

MAYOR MICHELLE WU HOLDS COFFEE HOUR P. 4-5

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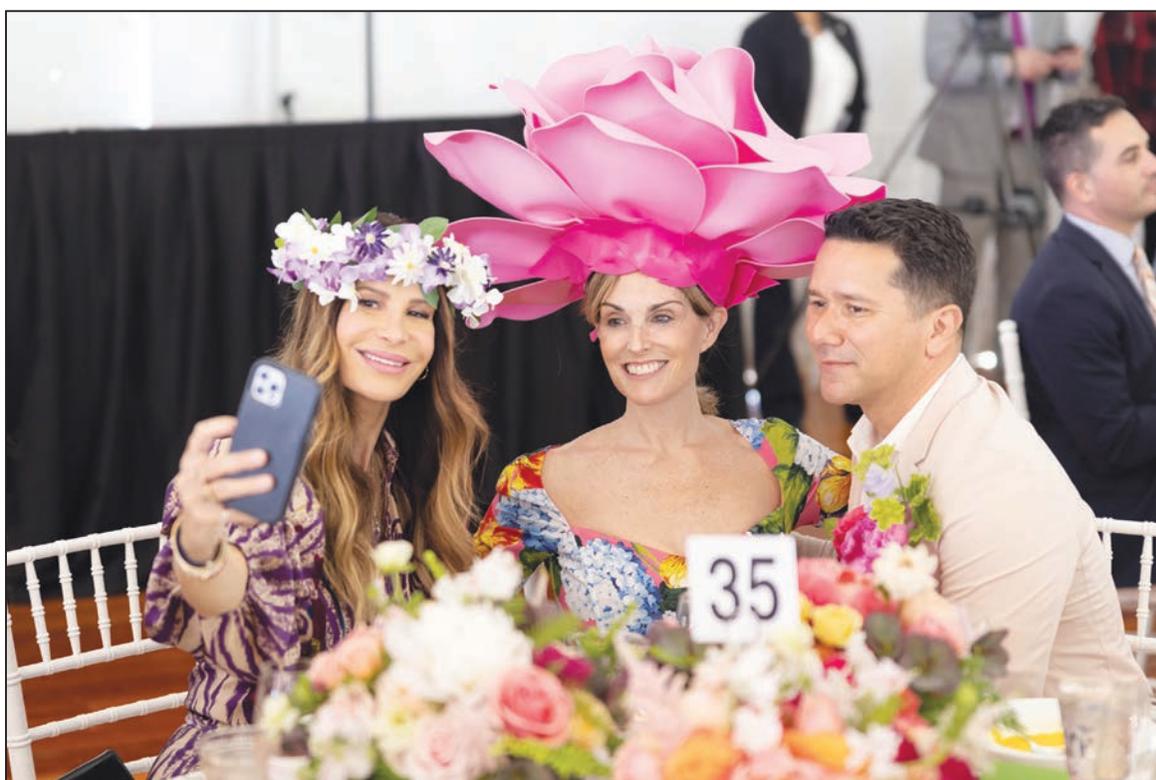


PHOTO BY MICHAEL BLANCHARD

Gayle Perry, Lisa Pierpont, and Ricardo Rodriguez take a selfie.

Party in the Park fundraiser brings in over \$550,000 for Emerald Necklace Parks

STAFF REPORT

The Party in the Park luncheon was held on May 11 at the Pinebank Promontory in Jamaica Plain. Together, more than \$550,000 was raised to support the 1,100-acre Emerald Neck-

lace park system that serves as a backyard for residents and a destination for more than one million visitors each year. Karen Mauney-Brodek, President of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, welcomed the guests. Mayor Michelle Wu joined the event

and spoke on the importance of public parks and the work of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy. Karen Abbott, President and CEO of Boston Harbor Now who received the Liff Spirit Award,

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2nd Suffolk Senate candidates tackle questions in virtual forum

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Jamaica Plain Progressives, along with Mijente, NAACP Boston, and RTC Vote, held a virtual forum for the candidates for the 2nd Suffolk Senate seat on May 23. The seat is currently held by Sonia Chang-Diaz, who is running for governor. Candidates include former

2nd Suffolk senator Dianne Wilkerson, current state rep. for the 15th Suffolk district Nika Elugardo, current state rep. for the 5th Suffolk district Liz Miranda, and pastor and lawyer Miniard Culpepper.

The forum was moderated by Saraya Wintersmith of GBH News and Yawu Miller of the Baystate Banner. The primary

election will take place on September 6, and will narrow the candidates down to two before the general election on November 8.

Miller explained that after this upcoming election, the new boundary lines of the district will go into effect, which means that

Continued on page 2

Three community-based organizations among recipients of ARPA funds

BY JOHN LYNDS

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) has awarded further funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to three community-based organizations located in and around Mission Hill that are working to address social determinants of health.

Sociedad Latina, Urban Edge and the Somali Development Center were among 34 organizations citywide to share in \$1.5 million in ARPA funding. The ARPA funds will support each organization's general operation costs to offset losses from the pandemic and stabilize these critical organizations and resources.

Each community organization will receive a grant between \$20,000 and \$50,000 from the ARPA funding that was approved by the Boston City Council in 2021.

Tres organizaciones reciben fondos ARPA

JOHN LYNDS

La Comisión de Salud Pública de Boston (BPHC) ha otorgado más fondos de American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) a tres organizaciones de Mission Hill que trabajan para abordar los determinantes sociales de la salud.

“Many community-based organizations suffered financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, yet the need for their services grew during the past two years,” said Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the BPHC Dr. Bisola Ojikutu. “BPHC is proud to support organizations that are meeting the urgent needs of their communities and advancing our shared mission to build a healthier Boston.”

BPHC awarded funding to community-based organizations working on a wide range of issues that impact Bostonians' health and wellness, such as food access and security, and safe and affordable housing, and other social determinants of health. Social determinants of health influence access to resources and opportunities and impact people's health.

Sociedad Latina, Urban Edge y Somali Development Center fueron entre las 34 organizaciones en la ciudad que compartieron los \$1,5 millones en fondos ARPA. Los fondos apoyarán los

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Visit MissionHillGazette.com Email stephen.quigley@reverejournal.com or patricia@jamaicaplainingazette.com or call 781-485-0588 for your Mission Hill information

## Questions

Continued from page 1

the 2nd Suffolk district has “lost most of the South End,” but “still includes Mission Hill and Hyde Square.” It also will no longer cover the Pondsides and Moss Hill portions of Jamaica Plain, he said.

Because of this redistricting, the district is now “32 percent white, 31 percent African-American, 26 percent Latino, and eight percent Asian,” Miller said. “It’s been redrawn to increase the... people of color percentages, and it’s a majority of people of color district which was the way the district was originally drawn.”

The candidates were asked a range of questions having to do with their current and past work, as well as how they would handle certain topics should they be elected to the senate seat. There were a mixture of rapid round (a simple yes or no) and long-form answer questions, for which the candidates had 90 seconds to answer.

One question was about homelessness and substance use disorder in the city, especially in the area at Massachusetts Ave. and Melnea Cass Blvd. Candidates were asked what they believe the “state’s role” should be in this crisis.

Miranda, who said she has been “active” in the Mass/Cass Task Force, said she believes that low threshold housing is needed to help get these folks off the street and into housing with resources. She said that she was able to secure \$5 million in last year’s state budget “to ensure that folks could have a place to go while they’re working on their recovery.”

Miranda also said she “believes in decriminalization of drugs,” and that people should get help instead of being sent to jail.

Elugardo said that “I come at this question from personal life experience,” as she has “grown up with addiction” and moved many

times as a young girl and also later on in life. She said that she has “run two statewide programs, both related to housing and asset development. One of those became the national model for foreclosure prevention.” She said that the EnVision Hotel is “one of the places the mayor and I are looking at” to “house people who are homeless and have serious substance use disorder.”

Elugardo also mentioned walk-throughs she has done, where she spoke to businesses and people with substance abuse disorder to learn more about what is needed. She believes the state has to “think both systemically and in the short term” to help with this issue.

Culpepper said he believes that “we have to look at what other states have done,” and used Los Angeles as an example. He said that Los Angeles built housing right across the street from encampments and “had wrap-around services that met the folks where they were in those encampments.”

He continued, “I don’t think we can run from the problem.” He suggested that housing be built right in the area of Mass. Ave. and Melnea Cass Blvd., and “meet them where they are.”

Wilkerson said that “the Baker administration has walked away; taken no responsibility.” She said that it “walks in every once in a while” and “makes an announcement,” but “our children can’t play in the park” because of needles on the ground.

“The human condition there is unspeakable,” she said. “I’m not looking to send them away,” she said, but she said the state needs to take on more responsibility in remedying the problems. “It’s unacceptable and we need to deal with it.”

Candidates were also each asked a question that was just for them.

Elugardo was questioned about her occasional “strong stands against House and Senate leadership,” and “how effective” she thinks she will be as a Sen-

ator, “a body where legislation is controlled by people in leadership positions.”

