

## **Advocacy**

### **Jett Foundation**

The Jett Foundation was founded 17 years ago by the family of Jett, who suffers from Duchenne muscular dystrophy, to raise awareness and promote advances in treatment of the disease. Most recently, the Foundation advocated for the approval of new medications to aid Duchenne patients, specifically eteplirsen, which slows the progression of the disease. Recognizing the knowledge gap between the FDA and recent Duchenne research, Jett launched an advocacy campaign, garnering 100,000 signatures on a White House petition for the FDA to review the drug. They worked with regulators, leaders in Washington, and over 900 Duchenne community members to show the FDA the importance of the drug and its compliance with federal guidelines. In the 16 months since its approval, hundreds of kids have benefitted from this medication.

### **Language Opportunity Coalition**

The Language Opportunity Coalition was founded to bring together diverse organizations in Massachusetts to increase language learning opportunities for learning English, native, heritage, and world languages, and to ensure that all learners have equal access to a high quality education and professional opportunities. The Coalition advocated for the expansion of bilingual program options for English learners through the passage of the LOOK Act, and opportunities for all students to pursue language study with the Seal of Biliteracy. The Coalition also coordinated the Seal of Biliteracy Pilot Project from 2014-2018, prior to approval by the state legislature.

### **New England Hemophilia Association**

Founded in 1957, the New England Hemophilia Association is the leading organization in New England dedicated to empowering individuals and families with bleeding disorders and building local and region-wide communities for them by providing diverse information sources, dynamic programming, individual and legislative advocacy, and emergency financial aid. Through collaboration, cooperation, purpose, and mission, several legislative goals and accomplishments were achieved. In March 2017, for the first time ever, all six New England states officially declared March 2017 as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month. Community and press events were held at each state capital in New England. This led to new relationships with elected officials and their staff, and helped to raise awareness with the general public.

### **Samaritans, Inc.**

Samaritans' mission is to reduce the incidence of suicide by alleviating despair, isolation, distress and suicidal feelings among individuals in the community, 24 hours a day; to educate the public about suicide prevention; and to reduce the stigma associated with suicide. In 2015, Samaritans expanded their Helpline by launching the first text-only suicide prevention line in Massachusetts, engaging in over 10,000 text conversations to date. Samaritans has spread awareness of suicide prevention through social media and advertising campaigns; training more than 5,250 volunteers; providing suicide prevention workshops to 135,000 individuals; and lending support to 13,000 suicide loss survivors.

## **Collaboration**

### Boston After School & Beyond

Boston After School & Beyond (BASB) is a public-private partnership that connects school, after-school, and summer learning strategies so that all Boston youth have the opportunity to learn and thrive. BASB works with the City of Boston, Boston Public Schools (BPS), and local and national organizations to expand high quality learning opportunities for nearly 15,000 high-need Boston students. This network, coined by Superintendent Tommy Chang as the "5th Quarter of Learning", expands access for students who would be otherwise unlikely to participate in highly engaging summer programming, strengthening students' academic and social-emotional skills so that they return to school in the fall primed for success. This philosophy has enabled the 5th Quarter initiative to rapidly expand from 5 programs serving 232 students in 2010 to 132 programs serving 10,338 students in 2017.

### Cardinal Cushing Centers

Cardinal Cushing Centers is dedicated providing opportunities to people with disabilities. They serve approximately 600 individuals each year through a variety of programs including academics, clinical and behavioral services, physical, occupational and speech therapies, employment training, recreational opportunities, and housing. In collaboration with the Planning Office for Urban Affairs and the Town of Hanover, Cardinal Cushing Centers converted an underutilized building into 37 units of affordable housing, four of which will be reserved for people with disabilities. This project is part of the organization's vision of creating an integrated neighborhood where people with and without disabilities live, learn, shop, and socialize together in the same space.

### May Institute

Founded in 1955, May Institute's mission is to promote independence, choice, dignity, and respect for the individuals they serve across the lifespan with autism and other special needs. The May Institute's National Autism Center partnered with Boston-based Work, Inc. to launch the Meaningful Jobs Initiative (MJII). MJII aims to bridge the employment gap by connecting adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to jobs in the fast-growing security industry. During the first 10 months of operation, 20 individuals participated in training and six individuals were hired into jobs in the security industry.

