



HELPING TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

New Report Reveals Metro Housing’s RAFT Program Saves Commonwealth up to \$33 Million



Panelists at Metro Housing’s recent forum on the 2019 RAFT Report (L-R): Thea James, MD, Vice President, Boston Medical Center; Chris Norris, Executive Director of Metro Housing|Boston; Eileen Murphy, RAFT recipient; Jillian Pinola, Regional Vice President, Beacon Communities; Molly Butman, Assistant Director, Housing Supports at Metro Housing; Amy Mullen, RAFT Manager at the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); and Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing and Director of Neighborhood Development, City of Boston.

On the brink of eviction, Eileen and her family found an apartment with the help of Metro Housing, but she was unable to come up with the standard move-in costs.

Knowing that Eileen needed just a little bit more help, Metro Housing staff connected her with the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition program, known as RAFT. Without this help, Eileen would have been stuck.

Instead, Eileen was one of more than 1,700 families that benefitted from RAFT in the Greater Boston region. Administered by Metro Housing, RAFT helps families with a housing crisis so that they can stay in their homes or move to a stable housing situation.

Metro Housing released its FY 2019 RAFT Report at a public forum in early December. The report found that this critical resource served households in all 29 Metro Housing communities. Almost \$4.5 million dollars was distributed to help with back rent, utility payments, and other expenses. This investment kept 1,710 households stably housed. 525 of them were individuals newly eligible for RAFT, previously

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2019 CHAMPIONS OF HOUSING

Annual Event Honors Community Leaders

Metro Housing honored community leaders who share our passion and commitment to affordable housing at our Champions of Housing Celebration on November 7th. The event, held at the Boch Center-Wang Theater, was attended by 275 people and raised \$409,000 to support Metro Housing programs.

Melissa Fish-Crane of Peabody Properties and Joe Rettman of NEI General Contracting served as co-chairs of the event.

Key Sponsors for the evening were:

Cocktail Reception Sponsor: NEI General Contracting

Platinum Sponsors: Bank of America; State Street Corporation; Winn Development

Gold Sponsors: Beacon Communities LLC; Corcoran Jennison Companies; Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation; Keith Construction, Inc.; National Lumber; Peabody Properties, Inc; Superior Plumbing

Metro Housing extends our sincere gratitude to all of our sponsors and attendees of Champions of Housing.



The 2019 Champions of Housing honorees (L-R): Robert Torres, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; Pamela Feingold, Eastern Bank; Shelley Hoon Keith and John Keith, Keith Properties, Inc.; Jesse Kanson-Benanav, B'nai B'rith Housing. Honoree Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley was unable to attend the event.



A Message from our Executive Director

This year has been exciting and productive. Metro Housing continued its 36-year-long commitment to ensuring that everyone in Greater Boston has a safe, accessible, and affordable home.

We advocated for city, state, and federal housing policies that benefit households with extremely low incomes. We situated our colocations in communities where we could make the most impact. We launched an internal capacity building project to increase our ability to track programmatic outcomes. We raised a record amount of funds through our signature event, Champions of Housing, and we fielded five athletes who ran the Boston Marathon to raise money for and awareness of Metro Housing's programs.

We said goodbye to several staff members who committed decades of their professional lives to our mission, and we welcomed new team members who bring great passion and expertise to help us advance our work.

However, our job will not be complete until every family in Greater Boston has a safe and affordable home. In 2020 we will continue to advocate for changes in policy that will help families address their housing needs and reach economic security.

To continue our efforts in helping families like Suad's, which you can read more about on this page, we need your help. Please consider supporting Metro Housing with a donation of any size. It is especially important during this time of year when those who are homeless endure frigid temperatures.

I thank all of you for supporting Metro Housing. From our family to yours, may 2020 bring you joy and good health, and may we get closer to the day that everyone in Greater Boston has a place to call home.

Happy New Year!

Chris Norris
Executive Director



Suad embraces her brother after not seeing him for nearly four years (L). Two of Suad's sisters hug their mother after reuniting (R).

METRO HOUSING HELPS REUNITE FAMILY

Suad, whose intense story of recovery and housing search was featured in Metro Housing's 2019 Impact Report, recently received the best news of her life. Her siblings – ages 13 through 18 – received approval for asylum and were going to be able to join her and her mother in Boston.

It had been more than three years since Suad and her mother left Africa –and their family – to come to Boston so that Suad could receive medical care after an attack left her face badly burned and disfigured.

Metro Housing was able to secure an emergency medical voucher through the Continuum of Care (COC) program with assistance from the City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development.

On November 13, Sylvia Kelly and Yanick Dennis of Metro Housing's Specialized Intensive Programs & Services brought Suad and her mother to Boston's Logan Airport for an emotional reunion with their family.

“To see the happiness and tears of joy when they saw each other will be something I will never forget.”

– SYLVIA KELLY,
Metro Housing's
Specialized Intensive
Programs & Services

“It was an extraordinary family reunion,” said Sylvia. “This family has been through such pain and sadness for nearly four years and to see the

happiness and tears of joy when they saw each other will be something I will never forget.”