Eligardo said that she has “developed a reputation in House and Senate as being an honest, straight shooter of integrity.” She said she views this seat the “same way I approach leadership in every position,” and that she will be “recognizing strengths and helping you see strengths of others in front of you.”

Culpepper was asked about his lack of political experience, as he is the only candidate who has not held an elected office.

“I would say that’s a big plus for me,” Culpepper said. “That’s an advantage. I come to this office without making any deals; any commitments. I come to this with a new voice, new leadership.”

Culpepper served for 20 years as Regional Council for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, so he said he is familiar with “how to put legislation together.” He said he wants to listen to residents, and “I am ready for this Senate seat.”

Wilkerson was asked about her record, which includes pleading guilty to charges of public corruption in 2010. She was asked how she would gain public trust in constituents.

“I think how you restore it is you just live, you work, you do the work,” she said. “I’ve been doing it for 10 years. I never stopped.” She spoke about her work with the Black Boston COVID-19 Coalition as well as “convening a community of people in 2015 when Boston was applying to host the Olympics.”

She said that “there’s things you can do in and out of public office,” adding that she has “no secrets. My record is on the table.”

Miranda was asked about how she would “respond to criticism of” past social media posts “that have used insensitive language.” Miranda said, “I’ve apologized for those statements that were done 10-12 years ago, and that’s not who I am today. I’ve engaged with my public very positively.”

She also said that “I do not believe in policing hood vernacular,

and if I used some of that hood vernacular when I was in my late 20s, I am not that woman today. I believe in grace and redemption for all people. This community, to be quite honest, is full of people who deserved a second chance, and that’s something that I believe in and have fought for...”

For every single rapid round question asked, all candidates agreed. All candidates support a single payer healthcare system in the state, all support “requiring health insurance plans to cover all pregnancy care, including abortion, without any kind of cost sharing,” and all support raising income tax on all income over \$1 million.

Additionally, all candidates support fare free public transit, the legalization of safe consumption sites, and all are against classifying gig workers as independent contractors. They also all support in-state tuition and financial aid for undocumented immigrants, as well as same-day registration for voting and during early voting.

With the recent state review of Boston Public Schools (BPS) saying that it “needs immediate improvement,” candidates were asked about their viewpoint on potential state receivership of BPS.

All candidates were very against state receivership, saying that it has not worked in other districts nor has it worked in other places in the country.

Candidates were also asked about the housing crisis and how they would “prevent further displacement of residents in the district.”

Miranda said that “housing is one of the major issues in the entire city of Boston,” with “rent too high” and the “lack of ability to buy a home.” She said she supports rent stabilization, as well as making sure the existing housing stock is “safe and affordable,” as many residents are currently “living in places unfit for humans.” She continued, “for me, it’s important that we think about everyone. Housing is a right.”

Elugardo said that the re-

sponse was to “approach it in piecemeal,” and there “hasn’t been a plan until recently.” She said that the state should be “expanding our conception of public housing,” by “building generational wealth” instead of “charity” efforts.

She said that there is nearly \$8 million in state-owned land that “can be used to generate cash, capital, or development for affordable housing that has not been tapped.”

Culpepper said “I have dedicated my entire life” to working for “housing justice,” and that rents need to be stabilized. He also called to “end bias and redlining from the housing market. I think we need to make capital more accessible to those who have been shut out of the mortgage market so that they can now buy housing.” Culpepper also said he does not believe that credit reports should be used to “deny mortgages to those who are income eligible to receive a mortgage.”

Wilkerson said that “when we talk about housing being our issue, it’s really money being our issue.” She said that “for the majority” of Black and Latino folks, income has “stagnated” so they are “not even able to compete in the housing market.” S

She said that “our focus ought to be on income,” and she has a plan that would “put money directly into people’s pockets...”

Wilkerson continued, “building affordable housing continues to make white people wealthy,” and she also called for rent control to return to Boston.

Before closing statements, candidates were asked to “fill in the blank” in the sentence “I am the only candidate in this race who...” Candidates were allowed to expand on their answers.

Elugardo said that she is the only candidate who “puts the leadership of others before my own leadership.”

Culpepper said he’s the only one “who has 27 years of housing experience, fighting for housing justice, putting folks in housing.”

Wilkerson said she’s the only one “who has actually been an effective state Senator for the 2nd Suffolk district.”

Miranda said she’s the only one who “has a lived experience, the progressive track record for legislative victories, and has the grassroots acumen.”

The full video recording of this forum can be found on the JP Progressives YouTube channel.

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## Party in the Park

Continued from page 1

gave a moving speech about her career and meaning of the award to her. Janet Wu was the event emcee and David Lombardo was the auctioneer.

“Party in the Park, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy’s signature fundraising event, funds capital improvements and essential tree care in the parks,” noted Karen Mauney-Brodek, President of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy. “It also supports our education programs, free public programming, advocacy efforts and special initiatives. We are extremely proud of the work the Conservancy has done for nearly 25 years to maintain and improve the Emerald Necklace, and to connect our communities to these parks – your parks – which are such an important part of our city, and our collective efforts to manage climate change. In this year, as we mark the bicentennial of the Necklace’s creator, Frederick Law Olmsted,

we are especially humbled by the power of these special places to heal, restore and bring us together.”

The luncheon also featured the presentation of the Liff Spirit Award to Kathy Abbott, President and CEO of Boston Harbor Now—a superior park advocate who has made an indelible impact on the preservation of waterfront parks and open space in Massachusetts. The award is named in honor of the late Boston Parks Commissioner Justine Mee Liff, who served from 1996 until her passing in 2002. “Boston, the Commonwealth, our country and the world need exceptional parks... to help heal our wounds and lead us to a safer, healthier, and more fulfilling future,” shared Kathy Abbott, 2022 Liff Spirit Awardee.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BLANCHARD

Kathy Abbott, Karen Mauney-Brodek, Mayor Michelle Wu, Ben Taylor, Commissioner Ryan Woods.

## ARPA

Continued from page 1

costos operativos generales para compensar las pérdidas de la pandemia y estabilizar estas organizaciones y recursos críticos.

Cada organización comunitaria recibirá entre \$20.000 y \$50.000 de los fondos ARPA que aprobó el Ayuntamiento de Boston en 2021.

“Muchas organizaciones sufrieron dificultades financieras debido a la pandemia, pero la necesidad de sus servicios creció”, dijo la Dra. Bisola Ojikutu, Director Ejecutivo de la BPHC. “BPHC se enorgullece de apoyar a las organizaciones que satisfacen las necesidades urgentes de sus comunidades y avanzan nuestra misión compartida de construir un Boston más saludable”.

BPHC otorgó fondos a organizaciones que trabajan en temas que afectan la salud y el bienestar de los bostonianos, como el acceso y la seguridad de los alimentos, viviendas seguras y asequibles y otras influencias sociales que afectan la salud.



Jenna Bates, Danielle Frissell, Dune Thorne, Julie Hume Gordon, Liz Brookhiser, Kathleen McIntyre.



Channell Dagesse and Renisha Talbot.

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🎵	Thursday	Aug. 11	Lucky 13	6:00-8:00
🎵	Thursday	Aug. 25	TBD	6:00-8:00
🎵	Thursday	Sept. 8	Soul of Boston	6:00-8:00

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# WU HOLDS COFFEE HOUR ART MCLAUGHLIN PLAYGROUND

Photos by Lauren Bennett

Mayor Michelle Wu's Mission Hill Coffee Hour was held on May 6 at McLaughlin Playground, where many neighbors and community supporters turned out to mingle with one another and enjoy fresh fruit from Star Market and coffee from Dunkin'. Residents were also invited to speak with representatives from several city departments, and take home a plant from the Parks Department.



District 8 City Councilor Kenzie Bok addresses neighbors.



Parks and Recreation Commissioner Ryan Woods.



Marta Rivera, Therese Miles, and Sandy Holden.



Mayor Michelle Wu speaks to the crowd at her Mission Hill coffee hour on May 6.



Tyler Lew, a city transit planner, plays Dunkin'-themed cornhole.



Adriana Cillo dances with Aaron Myers of A Trike Called Funk.

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# WU HOLDS COFFEE HOUR ART MCLAUGHLIN PLAYGROUND



Neighbors contributed to the Mission Hill-themed painting at the coffee hour.



Residents grabbed a free plant courtesy of the city's Parks and Recreation department.



Adriana Cillo speaks with Mayor Wu.



Many friends, neighbors, city officials, and elected officials came out to the Mission Hill coffee hour.

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# Mission Hill graduating senior looks towards a career in health science; will attend BU in the fall

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Mission Hill resident Wahaaj Farah is gearing up to attend Boston University in the fall, after graduating from Roxbury Prep on June 1.

Farah was an active participant in Roxbury Prep's High School 2.0 program during his high school years, where he took part in Quiz Bowl and debate. He was also Roxbury Prep's only member of the Mayor's Youth Council, working his way up to the Director of the Public Health Committee. Now, he is prepared to further his passion for public health through his upcoming studies at Boston University.