### Northeast Arc., Inc

Northeast Arc. (NeArc) enables people with disabilities to lead full lives and be contributing members of their communities through education, employment, and social services. NeArc's collaboration with the City of Peabody and other local organizations has both revitalized the City and developed opportunities for people with disabilities. In 2016, NeArc opened Breaking Grounds Cafe, which has raised the organization's profile and provided employment to people with disabilities. The City also approached NeArc about contributing space for a local theater. The Black Box Theater at ArcWorks Community Art Center opens this spring, and will house NeArc's drama-based social skills program, Spotlight, as well as provide a venue for community events. The collaboration has achieved the City's goals for revitalization and place-making in the downtown district while promoting inclusion and opportunities for creative expression and employment for people with disabilities.

### **Innovation**

College Bound Dorchester

College Bound Dorchester (CBD) aims to end cycles of poverty and violence through education by equipping students with the attitude, skills, and experience to graduate from college. CBD recognizes that Boston's full potential cannot be reached without effectively engaging gang members, called core influencers (CIs), because they disproportionately impact and influence children and families in Boston's most distressed neighborhoods. In 2017, CBD created Boston Uncornered, a streamlined college access program for CIs which provides three essential services: trained, neighborhood-based mentors; college-focused education (from secondary to post-secondary credential); and the financial freedom to focus on education through a weekly stipend. Each CI the program serves saves the Commonwealth about \$70,000 annually in costs such as incarceration and probation. Just a year into the program, Boston Uncornered has helped 45 CIs enroll in college and college programming.

#### Devens Eco-Efficiency Center

The Devens Eco-Efficiency Center was formed in 2008 to help institutions make more efficient use of human, material, natural, and economic resources. The Center started The Great Exchange, a program which preserves the value of materials and delivers savings from avoided disposal and purchasing costs by facilitating the reuse of unneeded items and materials. Reusable items are donated by manufacturers, commercial facilities, and other institutions. To support the sustainability of the Exchange, the Center began building revenue channels in 2016, including offering paid memberships for priority access, implementing a registration fee for distribution events, and requesting donations for larger, more valuable materials, such as furniture. Since its creation, The Great Exchange has diverted 500 tons of materials to benefit over 250 institutions from more than 30 towns.

#### Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance

The mission of the Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance (MHSA) is ending homelessness by addressing the practices, structures, and system failures that have led to homelessness. In partnership with the Corporation for Supportive Housing and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, MHSA piloted the first-in-the-nation Pay for Success (PFS) initiative to reduce chronic individual homelessness. PFS provides low-threshold, permanent supportive housing to those who would otherwise rely on costly emergency resources, enabling them to address their often-complex health issues more effectively than they would on the streets or in shelters. Launched in 2015, PFS has housed 690 individuals to date, reducing costs of caring for the homeless by over \$12,000 per tenant annually.

#### Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires

Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires (VIM) provides access to free, comprehensive healthcare for those in the Berkshire region who are income-qualified and uninsured or underinsured. After realizing that many patients missed appointments due to the lack of public transportation in rural Berkshires, VIM took on the task of providing free transport. Since July 2017, VIM has developed a volunteer-based transportation service for clients. Since establishing the program, VIM has seen a corresponding increase in appointment attendance during winter months. VIM is currently partnering with students at Williams College to create an app for patients to independently schedule rides, and with the Executive Office of the Massachusetts Health and Human Services to provide sustainable funding for patients to receive similar treatment at offices throughout the county.

### Willie Ross School for the Deaf

For 50 years, the Willie Ross School for the Deaf (WRSD) has maintained a commitment to an innovative learning environment that meets the unique needs of each student. Recognizing that most deaf students have access only to either “mainstream” education lacking the necessary accommodations or a residential school away from home, WRSD established the "Most Enabling Environment" model, which incorporates best practices in mainstream and Deaf education. WRSD now offers three educational environments: the Longmeadow campus provides a traditional School for the Deaf, and the East Longmeadow Campus houses an integrated program in which students participate in a mixture of public school and education geared toward deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The Outreach Program provides needed support to students in their home school district.

