Clerk	Peter Munkenbeck
Susanne Marzi Cameron	Jeffrey H. Packard
Nader Acevedo	Esther Schlorholtz
Kevin Boyle	Charles M. Smith
Patrick Centanni	Donald E. Vaughan
Lyndia Downie	

MBHP 2014 Annual Report now available

There's no denying that 2014 was a tough year for the cause of affordable housing—newspaper headlines painted a bleak picture of families struggling to pay high rents, stretching to make ends meet on low incomes. It's enough to make some people lose hope.

But at MBHP, we refuse to be discouraged. MBHP is stepping up.

In our 2014 Annual Report, we share the stories of just a few of the thousands of families we helped to secure safe homes they could afford. Learn more about the important work you helped us accomplish.

MBHP's 2014 Annual Report is online at www.mbhp.org/annual-report-2014.