Farah recently participated in the annual Senior Signing Day rally, which "is an inspirational pep rally celebrating the accomplishments of all graduating Roxbury Prep High school seniors," according to a spokesperson for Roxbury Prep. Students walk across the stage holding a T-shirt or a pennant that shows what college they will be attend-



Photo by JJ Ignatz Photography

*Roxbury Prep senior Wahaaj Farah during the Senior Signing Day event on May 26, where he revealed he would be attending Boston University this fall.*

ing, or what is coming next, all while their favorite song plays in the background.

"This is the most anticipated event of the year for students and serves to inspire younger stu-

dents to work hard toward their goals," the spokesperson said.

During his sophomore year, as part of the High School 2.0 program, Farah said he joined the Quiz Bowl, but switched to debate during his junior and senior years.

According to a spokesperson, "Roxbury Prep's High School 2.0 program takes learning outside of the classroom. A mix of co-curricular classes, activities, clubs, and competitions, the High School 2.0 program aims to enable students to learn through ways that support self-discovery—an essential skill for development during and after the pandemic."

"It was really fun to explore so many options and I stuck with debate for junior and senior year," he said. When the pandemic hit, it became more difficult to keep up with the practices, but he said he and the other students persevered and were able to pull it off.

"Overall, High School 2.0s were amazing," he said, and chose debate because he wanted to polish up his public speaking

skills. He said being on the debate team helped him to "really see what my public speaking style was," and "how I interacted with others" and built connections and networked.

He also learned how to craft arguments and work well with others, skills he says will translate into his college career and beyond.

During his junior year, he decided to take his skills outside of the classroom and into the real world. Farah canvassed for then-mayoral candidate Andrea Campbell as well as then-City Council candidate Said Abdikarim. He said this is his "fondest memory" of high school school years.

He said that he remembers "feeling accomplished and knowing that my senior year, I'm going to start strong, which I did."

During an awards ceremony for juniors, Farah was presented with the "Agent of Change" award. "My teachers and other students recognized the work that I did both inside and outside of school," he said, which "not

only motivated me, but pushed me to do what I have to do."

When he was in eighth grade, Farah said he was referred to the Mayor's Youth Council, and was interested in the opportunity. He explained that there was a group interview, and "we had to develop a project in groups, and the whole point of this interview was to see who would stand out from the crowd."

He said "that moment; that interview in specific; that project really taught me that it takes a team to build a project." He knew from that moment that being on the Mayor's Youth Council was something he was very interested in, especially as he transitioned to high school from eighth grade.

Everyone on the Mayor's Youth Council begins as a youth ambassador, he explained, but there are also elections for Deputy Director and Director of different committees on the Council.

During his freshman year, he decided to just remain a youth

*Continued on page 7*

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# Hill Happenings

By MAURICE 'MOSSY' MARTIN

The music reverberated through the Tobin Gym as the Boston Celtics cheerleaders guided the Mission Hill senior citizens in a variety of exercises. The event was dubbed “The Senior Celtics” and special guest, Leon Powe, a member of the 2008 Celtics championship team, harmoniously mingled with the crowd. I enjoyed chatting with Chrissy Dwyer from the N.E. Baptist Hospital, which sponsored the event. Mary Ann Nelson, Executive Director of The Mission Hill Health Movement, also attended the time. Mary Ann loves Mission Hill and she is a candidate for State Representative in the 15th Suffolk County which includes Mission Hill, Roxbury and Jamicia Plain.

Special gratitude goes to Harry Walsh, proprietor of the Mission Bar & Grill, who provided one hundred lunches to the seniors. Thanks Harry and I enjoyed the delicious chicken sandwich..

Brother Conal, the headmaster at Mission High in the early 60’s, passed away on May 7 at age 93. Brother Conal and I met a few times in his office when I was “slacking” in the classroom. He was a good man who nurtured us when we needed it most. After my sophomore year at Mission, Brother Conal and the other Xaverian Brothers departed our



Ellen Saucier and Lucky from the Senior Celtic event at the Tobin School.

proud school, most of them going to greener pastures in the newly built Xaverian High School in Westwood..

Walking by Brigham Circle a few weeks ago, I noticed about 20 Chelsea High baseball players in uniforms happily lapping up ice cream as the school bus awaited them in front of J.P.Licks. I talked some baseball with the players who were well mannered and inquisitive when I told them I played high school baseball. It seemed to matter little that the team had just lost to Latin Academy 8-6, after all it was a gorgeous sun splashed 80 degree day and it’s been said; “Baseball is a metaphor of life.”

A large crowd gathered at Mission Church for a Memorial Mass to celebrate the admirable life of Hellen Collins last week. Hellen, born in the summer of 1928, was a spiritual woman who raised nine terrific Mission Hill children, two of whom are priests, Father John Collins and Father George Collins. Some years back, Helen worked at the New England Baptist Hospital and she was beloved by her fellow workers in the Physical Therapist Department. May Hellen Collins rest in peace.

I was delighted to see the revered Father Dabney at the Memorial Mass. Fr. Dabney served at Mission Church for 11 years and he is currently in residence at the Baltimore Provincial House.

A tip of the cap goes to Jim Burke and Brian Back who spruced up Calumet Square and adorned that area with American flags in preparation of Memorial Day. The energetic Burke is 79 and a VietNam veteran.

Teenagers Lauren Alden and Kendall Alden notched tickets to see the superstar British singer, Harry Styles perform last week at UBS Arena in Long Island, NewYork. I’ve known the Aldens since they were little girls and they are so nice. The young ladies were driven by their loving dad, Eric Alden. Eric is the president of Longwood Properties Inc. in

Mission Hill, and he is a Board member of Mission Hill Main Streets..

God Bless Sister Patricia Hammond SSND and Sister McHugh who received the coveted Mary Leydon Award during a ceremony at Mission Grammar School last month. Both teachers previously taught at Mission Grammar which opened in 1889 . I’m proud to say that Sister Hammond and I were classmates at Mission High, class of 1967. Nine of Sister Hammond’s close lady friends from Mission High attended the joyous event. The ladies from that great “67” class have remained close throughout the decades. They love life and a good party and they affectionately call themselves “The Biddies”.

Thanks to my Mission Hill neighbor, Dawn Twomey, for the delicious plate of Greek Cous-Cous. I wasn’t familiar with that healthy cuisine full of greens which tastes better than a salad. It was nice seeing our Boston Police Officers for “Coffee with Cops” Day at Milkweed Cafe last week. The coffee sippers mingled with Boston’s Finest including Sgt. .Cogavin and Mission Hill Community Police Officer, Mike O’Rourke. The police have an unrelenting job and I appreciate them.

Did you hear the police received a call from a daycare center about a three year old boy-I’m told the boy was Resisting A Rest.

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After careful consideration and out of an abundance of caution, the City of Boston has decided to cancel the in-person application distribution period. If you cannot complete the application online, please call us at (617) 531-7123 x. 708 to request that we mail you one and to ask us for any guidance you might need to complete the application.

Fully completed + signed applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than Wednesday, June 8, 2022.

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## Farah

*Continued from page 6*

ambassador so he could learn more about how the Council worked. By his sophomore year, he wanted to “take on a leadership position,” and ran to be the Deputy Director for the Civic Engagement Committee.

He lost that election, but that did not stop him from continuing to put his best foot forward and work hard as a youth ambassador.

By his junior year, he ran to be the deputy director of the Public Health Committee, and won the seat. “I was so excited,” he said. “I was really happy about that accomplishment.”

He said that once he won the seat, “it was kind of interesting to see and learn the dynamic of deputy director. I gained a lot of experience on that.”

One project he worked on was creating care packages for homeless pregnant women and children for Rosie’s Place, and he said he has fond memories of “having that connection with team members” and creating something that was so essential for people in need.

During his senior year, Farah was elected Director of the Public Health Committee.

He plans on continuing his interest in public health by studying health science at Boston University this fall.

“College is all about exploring; seeing what your niche is,” he said. He chose Boston University because it is close to his family , but it’s “also an area where I can explore a new environment in the City of Boston I don’t go to frequently.” He said he looks forward to taking advantage of the many clubs and other activities BU offers.

He said his dream career would be to work for an organization like Doctors Without Borders, or potentially earn a Master’s Degree in public health or go to medical school or law school.

“There are so many things I want to be,” he said, but “I am kind of leaning towards the medical field. I want to keep an open mind with the options that I have.”

To his fellow graduates, he said, “we’ve come to this point where it’s like a milestone.” He urged his classmates to “keep pushing for what you want to do. Look back at the hard work that you have done, but also look forward to the things that you’re looking forward to or what you want to do.”

Farah added that while it’s “another cliché, don’t really give up on your dreams. Dreams shift dreams change. Do what you think makes you happy.”

