As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest.

—Nelson Mandela
In 2017, in a world characterized by a widening economic gap between rich and poor and divisive politics, Nelson Mandela’s words ring more true than ever: “As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest.”

At ABCD, in a climate of uncertainty, we stand strong and continue our mission to empower low-income people by providing them with the tools to overcome poverty, live with dignity and achieve their full potential. As Mandela says, we cannot rest; we must stand strong and STAND UP to the forces of poverty, injustice and inequality …providing opportunity and support to those in need and advocating tirelessly for policies that protect the poor and disadvantaged.

STANDING UP in the cover photo are the ABCD leaders and staff members on the front lines of empowerment and opportunity. Many work in the 14 ABCD neighborhood centers. They make sure that every person who walks through ABCD’s doors in Mattapan, South Boston, Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Malden and every other neighborhood gets optimum services that will put them on the path to a better life. Also STANDING UP here are leaders of several ABCD programs — Head Start, Housing & Homelessness Prevention, Elder Services, Neighborhood Operations, Health Services and more, as well as President/CEO John J. Drew and Executive VP/COO Sharon Scott-Chandler. Those pictured are just a portion of the over 1,000 ABCD workers who, along with dedicated board members and other volunteers, ensure that every person who seeks help at ABCD receives the assistance and encouragement and opportunity that will make a positive difference in their life.

ABCD is a Massachusetts-based, non-profit human services organization providing low-income residents in the Boston and Mystic Valley areas with the tools, support and resources to transition from poverty to stability and from stability to success. Each year, ABCD serves more than 100,000 individuals, elders and families through a broad range of innovative initiatives and proven programs and services. For 55 years, ABCD has been deeply rooted in neighborhood life, empowering individuals and families and supporting their quest to live with dignity and achieve their highest potential. bostonabcd.org
“STAND UP” is the watchword of this year’s ABCD annual report. And YES — this is a time to stand up and work hard for the values that guide this important organization. We are in a challenging time — a time when it is more important than ever to preserve and expand the ABCD spirit and programs that provide hope and opportunity to more than 100,000 low-income residents of Boston, Mystic Valley and communities across Massachusetts each year.

It is just a few short months since I was elected Chair of the ABCD Board of Directors, a position I am proud and privileged to hold. I have been an ABCD board member for many years and over and over I have seen the strong positive outcomes of this organization’s extraordinary work. ABCD provides pathways to better lives for those struggling to live in dignity and achieve their full potential. There are the teenagers in SummerWorks who learn how to write a resume, prepare for an interview and manage their money, as well as gain invaluable job skills and work experience. There are the Head Start children from homes below poverty level who enter public school kindergarten with high confidence and strong skills. There are the Foster Grandparents who had been isolated at home and are now welcomed back into society as they share their love and wisdom with children in need. There are the near-desperate homeless families moved from streets and shelters into affordable housing.

These are just a few of the ABCD programs that make a difference in people’s lives. I want to thank my fellow board members, the outstanding, hard-working ABCD staff, the neighborhood agencies, and the thousands of volunteers and supporters who do so much every day for ABCD and our community.

Yvonne Jones
Chair
Board of Directors

Yvonne Jones, Chair, ABCD Board of Directors, meets with renowned civil rights leader and U.S. Congressman John Lewis outside the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC.
STAND UP. STAND TALL. STEP UP. That’s what we do when things get tough. In our 55th year, ABCD and our board members, staff, volunteers, friends and supporters – including the remarkable staffers on the front cover of this report – are STANDING UP to the difficulties of a contentious and capricious political climate combined with unpredictable funding forecasts for our key programs.

As always, ABCD seeks creative and sustainable measures to continue and expand the important programs and advocacy initiatives that make a difference for the large numbers of Americans struggling against the ravages of poverty as well as those striving to maintain footing in the middle class.

The issue of wealth and income inequality is the great moral, economic and political issue of our time. America has more economic inequality than any developed country on earth and the gap between the very rich and everyone else is wider than at any time since the 1920s. The top one-tenth of one percent owns almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. The child poverty rate is higher than in nearly any developed country on earth. While economists applaud the fiscal recovery, in inner-city neighborhoods, unemployment is stuck in double digits.

Pope Francis says “…such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points?”