Sylvia and her team are currently working with Metro Housing's network of property owners to seek an apartment that will meet the needs of the family.

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

Please help Metro Housing provide assistance to more families like Suad's.

To make a donation, visit our website or go to bit.ly/DonateMetroHousing.

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INTRODUCING HOUSING HUB AND GATEWAY

Metro Housing provides participants with multiple ways to obtain assistance and information. Starting in fall 2019, Metro Housing re-branded the two primary communication methods for participants and property owners. These two new tools - which we have dubbed **HOUSING HUB** and **LEASED HOUSING GATEWAY** - are part of our ongoing effort to continually improve how we provide our services and respond to feedback we receive.

INTERESTED IN HOUSING RESOURCES? NEED ADVICE?

ResourceLine@MetroHousingBoston.org
617.425.6700

Those seeking information about supportive services or general housing advice contact the **Housing Hub**. Metro Housing's primary resource that is free and open to the public, the Housing Hub is a clearinghouse for households with any series of housing issues.

HAVE A VOUCHER? NEED HELP?

Gateway@MetroHousingBoston.org
617.425.6611

Tenants and property owners with questions about vouchers and leases contact the **Leased Housing Gateway**. The Gateway Team was established to provide a streamlined response for participants and owners who need to speak with a Metro Housing staff member.

TEAM METRO BOSTON

Preparing for 2020 Boston Marathon

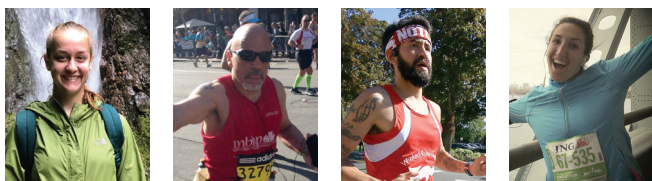
Winter is on the doorstep. The brutal winds, snow, and freezing temperatures are knocking at the door. The members of Team Metro Housing know what's in store as they train for the biggest race of their lives and the opportunity to help ensure that everyone in Greater Boston will have a place to call home.

Team Metro Housing has been running the Boston Marathon and raising money since 2006. We are greatly appreciative of the John Hancock Nonprofit Program for this opportunity. Over the past 12 years, volunteer runners have raised nearly \$500,000 to prevent homelessness for thousands of families and individuals throughout Greater Boston. The impact made by Team

Metro Housing is enhanced by the thousands of donors who have contributed over the years, and cheered over the miles.

The Boston Marathon connects eight Massachusetts cities and towns...and the entire world in the spirit of competition, camaraderie and community. It brings everyday athletes, many of whom are connected to extraordinary causes, to the same road as elite, world-class athletes. Together, inspired by the strength and courage of the individuals they run with, and run for, these athletes embody the power of the human spirit.

You can support an individual runner or donate to Team Metro Housing this year by visiting the team page at bit.ly/TeamMetroHousing2020



Team Metro Housing from (L-R): Cate Henning, Hector Cruz, Ray Garcia, and Rachel Lodi



2019 IMPACT REPORT

Metro Housing|Boston's 2019 Impact Report is now available on our website. The report describes our impact on local families and individuals - like Bill, who for the first time in more than 18 years has a place to call home. Or like Kimberly, who through our Green Space program, improved her credit score enabling her to rent an apartment.

Across our region, Metro Housing continues to stay true to our mission of assisting families to navigate the journey from homelessness and eviction prevention to housing stability to economic security.

To read the 2019 Impact Report online, go to bit.ly/ImpactRep19.

RAFT Report, continued from page 1

reserved for households that included a child under the age of 21.

The report also highlighted that RAFT likely saved the Commonwealth of Massachusetts up to \$33 million in shelter costs by keeping families out of the emergency shelter system.

"RAFT is an important resource for families and individuals at risk of homelessness throughout the Commonwealth," said Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Janelle Chan. "We are proud to partner with Metro Housing to assist households across the region.

At the forum, held at MassHousing, eviction prevention and housing stabilization experts discussed the impact of programs designed to help families and individuals maintain housing stability.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Expanding Access to Affordable Housing by Congresswoman Katherine Clark (MA-5)

The government has a vital role to play in ensuring that all families have a place to call home. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have fought for increases in funding for housing programs, the preservation and construction of new affordable housing, and support for low-income rental housing. Additionally, I have supported legislation that would expand the low-income housing tax credit by accommodating a wider range of low-income tenants and increasing the credit for low-income housing development projects.

However, these programs have not kept pace with our needs, as only 25% of families who qualify for affordable housing receive assistance. Housing is the largest monthly expense for most families, and for too long, incomes have not kept pace with the rising cost of housing. Across the country, nearly half of all renters are rent-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. The data is clear: we have an affordable housing crisis and we need more resources as we work



together to solve the challenges facing our families.