## What's Happening on Main Streets

By ELLEN WALKER  
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

“Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed... Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders.” Henry David Thoreau

Do you ever wonder who the force is behind MHMS successful events? It is Chorlette O'Neill a member of the MHMS Board of Directors since 2017. A skilled event planner whose work is like that of an orchestra's conductor, aware of the sound coming from each instrument. When she works on an event, magic takes place as she can turn an ordinary dining hall into an elegant

celebration of people and circumstances. I had the pleasure of witnessing this firsthand at our past events. Chorlette joined MHMS in 2017 to help promote small business and plan special events. Her background includes owning a restaurant and catering company and property management for Circle Properties here in Mission Hill. Chorlette said “I love the sense of pride the MH Community has for the neighborhood and the strong commitment in supporting local business, especially at the Annual Awards Reception. It's rewarding to participate in an event that acknowledges the hard work of small business owners and volunteers that keep the Mission Hill neighborhood thriving and watch the enjoyment of neighbors and friends catching up.”



Chorlette O'Neill and her family Kevin and Kelly.

When asked what she is currently working on, Chorlette excitedly mentioned the upcoming Fall event and went on to say

ing and watch the enjoyment of neighbors and friends catching up.”



HMS Kayla Lambricht, MHMS Ellen Walker, HMS Dr. David Duong and Katie Cavender in front of a local, small business they supported, Bread 'n Butter.

# COVID-19 Boosters: Fast Facts

## Here's what you need to know:

- Like other viruses, COVID-19 changes over time, leading to new variants.
- Boosters provide protection against these variants, giving your body an added layer of defense.
- You can still get COVID-19 after getting a booster, but your risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death are greatly reduced.
- Your booster does not need to be the same vaccine brand as your original COVID-19 vaccination.

Recommended booster doses vary by age and health status.

Check with your doctor or visit [mass.gov/CovidVaccine](https://mass.gov/CovidVaccine)



“coming up on September 10th, we will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of MHMS with a fun, outdoor event for adults and children. We'll offer delicious foods from Mission Hill restaurants, provide guided tours, pony rides, games, and much more. Please join us for a not to be missed community celebration!”

Speaking of forces! Kudos to the City of Boston's Graffiti Busters team. What a great job they did the week of May 16th as they cleaned up several hard hit, eyesores in the neighborhood including both residential and commercial properties. Has your home been tagged with graffiti? Has a graffiti artist tagged your business? Contact 311 to fill out a request for FREE clean up by Boston's Graffiti Busters. There is any easy form to fill out and it is worth the few minutes of your time to keep our neighborhood looking welcoming!

When the name Harvard Medical School comes up in conversation around Mission Hill, the reaction is mixed. It was with great pleasure that I recently met with HMS' Kayla Lambricht, Dr. David Duong and Katie Cavender. Kayla and her team comprise the newly formed Community Centered Medical Education (OCCME) at HMS. Students demanded change — a change that was overdue and much needed. Formed in 2021, OCCME's mission is to ensure health access and equity, by dismantling structural racism and addressing the social determinants of health in Jamaica Plain, Roxbury and

# Mission Hill/Roxbury's weekly COVID positive test-rate drops slightly

By JOHN LYNDIS

Mission Hill/Roxbury's weekly COVID positive test rate dropped last week but still remains near 10 percent as Boston health officials grapple with new, more contagious stains of the virus.

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) reported that COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to rise. Last week adult COVID-19 hospitalizations in Boston were 208.7 per day, 8.7 over the 200 per day threshold. This metric helps the BPHC understand the burden of

serious COVID-19 cases among adults resulting in inpatient care in Boston hospitals.

Last week, 1,265 Mission Hill/Roxbury residents were tested for the virus last week and 9.4 percent were positive--this was a 13 percent decrease from the 10.8 percent that tested positive as reported by the BPHC on May 23.

One hundred nineteen additional Mission Hill/Roxbury residents contracted the virus between May 23 and May 30 and there have now been 13,236 confirmed cases in the neighborhood

since the start of the pandemic.

Boston's citywide weekly positive test rate also decreased last week but remains above 11 percent.

According to the BPHC 18,277 residents were tested citywide last week and 11.1 percent were COVID positive--this was a four percent decrease from the 11.6 percent that reportedly tested positive for the week ending on May 23.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID-19 report breaks down the

number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 1.1 percent last week and went from 186,446 to 188,509 confirmed cases since the start of the pandemic.

There were three additional deaths in Boston from the virus in the past week and the total number of COVID deaths is now at 1,469.

The Boston Public Health Commission strongly recom-

mends residents:

Wear high-quality, well-fitting masks indoors and on public transportation;

Stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters;

Stay home if you feel sick;

Ensure proper indoor ventilation by opening windows when possible;

Gather outdoors as the weather warms, instead of indoors;

Test for COVID-19; and

Contact your health care provider about anti-viral treatment if diagnosed with COVID-19.

## Main Streets

Continued from page 8

Mission Hill.

So what does OCCME's work look like day-to-day? It's students and faculty learning the needs of their neighbors; it's showing up when support is needed; and it's looking for solutions to issues that have been present for far too long in our community. Our hope is that OCCME not only serves those in our community who need support but provides medical students the training they need to promote health equity long after they've graduated.

Mission Hill is a beautiful community with a rich history. We appreciate Mission Hill Streets allowing us the opportunity to be a good neighbor and earn your trust.

This month we are honored to announce the 2022 MHMS Annual Community Award Recipients. The Business of the Year recipient is Solid Ground Café. This award recognizes the innovation, great service and products of a small, local business as well as their stability in the community. The delicious, fresh-made foods and baked goods along with their programs that support their community made them a sure winner for this acknowledgement. Make sure to congratulate Keith or Lucia the next time you see them!

Our next honor goes to the Volunteer of the Year, James Farrow. A mainstay in the community for many years, Jim is being acknowledged for his work with the

Mission Hill Health Movement and the Boston Breakers. Way to go Jim!

The Golden Broom award recipient is Penguin Pizza for being the cleanest, most welcoming business in the community and we can't forget the creative level Pamela Carthy brings to promoting the Penguin throughout the year. Congratulations Pamela!

In addition, MHMS recognizes Neighborhood Community Assets, that are businesses or individuals, which have gone beyond in their efforts to give back to the community. Please join us in congratulating Luisa Harris, Mort Ahmadifar, Dennis Pultinas and the Northeastern Breakfast Club!

There is one more award that is presented at the MHMS annual event and it is The Kevin W. Fitzgerald Friend of Mission Hill Award. The Fitzgerald family selects the recipient, and we are proud to congratulate Eric Alden, long time resident of Mission Hill, member of MHMS Board of Directors, owner of Longwood Properties and a great example of a "local kid, made good." Eric always gives positive and constructive feedback at community meetings and is an individual whose drive and efforts support the Mission Hill community, as did the late Honorable Kevin Fitzgerald. Please congratulate Eric when you see him!

Until next month, stay safe...



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## Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll

### 'CICERO'

Cicero is happy and playful 4 month old puppy.



He will need someone who has time during the day to continue his training and socialization. He looks like a Catahoula mix, so he's going to be a large dog when fully grown. He's shy of children but adores other dogs!



"Gazette Pet of the Week" is sponsored by

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# Wu provides updates on city efforts to address unsheltered homelessness and substance use crises

STAFF REPORT

Mayor Michelle Wu on May 24 provided updates on the City of Boston's next steps to address the intersection of unsheltered homelessness and substance use crises, centered in the area surrounding Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard. The City of Boston has developed a comprehensive Warm Weather Plan to address immediate public safety and public health needs during the spring and summer months.

Additionally, Mayor Wu shared the long-term strategic direction that the City of Boston is advancing to improve systems of care for unsheltered individuals impacted by substance use disorder. This strategic outlook outlines initiatives to decentralize services and strengthen the continuum of care, in part through shelter redesign. Through these initiatives, Mayor Wu seeks to reimagine how the City and regional partners assist individuals, services, and community, leading with a public health approach and supported by public safety.

Mayor Wu made this announcement at Boston City Hall with Dr. Monica Bharel, Superintendent of Street Operations Mike Brohel, Department

of Public Works; Commissioner John Dempsey, Boston Fire Department; Chief Sheila Dillon, Mayor's Office of Housing; Chief James Hooley, Boston Emergency Medical Services; Lt. Peter Messina, Boston Police Department Street Outreach Unit; and Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission.

"As the weather warms, we are taking concrete steps to ensure safety and health. Boston is creating a continuum of care for individuals experiencing homelessness and substance use disorder with pathways from living on the streets to permanent housing," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm grateful to all of our partners in public health and public safety working collaboratively to lower barriers and increase access to services while ensuring safe and healthy streets."

Between November and January, Mayor Wu charged the City to conduct a public health-led emergency response to transition individuals living in the encampment in the Mass and Cass area to low-threshold transitional housing and shelter sites. This effort included working with partners to create and staff six low-threshold housing and shelter sites for over 145 individuals

leading up to January 12, 2022, after which no encampments were allowed in the City. This effort transitioned individuals from the street to supportive, transitional housing. Guests at these sites are connected to behavioral health and medical care, as well as housing navigation. The Warm Weather Plan and longer term Strategic Outlook continue this work to support unsheltered residents.

