



ABCD Press

From the Office of Public Information

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ABCD and National Grid/KeySpan Partner on Charity Auction to Promote Affordable Housing, Assist Homeless Families

FOX 25's Maria Stephanos is Special Guest at April 2 Event

Hit hard by rising costs and a difficult economy in one of the most expensive cities in the nation, the number of homeless Boston families increased by 17 percent in 2007. Across the state, an estimated 5,000 families with 10,000 children moved through homeless shelters that year. And even though they work full-time, half of the individuals who are homeless simply are unable to find housing they can afford.

Helping keep a roof over their heads are **Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)**, Boston-area antipoverty agency, and **KeySpan** (now a part of **National Grid**), the largest distributor of natural gas in the Northeast. Together they will host the 7th Annual ABCD "*Keeping a Roof Over Their Heads*" Charity Auction. The event, which promotes affordable housing and combats homelessness, is scheduled for April 2 at 6 p.m. at the Marriott Boston Copley Place.

"This event gives us a unique opportunity to educate customers--renters and homeowners alike--on energy efficiency as well as the need for affordable housing, said **Richard D. Murphy**, Senior Vice President, Energy Solutions Services for National Grid. "Using natural gas and all energy wisely is a big part of the housing affordability equation. National Grid is honored to play a part in providing solutions to the problems of homelessness."

"We are thrilled that National Grid/KeySpan is on board for the second year in a row to support this much-needed fundraiser," said ABCD President/CEO Bob Coard. "This is an outstanding example of their commitment to children, families and communities. We are so grateful for their important assistance," he said. Coard said that the money raised will enable ABCD housing counselors to prevent families from falling into homelessness and help homeless families get out of shelters and off the streets and into homes of their own."

Coard also thanked the distinguished Honorary Chairs who are supporting the auction: Senator **Ted Kennedy** and **Victoria Reggie Kennedy**, Senator **John Kerry** and **Teresa Heinz Kerry**, Governor **Deval Patrick** and **Diane Patrick**, Lt. Gov. **Tim Murray** and **Tammy Murray**; Mayor **Thomas Menino** and **Angela Menino**, Congressmen **Markey**, **Capuano** and **Lynch**, State Representatives **Byron Rushing** and **Kevin Honan**, **Don Law**, **Peter Smyth**, **John Sasso**, **Jim Brett**, **Larry Moulter**, and **Philip** and **Beverly Johnson**.

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He also thanked the Auction Committee, chaired by **Kate Nesta** of Newton for their dedication and outstanding, hands-on work helping ABCD to make the auction a huge success.

In addition to providing generous corporate sponsorship, National Grid is donating premium Red Sox tickets with parking, a deluxe gas grill, home insulation, and other energy efficiency products for the auction.

National Grid/KeySpan's award winning Energy Management program has helped thousands of people use clean burning natural gas more efficiently. "We offer many incentives and rebates for people using natural gas," Murphy said. "These efforts not only save money, but also help emit fewer pollutants and unhealthy air emissions that contribute to global warming."

ABCD's Housing and Homelessness Prevention programs focus on cost-effective prevention strategies including landlord-tenant mediation, housing court assistance and rental assistance that keep at-risk families in their homes. They also move families from shelters and the streets into apartments they can afford and provide stabilization services. There are never enough funds to support the high numbers of families needing these services.

That's where YOU come in! Join us on April 2 to support this important cause and also have a grand time bidding on items that include courtside tickets to a Celtics game with legendary Boston Sports personality Bob Ryan, a \$1,500 gift card from U.S. Airways, good for travel anywhere in the world, two premium Red Sox tickets with parking, and much, much more!

About National Grid:

In the U.S., National Grid delivers electricity to approximately 3.3 million customers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Rhode Island, and manages the electricity network on Long Island under an agreement with the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). National Grid is the largest power producer in New York State, owning 6,650 megawatts of electricity generation that provides power to over one million LIPA customers and supplies roughly a quarter of New York City's electricity needs. It is also the largest distributor of natural gas in the northeastern U.S., serving approximately 3.4 million customers in New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. More information is available at <http://www.nationalgridus.com>.

About ABCD:

ABCD serves more than 100,000 low-income Boston-area residents through its central offices and a decentralized network of Neighborhood Service Centers (NSCs), Head Start centers, Family Planning sites and Foster Grandparent sites. Programs and affiliations include Fuel Assistance; Child Care Services; Head Start; Child Care Choices of Boston; Education; Career Development; Housing and Homelessness Services; Health Services; Family Planning; Urban College of Boston; University High – an Alternative High School; Ostiguy High School for high school students in recovery; Weatherization; Foster Grandparents; Elder Services; Intergenerational Programs; a Multi-cultural Independent Living Center serving people with disabilities; management of the Combined Federal Campaign, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, City of Boston, and Keane Inc. employee giving campaigns; advocacy and consumer services.