Last year’s annual report spoke out against the racial discrimination that divides America and Americans. Today ABCD reinforces that call for an end to the pervasive racism that inflicts painful wounds on our neighbors of color and is a root cause of high unemployment, unfair housing practices, harsh poverty, fear of police violence and more. We also denounce cruel and unjust rulings that vilify immigrants striving to build lives in America, immigrants who historically have strengthened our nation.

As we continue the ABCD journey to combat poverty and discrimination, ABCD thanks our outstanding volunteers, including the dedicated members of the ABCD Board of Directors and all our neighborhood advisory groups, our many supporters, and our committed, hard-working staff members. All of you – standing up together – truly make a difference for those in need.

John J. Drew, President/CEO

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq., Executive Vice President/COO

ABCD Executive VP Appointed to Governor’s Commission
ABCD Executive Vice President & COO Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq., was appointed in February 2017 to Governor Baker’s Black Advisory Commission. The Commission advises on issues related to the economic prosperity and well-being of the Black community in Massachusetts.
DEVELOPING FIRST RESPONDERS: This year ABCD launched “Future Protectors Initiative,” a Department of Labor-funded project to guide 250 court-involved or at-risk youth into justice/service careers. The young people are drawn from high-crime, high-poverty areas and earn credits via dual high school-college enrollment as they pursue careers in police, fire, emergency, health and more while receiving mentoring, case management and wrap-around supports.

Teen enrollee in the ABCD Future Protectors Initiative tries on gear during visit with Boston firefighters.

TWO NEW CENTERS FOR HEAD START! ABCD Head Start hosted the grand openings of two state-of-the art centers in Malden and the South End this year. Cardinal O’Malley and a host of national and local political and community leaders joined ABCD representatives, parents and children to cut the ribbons and applaud the creation of these outstanding environments serving hundreds of low-income children and families who struggle to get a foothold on the ladder of economic opportunity.

BOOKS FOR KIDS – Chef Mario Donates Library to Head Start: Celebrity Chef Mario Batali and the Mario Batali Foundation established an extraordinary “Books for Kids” library at ABCD Geneva Avenue Head Start in Dorchester where more than 300 Head Start children and their families are served. An exuberant Mario read Green Eggs & Ham by Dr. Seuss and joined children, parents, ABCD reps and a host of political/community leaders to cut the ribbon for the outstanding and much-appreciated new library.

Chef Mario Batali reads Green Eggs and Ham to ABCD Head Start children in Dorchester.

A LIFELINE FOR IMMIGRANTS: ABCD offers free immigration services through its neighborhood centers and central programs, including free civics and ESOL programs and “Citizenship Days” at neighborhood sites with a cadre of volunteer lawyers and others assisting immigrants on the road to citizenship. Vital English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs are offered free at ABCD’s Asian American Civic Association, Mattapan FSC, North End/West End NSC, Parker Hill/Fenway NSC, ABCD South Side and Mystic Valley Opportunity Center.

With her children by her side, Xiomara Perez proudly holds graduation certificate from Mystic Valley Opportunity Center ESOL program. (l-r) ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew, Aiesha Washington, MVOC Operations Manager; Xiomara Perez; Cecilia Plotkin, MVOC Case Manager/ESOL Instructor; ABCD Executive Vice President/COO Sharon Scott-Chandler.

OUR FUTURE LEADERS: In 2007 ABCD became involved in a management program developed by the MA Council of Human Services Providers, partnering with Suffolk University. ABCD provides several employees annually with the opportunity to attend the year-long graduate academic program one day a week, earning a Certificate in Nonprofit Human Services Management with tuition subsidized by ABCD. Courses in this rigorous program include Human Services Management, Human Resource Management, Financial Management, Non-profit Legal & Ethical Issues and more. Originally based in ABCD Community Coordination, ABCD Human Resources now oversees the program.

Amber Dickerson, Operations Manager, ABCD Community Coordination, displays her Certificate in Nonprofit Human Services Management at graduation ceremony with Michael Weekes, President & CEO, MA Council of Human Services Providers and Sandy Matava, Clinical Assistant Professor and Director, Moakley Center for Public Management, Suffolk University.
Early Care & Education

Head Start & Children’s Services
ABCD’s Head Start & Early Head Start programs serve more than 3,000 young children and their families annually, providing high quality early education that prepares them for success in school and life. Head Start is considered the “gold standard” of early education programs, providing comprehensive services – education, health, nutrition, family services – and intensive parent engagement. Parents are leaders in program decision-making, help shape Head Start policy, guide programs, volunteer in the classroom and advocate for the needs of the most vulnerable young children and families.