## Warm Weather Plan

The Mass/Cass neighborhood offers many critical services to individuals facing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. During warmer months, more individuals spend time outside in the area, increasing needs related to public health, public safety, and quality of life. To meet the increased need, Boston's Coordinated Response Team developed the Warm Weather Plan to enhance the City's multi-departmental, collaborative strategies for supporting both individuals accessing services and the surrounding community through safe and healthy streets. The main goals of the plan are to improve public safety; enhance health and cleanliness; reduce overcrowding; and prevent encampments from

forming. This will be achieved through 11 steps:

1. Promote public safety through the Boston Police Department and Boston Public Health Commission Public Safety
2. Increase presence of joint public health and public safety outreach teams
3. Prevent encampments
4. Increase street cleaning
5. Promote safe environment for accessing services at Engagement Center
6. Increase parking enforcement
7. Make the neighborhood more beautiful and more walkable
8. Increase outreach
9. Open new day centers outside of the neighborhood
10. Provide transportation and referrals to day centers outside of the neighborhood
11. Strengthen supportive services at low-threshold shelter and housing sites

## Strategic direction for longer term response

Additionally, Mayor Wu shared updates on longer term approaches to decentralizing and improving homelessness and substance use services by establishing low-threshold housing and shelter and treatment services in other parts of the city.

## Enhance outreach

The plan outlines strategies to expand public health outreach to be proactive, to run 24/7, and to serve the city equitably. Through both city and community-led teams, the goal is to maintain encampment response supported by intentional engagement. This will connect unsheltered individuals to available housing and recovery services, and maintain clean and safe streets.

## Service navigation

Service navigation works to make available resources more accessible, including at shelters and day-time spaces. The City will expand access to on-site triage services for unsheltered individuals by opening more drop-in hours at locations throughout Boston to connect them with recovery and treatment resources. The City will also expand low-threshold daytime spaces throughout Boston and maintain an updated online map of resources across Boston.

## Shelter redesign and low-threshold housing options

Shelter redesign and low-threshold housing options lower barriers for people who have traditionally been unable to access housing and shelter options. The City will work with the State to maintain the six low-threshold housing sites that were established in January, while working to create permanent locations. Additionally, the City is working to redesign shelter space. This will make these spaces more supportive through upgrading the physical space, lowering barriers to entry, and enhancing on-site recovery and behavioral health services. Shelter redesign will allow more people experiencing homelessness to access recovery and treatment services in shelter settings.

## Permanent housing

Unsheltered individuals impacted by substance use disorder often also face acute medical and mental health challenges. The City will work to develop new permanent supportive housing dedicated to individuals with histories of homelessness and substance use disorder. Additionally, the City will work with service, state, and municipal partners to increase the model of wrap-around services and housing supports. There are 800 units of permanent supportive housing in the City's pipeline, 300 of which are in construction. The City will continue to identify more opportunities for permanent supportive housing.

Decentralized harm reduction/treatment and high opportunity sites

The City is working to decentralize services, including creating a citywide network of harm reduction services by collaborating with community health centers, hospitals, and social service providers. This will increase the locations and options where individuals can access treatment and services, including at community health centers. Additionally, the City will continue to work with partners to explore expanding services through recovery campuses in other parts of Boston. Boston will continue working with partners at the State level to reimagine the Lemuel Shattuck

Continued on page 15



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# John Drew, longtime President and CEO of ABCD, set to retire

BY JOHN LYNDS

For decades Action for Boston Community Development's (ABCD) Parker Hill Neighborhood Service Center has been an oasis of help and hope for countless families in the neighborhood.

Social service programs like ABCD's Fuel Assistance have helped low-income residents and fixed income seniors heat their homes throughout the winter without having to worry if they would have enough money for both heat and food or heat and medication.

At the helm of the renowned antipoverty/community action organization since 2009 was a man that approached helping Mission Hill's most vulnerable population with empathy, compassion and an unparalleled ability for being the voice of thousands of marginalized citizens both here and across the state.

Last week it was announced that President and CEO of ABCD John Drew, longtime fighter for the low-income and underserved, will step down from his top role at ABCD on June 30, 2022 after over five decades of service to the agency.

The 85-year-old Drew has served in leadership positions at the renowned antipoverty/community action organization since 1971. Drew has been ABCD President/CEO since 2009.

"I have had a long run supporting ABCD and its many all-important programs, as well as playing a role in significant national, state and local initiatives to combat poverty and provide opportunities for those who are low-income and disadvantaged to get on the escalator to a better life," said Drew. "I came in when ABCD was a start-up – something new – an organization dedicated to combating poverty during tumultuous times."

Drew noted that his work for decades alongside former President/CEO Bob Coard, as well as other dedicated community, corporate and political leaders has made his journey all the more special.

"I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work with these committed trailblazers and hundreds of others over the years to make a difference for those in need," he said.

ABCD was a start-up in the fight against poverty in America, taking off in 1962 with a \$1.9 mil-



*John Drew, Longtime head of ABCD, announced he will retire at the end of June after over five decades with the area's leading anti-poverty agency.*

lion grant from the Ford Foundation and help from other funding sources. When Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, ABCD was designated as Boston's official antipoverty agency. Suddenly grass-roots community-based ABCD centers were serving every neighborhood, kids were signing up for summer jobs, seniors were becoming Foster Grandparents. Fuel assistance, job-training, Head Start, childcare sprang up.

Since the 1960s, ABCD has built institutions including the community health center movement; the Women, Infants & Children program; Roxbury Multi-Service Center; Urban College of Boston and many more. It spearheaded community participation, leadership building, and community engagement. In 1973, ABCD and three other community action agencies filed a successful class action lawsuit to prevent President Nixon from abolishing the Office of Economic Opportunity.

"ABCD was a leader in a revolution for poor people," said Drew. "And we never stopped growing."

Today ABCD serves more than 100,000 low-income people annually with programs and services providing help and support for individuals, families, seniors, those with disabilities – whoever is in need.

ABCD announced that Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq. will take over the President and CEO post.

Drew said his successor, currently ABCD Executive Vice President/COO, has been approved by the 50-member ABCD

Board of Directors to take the reins upon his retirement.

"Sharon has the experience, expertise and commitment to take ABCD to the next level," said Drew. "I am proud and privileged to pass the baton to her, the first African-American woman to lead this extraordinary organization."

Chair of ABCD Board of Directors Sean Daughtry said Drew was always a tireless advocate, champion and warrior for all those needing a hand up in our city, state and nation.

"John is determined, tenacious and relentless in pursuing goals that give people in need opportunities to build a better life for themselves and their children, and live with dignity," he said. "His leadership at ABCD has been a force for good for all concerned and he leaves the organization stronger than ever."

While Director of ABCD Government & Industrial Relations Bob Elias added, "I have worked side by side with John Drew for decades, always inspired by his drive, his commitment, his vision for the future and ability to mobilize forces to make a difference for those in need. He's a creative thinker and passionate leader who is also an entrepreneur, savvy about leveraging economics to meet human needs. During difficult times, ABCD has prospered under John's unwavering leadership. We will miss him."

A national leader in the community action and non-profit sectors for decades, Drew is the founder of several national and Massachusetts-based non-profit organizations. As the Northeast region board member of the National Community Action Foundation, he has spearheaded national policy impacting low-income people and communities.

He also oversaw expansion of Head Start programs, particularly early Head Start, and initiated several new youth programs, including WorkSMART, a year-round paid work and learning experience for disadvantaged youth, and YEA! Youth Engaged in Action, a summer program for low-income 13-year-olds who are too old for camp and too young for traditional summer jobs programs.

During his tenure, Drew acquired significant real estate property for ABCD and initiated renovation and high technology updates to produce state-of-the-

art facilities that enhanced program stability for Head Start, neighborhood programs, ABCD's two alternative high schools, Urban College and more. His efforts supported neighborhood development and strengthened non-profit programs, expanding services and opportunities for low-income residents.

In 2011, ABCD expanded to also serve the Mystic Valley region, receiving federal Community Services Block Grant and other funding designated for that area and successfully providing vital services and programs.

Drew's passion for the underserved stems in part from his experiences living in public housing following a back injury and, in

the early days of the anti-poverty movement, sending his two young children to Head Start.

"Head Start turned our lives around," he said. "From day one it has been a beacon of light for struggling families."

Drew studied at Bentley College in his mid-30s and went on to complete his MBA at Suffolk University. After being licensed as a Certified Public Accountant, he worked as an auditor for Peat Marwick and was assigned to audit ABCD. He soon joined the organization's finance team and the rest is history. Before long he was serving as second-in-command at ABCD and in 2009 was named President/CEO.