### Leadership

#### *Andrea Genser, WE CAN*

Women’s Empowerment through Cape Area Networking (WE CAN) works to empower Cape women in transition or crisis through free programs and services such as mentoring, legal, financial and work support consultations and workshops. As executive director, Andrea ran capital campaigns to expand the WE CAN work space, established monthly and multi-year donation programs, and set up an endowment to ensure the organization’s long-term financial security. Andrea has recruited volunteers across sectors to provide services and support to women, made WE CAN resources accessible to non-English speakers, and built relationships with other organizations to provide space, services, and expertise to clients. WE CAN’s capacity to serve had more than doubled since 2011. In 2017, WE CAN served 3,000 women and fielded 17,000 calls and walk-ins.

#### *Deborah Hughes, Brookview House*

Deborah Hughes is President and CEO of Brookview House, a nonprofit organization for women and children experiencing homelessness that confronts the root causes of homelessness and transforms lives. Since 1991, Deborah has expanded Brookview into a multi-service agency, providing 370 women and children annually with a safe, supportive environment in which to live and pursue education, job training and employment to achieve long-term stability and independence. Thanks to Deborah’s innovative model, 92% of mothers who have lived at Brookview maintain permanent housing after leaving, and 88% of the children who participate in Brookview's Youth Development Program graduate high school, compared to the national graduation rate of only 25 percent among homeless youth.

#### *Roseanna Means, Health Care Without Walls, Inc.*

Dr. Roseanna Means founded Health Care Without Walls (HCWW) in 1999 to address the specific needs of impoverished women in Boston. HCWW provides free medical care and care coordination to women and families experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity as well as women staying in "safe houses." Their clinical team includes nurses, community health workers, and volunteer doctors, nurses, and physician assistants. HCWW offers targeted outreach to women over 60 and pregnant women through the Bridges to Moms program. In the Bridges to Moms program, led by Roseanna, 79 families have been referred for services. Among the women who were referred during pregnancy, 80% of prenatal and 60% of postpartum appointments were attended. Nearly 77% of the mothers visited their babies in-person in the NICU. The percent of families living in stable housing increased from 10 to 38%. HCWW has

demonstrated that it can uniquely reach and impact the way homeless women access and succeed in the healthcare system.

#### *Karen Peluso, Neurofibromatosis Northeast*

A founding board member of NF Northeast in 1988, Karen Peluso has served as Executive Director for 24 years. Karen is a driving force for the organization's mission to support scientific research, create awareness, and provide support to those who are affected by neurofibromatosis (NF). Under Karen's leadership, NF Northeast has helped secure over \$500 million in federal funding for NF research, established a NF research center at Harvard Medical School, partnered with hospitals to provide resources to families of NF patients, and awarded over \$3 million in grants to NF scientists. Karen has become a leader for NF advocacy in Washington, D.C., earned a master's degree in nonprofit management, and served on the board of the National Neurofibromatosis Foundation.

#### *Verónica Serrato, Project Citizenship*

Verónica Serrato is the founding Executive Director of Project Citizenship, a Boston-based organization whose mission is to dramatically expand the number of legal permanent residents who become naturalized citizens by breaking down the considerable barriers to citizenship. Project Citizenship seeks to achieve this mission by providing free, high quality legal and other services to legal permanent residents to help them become U.S citizens. Verónica has been the innovative mind behind every evolution of Project Citizenship, from forming the organization's mission, to ensuring financial viability, to expanding services to meet emerging needs as immigration policies change.

### **Small Nonprofit**

#### **Berkshire Immigrant Center**

The Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC) assists Berkshire County immigrants and refugees in making the economic, psychological, and cultural adjustments to a new land by meeting their basic needs, helping them become active community participants, and by building bridges of understanding across cultures. BIC provides legal services, housing and social service referrals, employment services, citizenship assistance, and interpretation and translation services. Berkshire County's population is 10 percent foreign-born, many of whom fled violence, persecution or war in Central/South American, Asian or African nations. In 2017, with two full-time and four part-time staff members aided by 129 volunteers, BIC assisted 736 clients.