In order to address the scale of the challenge we face, we must pursue a broad slate of legislation and work

together to institute reforms that provide access to affordable housing for all. For example, through the Housing Choice Voucher Program, commonly known as Section 8, more than 2 million low-income families across the country pay no more than thirty percent of their income towards rent in the private market. In the Boston metropolitan area, fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment is nearly \$2,000. Section 8, available locally through Metro Housing| Boston, puts a home within reach for thousands of families.

Housing is so much more than having a roof over our heads. It provides access to good schools, good jobs, reliable transportation and the security of a place to call your own. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to safe and affordable housing that opens doors to equal and all opportunity. I'm grateful to have the support and partnership of Metro Housing| Boston, as we work towards a future where everyone has a place to call home.

UPDATES FROM BOSTON CITY HALL

Metro Housing Congratulates New Boston City Council Members



Newly elected members of Boston City Council, clockwise from top left: Ricardo Arroyo, Kenzie Bok and Liz Breadon

Metro Housing is pleased to congratulate the new members of the Boston City Council who were elected to office on Election Day in November. We look forward to working with Ricardo Arroyo, Kenzie Bok, and Liz Breadon.

There will be another new member of Boston City Council, but the race between at-large candidates Julia Mejia and Alejandra Nicole St. Guillen was extremely close and as we go to press the votes are being recounted before the election is certified.

Metro Housing congratulates returning members of the Boston City Council.

- President Andrea Campbell
- Annissa Essaibi-George
- Kim Janey
- Lydia Edwards*
- Michael Flaherty
- Ed Flynn*
- Frank Baker*
- Matt O'Malley*
- Michelle Wu

We also thank the following members who are departing the City Council for their dedicated service to the residents of Boston.

- Mark Ciommo
- Althea Garrison
- Timothy McCarthy
- Josh Zakim

*Did not have opponents in the election

WAYS TO GIVE TO METRO HOUSING



Support from individuals, businesses, and foundations make the difference in allowing Metro Housing|Boston to provide the services that help individuals and families find a stable place to live and get the help they need to become more economically secure and enhance their quality of life.

MAKE A ONE-TIME DONATION

Help us make an impact one individual or family at a time. Every gift made helps us fill the needs of families and supplement the work for which there is no other funding.

bit.ly/DonateMetroHousing

MATCH YOUR GIFT

Double the impact of your gift! Go to our website, MetroHousingBoston.org/match-your-gift to see if your employer has a matching gift program. Don't see your company's name?

Contact your HR department.

MAKE A RECURRING GIFT

A recurring monthly gift consistently supports those families and individuals who need more than just a safe place to live, but also need job skills, educational support, and additional counseling.

bit.ly/recurringgift

COORDINATE A DONATION DRIVE

Metro Housing goes beyond just getting people housed. We make sure they have the items necessary to transition into their new homes. You can help by hosting a donation drive for the following types of items:

• Gift Cards

For emergency items, including; food, clothing and basic home goods

• Home Goods

Bedding, kitchenware, and bathroom items

• Children's Books

To start a child's first home library of books

DONOR PROFILE: ASENETTA ROWE

Asenetta Rowe became a widow when she was in her early 30's and learned the importance of caring for the people around her. A native of Jamaica, Asenetta went to school and became a Certified Nursing Assistant so that she could provide for her four children.

Asenetta lives in Boston and has 12 grandchildren. As a CNA, she has witnessed many situations where people were in need of assistance. She can empathize because of the time earlier in her life when she cared for her four children as a single mother.

"There are people who are in need and I want to help them," says Asenetta.

From giving spare change to someone she passes on the street to setting up recurring donations to organizations like Metro Housing, Asenetta just wants to help as much as she can.

"Every gift we receive is important to Metro Housing because it allows us to help families in need," says Carla Beaudoin, Director of Development. "Recurring gifts like Asenetta's - regardless of size - make an impact as they ensure a stream of funding that we can plan on."

"There are too many people who are having a hard time," adds Asenetta. "I want to share what I have with people who need it and give the most of what I can to Metro Housing."



Carla Beaudoin, Development Director at Metro Housing (L) with Asenetta Rowe.

If you would like to join Asenetta in arranging a recurring gift to Metro Housing - in any amount - then visit our website at bit.ly/recurringgift.

SOCK IT TO ME!

Metro Housing Donates More than 1,200 Pairs of Socks

Homeless individuals often walk several miles a day to access food, shelter, and essentials. Healthy feet are an important priority for them (and everyone). Socks are one of the least donated items yet they are the most requested at any shelter or neighborhood clothing resource.

During the month of November, employees at Metro Housing held a Sock Drive, donating more than 1,200 pairs of socks to the Parker Hill/Fenway ABCD (Action for Boston Community Development) in Roxbury. The socks will be distributed to those in need during the winter months.



Metro Housing's Inspection Department contributed 300 pairs of socks to our Sock Drive.

**METRO
HOUSING|BOSTON**

helps families and individuals address their housing needs across the continuum toward economic security.

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OUR MISSION

Metro Housing|Boston mobilizes 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.

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**May the spirit
of this holiday
season shine
brightly for you
and your family**

*Artwork by Tavius Winslow, Age 9,
Metro Housing Participant*