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Public Works

# Wu announces city initiatives for residents to have a safe, healthy summer

Mayor Michelle Wu on May 25 announced the City of Boston's comprehensive plan for a safe and healthy summer for all Boston residents, communities, and neighborhoods. Mayor Wu announced several violence prevention and intervention initiatives, including the Community Ambassadors Program, "Adopt a Block" initiative, Operation Homefront, and new employment and job training opportunities. These programs fill critical gaps in service delivery, build new possibilities for Boston, and ensure the City fully supports our communities most directly impacted by violence with the safety, trust, and accessibility that residents deserve.

This new, intensive approach addresses public safety through a lens of public health, equity, economic opportunity, and community trust. The initiatives announced today will also organize the wide variety of preexisting

programs from the Mayor's Office, Boston Public Schools (BPS), the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), the Human Services Cabinet, and the Boston Police Department (BPD) into a coordinated network of services to support Boston residents this summer.

"Too many people in our communities live with the fear and threat of violence. As a mom to two boys, as a neighbor, and as someone that cherishes the friends, family, and neighborhoods we have in Boston, I will move with urgency to make sure our communities are safe," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "We have been reimagining public safety through the lens of health, equity, and community trust. We are taking a wraparound approach to create new violence intervention and prevention initiatives and expand and improve existing programs."

In an effort to better connect with residents and strengthen violence intervention efforts in Boston's neighborhoods, the Mayor's Office is launching a Community Ambassadors Program, a new initiative that will work to engage, inform, and support residents who are most vulnerable to gun and gang violence. This program will expand City services in supporting residents' transition from high risk area to resourced and engaged

community work that improves neighborhood conditions.

The ambassadors, residents of Boston neighborhoods with close community ties and a shared commitment to anti-violence programming, will work in two-person teams (with a total of ten teams) through the summer months and into the first quarter of the school year, a pivotal time for reaching residents most impacted by violence. Teams will each be assigned to historically underserved and under-resourced areas and neighborhoods throughout Boston to ensure our most vulnerable residents are connected to the resources they need and deserve. The Community Ambassadors will report directly to Rufus Faulk, the Mayor's Senior Policy Advisor for Public Safety, and partner with the Boston Housing Authority, Boston Public Health Commission, and the Human Services Cabinet. This program will further drive the City's work to create more pathways and support systems for residents, currently seen with BCYF's SOAR Boston program and BPHC Neighborhood Trauma Team Network (NTT) outreach and crisis on-site response work.

"The Community Ambassadors Program will lean on the social capital, knowledge, and experience of our local community leaders to better connect

our neighborhoods and families who have been disproportionately impacted by community violence with City services and resources," said Dr. Rufus Faulk, Senior Advisor for Public Safety. "This program will drive more place based initiatives and intentional engagement with underserved individuals, families and communities. These Community Ambassadors will have the lived experience to serve as tangible examples of success to our neighborhoods and community leaders in our pursuit of a more equitable Boston for all."

Through vetted referral groups in their assigned area or neighborhood, ambassadors will engage key populations identified as disproportionately impacted by violence. Ambassadors will connect these populations with resources and services that fit their unique needs. Those populations have been identified as follows:

- Individuals and families within the BHA footprint and communities who have been disproportionately impacted by gun violence (for example, Humboldt Ave corridor).
- Juvenile/young adult populations within BPS, DYS, and the Suffolk County DA's Office department of juvenile diversion under the age of 21.
- Gang members who are driving violence between the ages of 21-24.
- Individuals aged 25+ looking to transition fully from active gang involvement.

## Operation Homefront

In an intentional effort to address this issue within our school communities, Boston Public Schools is reinstating Operation Homefront, a nationally acclaimed collaboration with the Boston Police Department, that centers around community-building and family relationships in violence prevention and intervention. Following a referral, the Operation Homefront team – consisting of law enforcement officers, Boston Public Schools staff, service providers, and clergy members – will conduct home visits to inform parents or guardians about their child's behavior and provide resources. This effort is key to provide wraparound services to both students and families heading into summer months.

"The past two years have been incredibly challenging for our

children, and they need all the support they can get, not just from Boston Public Schools but from the entire City of Boston," said Superintendent Brenda Cassellius. "When City partners, community advocates and local businesses come together to lift them up and expand their options, anything is possible. These youth jobs and programs not only offer students valuable work experience and adult mentoring that enhances their academic endeavors, they also help keep them safe, engaged and out of harm's way during the summer."

"Operation Homefront has been a tremendous tool for years for identifying and assisting at-risk students and getting them the services and supports they need," said Superintendent-in-Chief Greg Long. "The Boston Police Department is thrilled that Operation Homefront is being reinstated and look forward to continuing our partnerships with clergy and the Boston Public Schools. Undoubtedly this will lead to more young people getting the interventions they need to divert them from delinquency, gang involvement or criminal behavior."

## Adopt a Block

Building on the Mayor's commitment to address the root causes of violence, the City is also revamping the "Adopt A Block" Initiative, a partnership between the City of Boston and various faith communities to serve residents and families in neighborhoods that have historically experienced an increase in violence during the summer months. Starting on June 1, this initiative will utilize a public health, wraparound approach to identify impacted families, effectively address quality of life needs, and better connect families with crucial city services and resources.

Recognizing the critical role that faith-based organizations play in delivering crucial programs and services, particularly to underserved Black and Brown communities, the "Adopt a Block" Initiative will support faith institutions' efforts to connect and support residents' safety and health. Additionally, the faith organizations will partner with the City to host summer community events, food distribution events,



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### Project Description:

The BPDA is hosting a Public Meeting for the proposed project at 775 Huntington Avenue, a project located in the Mission Hill neighborhood of Boston. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the Public. The Project consists of the construction of a new thirteen-story, mixed-use, mixed-income primarily residential development of approximately 123,100 square feet of gross floor area (GSF) of residential, 2,900 GSF of commercial, and 13,500 GSF of below-grade parking. The Project will include approximately fifty-six (56) rental apartments restricted to income-eligible renters and approximately fifty-five (55) for-sale condominiums, of which approximately twenty-seven (27) restricted to income-eligible buyers.

La información de esta reunión es crucial para usted como residente y parte interesada de la ciudad de Boston. Se encuentra disponible el servicio gratuito de interpretación de la información brindada en estas reuniones. Si necesita servicios de traducción, contáctese con: ([ebony.darosa@boston.gov](mailto:ebony.darosa@boston.gov)) (617.918.4419) La reunión está programada para el 06/27/2022. Por favor, solicite los servicios de interpretación a más tardar 5 días antes de la fecha de la reunión.

作為波士頓居民和利益相關者，本會議的信息對您來說是至關重要的。可以提供翻譯服務以傳達本會議的內容，您無需承擔任何額外費用。如果您需要翻譯服務，請通過以下方式進行聯繫：[ebony.darosa@boston.gov](mailto:ebony.darosa@boston.gov) (617-918-4419) 會議定於2022年06月27日，請在會議前5天內申請口譯服務。

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## Healthy Summer

Continued from page 12

homelessness prevention services and neighborhood cleanups. This initiative will be piloted in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan.

The following faith leaders and institutions will serve as partnering point of contacts with the City for the immediate areas surrounding their institution and the aforementioned neighborhoods:

- Roxbury: Reverend Dr. Willie Bodrick, II; Twelfth Baptist Church (160 Warren St, Roxbury, MA 02119)

- Dorchester (especially Codman Square/Four Corners): Reverend John Marshall - Mt. Calvary Holy Assembly (297 Talbot Ave. Boston, MA 02124).

- Mattapan: Bishop Nicolas Homicil - Voice of the Gospel Tabernacle (47 Edgewater Drive, Mattapan, MA 02126)

This initiative aims to build trust between the city and residents, strengthen relationships between the City and critical faith organizations, provide opportunities for community engagement and improve delivery of City services to families most impacted by violence.

“As a faith leader in this city, I believe that it is important to prioritize our youth and provide opportunities to ensure that we have a safe summer,” said Rev. Dr. Willie Bodrick, II, Senior Pastor, Twelfth Baptist Church. “We must engage families and provide wrap-around services and programs to ensure that they have the resources needed as we work to curtail violence. Our youth are important and I look forward to partnering with the City of Boston and other organizations to meet our City’s needs

and keep our communities safe.”

The BPHC offers many violence intervention and prevention programs, including the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI). SSYI works with teens and young adults between the ages of 17 and 24 who have been impacted by community gun violence to connect them with mental health services, educational opportunities, and workforce programs. By providing more intensive support and services to those individuals more regularly impacted by or engaged in violence, this is a program designed to address entrenched issues at the root of violence. SSYI is an ongoing program that will continue throughout the summer.

### Youth and Summer Job Programs

In addition to scaling up existing programs and launching new efforts to address the root causes of violence, Mayor Wu remains committed to creating opportunities for young people to access and pursue meaningful support networks and longer term, valuable career pathways.