#### **Falmouth Volunteers in Public Schools**

Falmouth Volunteers In Public Schools (Falmouth VIPS) enriches the lives of students by promoting volunteerism, creating impactful programs, and forging community partnerships. With two full-time staff members and nearly 1,000 volunteers, Falmouth VIPS contributes over 40,000 volunteer hours annually in the Falmouth School District, ranging from classroom help to lending assistance with reading, art, music, and fitness programs, to serving as mentors to at-risk students.

#### **Girls on the Run Western Massachusetts**

Girls on the Run inspires girls to be healthy, joyful, and confident using an experiential, social-emotional curriculum that integrates running. In its third year of operation, Girls on the Run Western

Massachusetts has 180 volunteer coaches including teachers, parents, and community members operating at 54 school sites serving over 740 girls. This year, Girls on the Run has served over 1,200 girls across Western Massachusetts.

#### **Jeffrey Coombs Memorial Foundation**

Founded in memory of Jeffrey Coombs, a father of three who died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Jeffrey Coombs Memorial Foundation assists families in Massachusetts who are challenged financially by death, illness, job loss, divorce, and other circumstances beyond their control. It also works with military families, providing them with special programs and assisting with grants, and provides grants to college-bound students in Abington, MA. The Foundation has been going strong for 17 years, distributing nearly \$1 million since issuing its first assistance in November 2001.

#### **Young Professionals**

*Jillian Alfeo*, Youth Opportunities Upheld, Inc.

Jillian Alfeo is Vice President of Quality Management at Youth Opportunities Upheld (YOU, Inc.), a leading child welfare, behavioral health and education agency, offering more than 40 innovative programs at 32 distinct sites. In every role Jillian fills, she demonstrates passion for and dedication to YOU, Inc.'s mission and those the organization serves. Jillian shows her dedication by being unafraid to identify and discuss quality improvements that can be made with colleagues, and she always does so with thoughtfulness and care.

*Alyssa Irizarry*, Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs

Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs works to inspire the next generation of ocean caretakers through education and engagement with the arts, science, and advocacy. As the only full-time employee at Bow Seat, Alyssa serves multiple and diverse roles: project coordinator, educator, social media manager, graphic designer, writer, event manager, and more.. Last year, Alyssa was invited to participate in panels and exhibit at events, including: the High School Marine Science Symposium, UNICEF Sustainable Development Goals Activate Talk, Massachusetts Poetry Festival, National Marine Educators Association Conference, and Youth Ocean Conservation Summit.

*Sandra Lee*, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center

Sandra Lee has served the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) for seven years, and has filled the full-time position of Director of Youth Education since 2015. Sandra has been a backbone of Youth Education at BCNC, rebuilding the Youth Center programming and staff when she first assumed her role as director, pulling the program out of a two-year deficit in her first year, launching a youth employment program, and overseeing the Youth Center's expansion into Quincy. Sandra continually seeks out community partnerships and education programs that make her a more effective leader and maximize BCNC's impact.

*Lauren Riviello*, Brookline Arts Center

Lauren Riviello is the Executive Director of the Brookline Arts Center (BAC), a visual arts center committed to bringing the community meaningful experiences in the arts through classes, exhibitions and outreach. Lauren has worked to remove barriers to access to the arts by opening up classes to low

income families, creating programs in public housing, developing art classes during food pantry hours, and expanding classes in the Public Schools and the Teen Center. Each year, BAC serves over 5,000 visitors of all ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds.

*Christina Roth, The College Diabetes Network*

Christina Roth is founder and CEO of the College Diabetes Network (CDN), an organization focused on helping young adults with Type 1 Diabetes to successfully manage the challenging transition to independence at college and beyond. Christina started CDN from the ground-up as a college student, and there are now over 115 affiliated chapters on college campuses all over the country. More students have been able to safely and successfully make the transition from high school to college, and thrive as people with diabetes, because of Christina's work.