The Green Jobs Initiative, led by newly appointed director Davo Jefferson, provides exciting opportunities for younger people to not only gain access to meaningful work experience, but also help make Boston a more equitable and resilient City. Inspired by the PowerCorpsPHL model, the Green Jobs Initiative connects primarily unemployed or underemployed young people and returning citizens with careers in industries addressing pressing environmental challenges. Members go through tailored training phases that provide sector-specific on-the-job training. They will also be able to get relevant credentials in a field of their

choosing. The “earn and learn” model ensures that members are set up to succeed in career pathways. The Green Jobs Initiative will be supported by the Mayor’s historic \$1 million investment in green jobs in the FY2022 budget.

As part of Mayor Wu’s commitment to expanding opportunities for youth, the City is now accepting applications and has expanded the 2022 Boston SuccessLink Summer Youth Jobs program to include 6,000 job opportunities, which is 1,000 more jobs than last year. Boston youth ages 14 to 18 (14-year-olds must turn 15 by September 1, 2022) can now apply for a summer job. Youth will have the opportunity to get connected to thousands of summer jobs that aim to promote skill building and networking through the City of Boston’s Department of Youth Engagement

and Employment’s (DYEE) SuccessLink Employment Program. The Department will grant up to \$3.8 million to local nonprofits for summer 2022.

Boston Centers for Youth & Families provides many summer programs and activities for youth and teens including summer day programs, girls-only activities, teen employment, sports leagues and many aquatics offerings. BCYF also makes their space available to youth and families across Boston as the host site for special events and activities organized by partnering agencies. On July 5th, BCYF community centers will begin their extended summer hours. Additionally, the BCYF centers are available to extend hours as needed for special situations to ensure that City programming can effectively engage youth and families impacted by violence.

This announcement builds on Mayor Wu’s commitment to transforming the structures of public safety and health to build safe, healthy communities, including yesterday’s announcement of the City’s Warm Weather Plan to address the ongoing challenges centered at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard and the recent historic investment in the Office of Returning Citizens. Additionally, Mayor Wu has worked to expand programming and employment for all Boston residents, including recent expansions of Early College and Innovation Pathways programming and the Summer Youth Jobs program. In January, Mayor Wu also took steps to build up public safety infrastructure, fully staffing OPAT’s Civilian Review Board and Internal Affairs Oversight Panel.

## 2022 Mission Hill Arts Festival

A series of exciting summer events to gather and enjoy a variety of art forms as well as conversations between the artists, festival collaborators, and the audience.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11 | 5:30pm  
MATT JENSON with  
“Mix Up Mix Up” band  
Reggae

SATURDAY, JUNE 25 | 5:30pm  
ABRIA SMITH presents:  
“Workspeak: Somebody Soup” Theater, music,  
spoken words, and movement

See full schedule of events at: <http://www.mhartsfest.org/>



## Virtual Public Meeting

### 1558 Tremont Street Public Meeting

Tuesday, June 21  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: [bit.ly/3l2awqu](https://bit.ly/3l2awqu)  
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864  
Meeting ID: 161 243 9564

**Project Proponent:**  
Tremont & Pontiac LLC

**Project Description:**

The Proposed Project will include the demolition of an existing three-family structure and the construction of a seven-story rental apartment community consisting of approximately 139 units, with a unit mix of (99) studio units, (26) one-bedroom units and (14) two-bedroom units, 1,730 square feet of café/retail space, including two levels of parking that will provide 44 dedicated parking spaces to Boston Basilica of Our Lady Perpetual Help and 10 residential spaces. The total gross square footage of the project is anticipated to be approximately 120,543 gross square feet.

mail to: **Daniel Polanco**  
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**Close of Comment Period:**  
6/27/2022

**Milton Residences for the Elderly, Inc.**  
[www.mreinc.org](http://www.mreinc.org) 617-698-3005

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## EDITORIAL

# Congratulations to the Class of 2022

These have been difficult times for all of us, but particularly for our young people, who have sacrificed so many of their rites of passage to the demands of the pandemic during these past two years.

For older people such as ourselves, some of what we've lost -- such as a vacation or similar -- have only been postponed. We can make them up later.

But for our young people of high school and college age, their once-in-a-lifetime experiences, ranging from sports and extracurriculars, to class trips, to proms, to graduation days, either were canceled altogether or conducted in a truncated form.

We are only now beginning to recognize and understand the significant psychological and emotional impacts, not to mention the lost learning time and lack of contact with friends, that the pandemic has wrought upon this generation. The experts tell us that those adverse impacts will last well beyond the end of the pandemic (whenever that may be).

Still, life goes on, and it is with great pleasure and relief to see that the graduates of the Class of 2022 have been able to resume their lives to a level of near-normalcy, especially during this graduation season.

Graduation is a bittersweet time, both for the grads and their family members.

For the parents who will be watching their sons and daughters step to the podium when their name is called, no doubt they will be thinking of how fast time has gone by since they first brought their child by the hand to pre-school and kindergarten.

Such moments bring to mind the sentiments expressed in the lyrics of the song, Sunrise, Sunset, from the musical Fiddler on the Roof:

*Is this the little girl I carried*

*Is this the little boy at play?*

*I don't remember growing older*

*When did they?*

*When did she get to be a beauty*

*When did he grow to be so tall?*

*Wasn't it yesterday when they were small?*

*Sunrise, sunset*

*Sunrise, sunset*

*Swiftly flow the days*

*Seedlings turn overnight to sunflowers*

*Blossoming even as we gaze*

*Sunrise, sunset*

*Sunrise, sunset*

*Swiftly fly the years*

*One season following another*

*Laden with happiness and tears*

A high school graduation is a singular event in the life of every community, where almost everybody knows one of the graduates or their families. All of us share the happiness and sense of achievement of our young people who will be receiving their diplomas. And for all of us, a high school graduation brings back our own fond memories from our long-gone youth.

For the grads, their high school graduation marks both an end and a beginning. The grads no longer are children, either in the eyes of the law or in reality. They are full-fledged adults who will be leaving the sheltered harbor, where they have been protected from the full fury of life's storms and vicissitudes by their families and teachers, and embarking on a journey which none of them will be able to anticipate, but which will be full of surprises, both joyful and tearful.

We congratulate the Class of 2022 for all of the accomplishments that have earned them the right to step onto that podium to receive their diplomas.

We know we join with all of the members of our community in wishing them fair weather, both for their Graduation Day and in the years ahead.



## OP-EDS

### More mass killings, what is the answer?

DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

Do parents in America want to spend every school day hoping and praying their children will not be heinously murdered? Do children want to spend their days constantly looking up to see who might be entering their room with an assault weapon? Do you want to walk the grocery store aisles wondering if someone has picked your store and this day to shoot at you? Do you enjoy sitting in a house of worship knowing that if a crazed gunman enters your location the exit doors are very few. Movie theatres are anticipating a major boost in attendance this summer. Can you go in peace knowing that your life could be in danger if someone enters with a semi-automatic weapon or an AR-15?

The list of possibilities is almost endless as restaurants, sporting events, concerts, shopping malls and more are targets of those who plot evil rampages against innocent people.

Uvalde, Texas and Buffalo, New York are the recent locations of horrific killings of the very young and elderly American people doing everyday life – going to school and buying groceries.

When will this happen at your school, grocery store, house of worship or any place else? At one time, Americans never imagined such horrors as many of us have

lived to see. One mass shooting has led to another and another. Your school or church or whatever the event is must plan for an attack every time you gather. If we do not try to protect the people at such events and gatherings, then we are throwing caution to the wind and subjecting people we love to the possibilities of being killed.

What is the answer? The Buffalo grocery had an armed guard. This was not enough for a gunman who had strategized and outgunned the security guard who gave his life trying to save others. One major problem is such an evil person has the element of surprise. They have surveyed the location. Innocent people are caught off guard. People may even be carrying weapons but might not even have the time to draw their weapon because the rapid fire of the attacker's weapon takes that person's life before he or she can reach for their weapon. What is the answer? Do we equip every teacher in America with a semi-automatic weapon? Should teachers and grocery store shoppers and ministers carry assault weapons at all times? Do you want to put on your Sunday dress and then strap on your assault rifle so you might have a chance of defending yourself?

State and federal lawmakers continue to wrestle with what to do. One suggestion is to take away

all the guns. This might be okay until Russia or China invades us and we all have to fight.

The local villain may find a way to order all the parts he needs online to assemble an assault weapon and you have no way to defend yourself. This possibility must be made illegal.

Evil finds a way to release hate and fulfill deranged fantasies. This does not mean we give up. Limiting assault weapons to people 25 and older, strict background checks, waiting periods and licenses is possibilities. Limiting all gun purchases to people over 21 is another possibility. Eighteen-year-olds use guns in the military but are trained and strictly supervised.

Do Americans really need assault type weapons? Would we be willing to ban them if it would save an elementary school of children from a murderous rampage?

It's all too late for Uvalde, Texas families and so many more. State and federal government must make some real decisions. In the meantime, we have to protect ourselves.

*Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist – American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.*

# Blair Capital looking to develop 120 units in Mission Hill

By JOHN LYNDIS

The Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) is reviewing two Mission Hill proposals by Boston-based developer Blair Capital totaling more than 120 units.

The larger of the two projects at 110-128R Terrace St., Blair plans to construct a six story, 87,000 square foot mixed use development on a site currently housing an auto repair shop and three adjacent residential buildings.

The building would include 80 apartment units, ground floor retail and 30 below grade parking spaces.

According to Blair's attorney, Mike Ross, the proposal would



An artist rendering presented to the community at the May 23 BPDA meeting on the proposed project at 1-4 Terrace Place in Mission Hill.

require the demolition of the existing commercial auto repair buildings and three residential structures. The residential program will consist of a total of 80

apartment units including 11 affordable units under the BPDA's inclusionary policy. Unit types include traditional one, two and three-bedroom flats, studio and

micro units, and two and three bedroom duplexes on the upper floors.

The process on this proposal began in January 2021 and is awaiting BPDA approval.

The other project located at 1-4 Terrace Place, Blair is planning to construct a six-story, 40,000 square foot residential development that includes 47 home-ownership condo units, seven of which would be affordable under the BPDA's inclusionary policy. The project also includes 14 underground parking spaces.

At a BPDA meeting on May 23, Attorney Ross said the final proposal was the result of a lot of effort and energy by Mission Hill residents, the BPDA and Blair to get this project right

and something that works for the neighborhood.

After months of tweaking the project Ross said at the meeting, "We're really pleased to be back here now, to show (Mission Hill residents) what we've been able to do. We're proposing 47 home ownership condominium units. That's something that we understood to be very important to the community. There are also 14 parking spaces within this proposal, 48 bicycle spaces inside and 10 bicycle spaces outside and we are meeting our goal for 15% of our units to be affordable."

Based in Southie, Blair is known for its developments in Chicago like the Saint George Plaza complex that includes 370 units.

## Homelessness

Continued from page 10

Hospital campus with a focus on acute treatment services and low-threshold transitional housing and shelter. As reflected in our capital budget, the City will continue repairing and stabilizing the existing buildings on Long Island and review the possibilities for that site. These efforts require partnership across the state and the region as the City seeks to expand access to temporary and permanent supportive housing.

### Recovery services

Recovery services are important for the continuum of care for individuals in recovery. The City will continue the wrap-around support on the street including the BPHC Recovery Services street team, nurses, mental health clinicians, and recovery professionals. Additionally, the City is partnering with businesses to create low-threshold job opportunities to help unsheltered individuals impacted by substance use disorder earn income and increase job readiness. Finally, the City aims to create job and life skills training for newly housed individuals.

### Behavioral health workforce

The City of Boston recognizes the need for supporting and growing a diverse behavioral health workforce to expand access to care. The City aims to train shelter, recovery, and housing workforce in harm reduc-

tion to improve care quality and health outcomes for individuals with substance use disorder. This initiative would equip providers across the City with the tools and skills to better serve individuals navigating addiction.

More details on the Long-term Strategic Outlook can be found at [boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2022/05/Strategic%20Outlook.pdf](https://boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2022/05/Strategic%20Outlook.pdf).

In developing these strategies, the City convened over 20 stakeholder meetings, meeting with over 250 individuals, including community members with lived experience, clinical partners, neighborhood associations, community health centers, shelter and housing partners, faith-

based organizations, outreach teams, Boston's State delegation, Boston City Council, outreach teams, and justice partners. The City also engaged with best practices from cities around the country and maintained an intentional focus on neighborhoods facing disproportionate impact from substance use disorder and racial/ethnic disparities in health care access. As the City works to develop best steps to address the crisis, engagement sessions with community and stakeholder groups will continue.

More details on the City's response can be found at [boston.gov/departments/recovery-services/mass-and-cass-showing-whats-possible](https://boston.gov/departments/recovery-services/mass-and-cass-showing-whats-possible).

The opinions expressed on these pages are not necessarily those of this newspaper.

## Mission Hill GAZETTE

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# Jamaica Pond closed due to harmful algae bloom

By JOHN LYNDS

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is asking residents to not swim, fish or boat in Jamaica Pond due to a dangerous algae bloom that can make people and pets very sick.

The BPHC issued the warning for the popular outdoor recreational space last week and said the pond is ‘temporarily closed’ to water activities.

Health officials suspect there’s a bloom of blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria. “Based on initial visual inspection of the pond, it appears likely that Jamaica Pond is experiencing a harmful algae bloom,” said the BPHC in a statement. “These blooms may produce toxins that can make people and pets sick. Park visitors are urged to avoid contact with the water and any areas of algae concentration, even on shore.”

Blue-green algae can form harmful blooms in lakes, ponds,



Photo courtesy Emerald Necklace Conservancy website

Jamaica Pond is experiencing a harmful algae bloom.

and rivers that make the water murky, and can sometimes make the water look like pea soup or paint. The current suspected bloom in Jamaica Pond appears like a dull green discoloration that could be confused as otherwise safe pond water. The toxins in the algae may be present within the algae cells or in the water.

“For humans, the primary concern is ingestion of water containing blue-green algae while swimming,” continued the statement. “Direct skin contact with

the blue-green algae and inhalation of water droplets containing blue-green algae or toxins is a secondary concern. For dogs, the primary concern is the ingestion of water containing blue-green algae or scum that has washed ashore or gotten onto their skin or fur.”

The BPHC suggests if you, your child, or pet comes in contact with the water at Jamaica Pond, rinse off immediately. The BPHC said contact by humans with tox-

ins in the algae may cause skin and eye irritation, and inhalation can cause respiratory irritation and exacerbate pre-existing respiratory conditions. Ingestion of blue-green algae can cause acute gastrointestinal symptoms, such as vomiting and diarrhea. If the blue-green algae are producing toxin(s), the health effects can be more serious, especially for small pets due to their smaller body weights. Ingestion of the toxins can cause acute gastrointestinal distress and, depending on the specific toxin, can affect the functioning of the liver, kidneys, and/or neurological systems and in severe cases can result in death.

“Call your veterinarian immediately if your dog has been around an algae bloom and shows symptoms such as vomiting, staggering, drooling, or convulsions,” the BPHC statement said. “These symptoms present themselves soon after exposure. Dogs have been known to eat the scum that washes ashore and/or

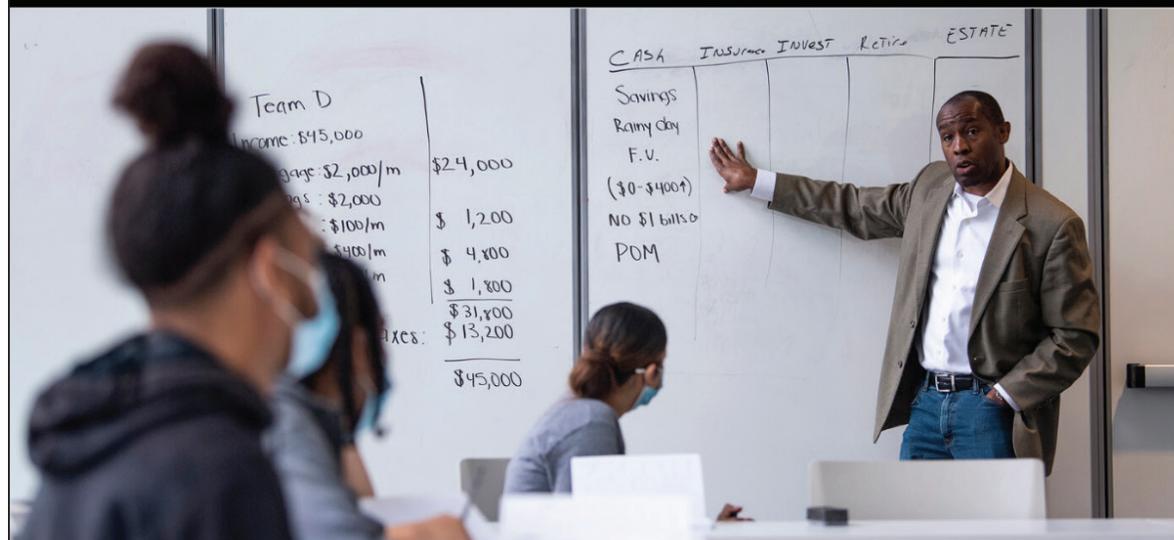
lick scum out of their fur. In Massachusetts and in many other states, canine deaths have been documented due to the ingestion of harmful algae.”

City health officials can not predict how long an algae bloom will last. In Florida for example, the Gulf Coast experienced an algae bloom that lasted for most of 2017 and killed scores of marine life and sickened residents with respiratory issues.

“Algae blooms may last for weeks in the summer or may disappear quite quickly,” said the BPHC’s statement.

The BPHC said they will coordinate with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) over the coming weeks with DPH water sampling to determine when the advisory can be lifted. DPH recommends that the recreational water advisory not be lifted until two consecutive weekly samples show algal cell counts below the safe limit of 70,000 cells/milliliter of water.

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