Child Care Choices of Boston
Child Care Choices of Boston is the Child Care Resource & Referral agency for Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Somerville and Winthrop. CCCB plays a key role in making child care work for everyone by providing support, resources, technical assistance, training and child care expertise to a very diverse community of more than 8,500 families and 1,400 child care providers in the service area. CCCB distributed more than $50 million in state-funded vouchers to more than 13,000 children.

For every $1 invested in Head Start, there is a return of $6.30.

U.S. Congressman Michael Capuano joins ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew and celebrity chef Mario Batali at the dedication of the Mario Batali Foundation/Books for Kids library at ABCD Geneva Ave. Head Start in Dorchester. The foundation donated 20,000 new books for the library serving Head Start children, their families and community members.

Massachusetts First Lady Lauren Baker makes a friend during her visit to ABCD Parker Hill-Fenway Head Start in Mission Hill.

U.S. Congresswoman Katherine Clark receives framed painting “The Heart of Head Start” by 4-year-old Head Start artist Kianna at the grand opening of the ABCD Head Start Early Learning Center in Malden.

(l-r) Eric Mitchell, ABCD Deputy Director, Field Operations; Sharon Scott-Chandler, ABCD Executive VP/COO; Yvette Rodriguez, ABCD VP, Head Start & Children’s Services; U.S. Congresswoman Katherine Clark; ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew.

Peace, love and fun with friends for Malden Head Start children at ABCD’s Annual Head Start Celebration on historic Boston Common.
HEAD START & CHILDREN’S SERVICES

IRIS LOPEZ

“For me, Head Start …and the ABCD G.A.T.E. program… have meant a new beginning. Without the support of these programs and the caring people who run them, I could not have moved forward with my life.”

Iris Lopez is a working mom with two beautiful daughters ages 4 and 6 who is building a career in health care. After surviving a high-risk pregnancy, she was a stay-at-home mom for 3 years. When it was time to return to the workforce, it was Head Start to the rescue!

Iris found high quality early education programs at ABCD South End Head Start for Kyana in Early Head Start and Keilani with the 3-5-year-olds. She says that Head Start provides her daughters with the tools to succeed in school and life. “Head Start gave Keilani the reading, math and social skills to do well in elementary school. She’s now at St. John Paul II Catholic Academy and loves it. Kyana thrives at Harrison Ave. Head Start. My children want to learn – they soak up knowledge like sponges. At Head Start that eagerness for education is valued – and they also receive outstanding social and emotional support. Head Start has it all!”

With Head Start as a base, it’s little wonder that those pink t-shirts the girls are wearing read “I AM YOUR FUTURE PRESIDENT.”

At Head Start, Iris learned about ABCD’s new G.A.T.E. initiative – Generations Advancing Together Through Education – which puts enrollees on a career path in health care, financial services or office software skills while also providing access to needed child care. Iris completed the Pharmacy Technician program and is now employed full-time at CVS, earning a competitive wage and planning to move up the career ladder.

“Head Start and ABCD are a win-win for me and my family,” she said.

Photo by Don West
Youth Programs

Ostiguy High
“Ostiguy” is a “recovery high school” — an alternative high school diploma program serving 75 young people in recovery from substance abuse. This partnership with the Boston Public Schools and the Gavin Foundation is a national model accredited by the National Association of Recovery Schools.

ABCD “Changing Tracks,” managed by Ostiguy High School, is a community-based program that seeks to significantly improve the life chances of youth of color in Boston affected by the juvenile justice system. Changing Tracks assists 125 juvenile justice-involved youth annually, helping them access gainful employment, educational resources and mentorship services. It is funded with a $1 million grant from the federal Department of Labor.

Dorchester Academy
In the 2016-2017 school year, the ABCD Dorchester Academy served 120 students, implementing a variety of strategies to turn around a low-performing Boston Public School and give students the opportunity and inspiration to succeed in school and life. Operated in partnership with the Boston Public Schools, ABCD @ Dorchester Academy is a “wrap-around” education-service model proven successful in serving disadvantaged students. It has a clinical program to serve the needs of student impacted by trauma, a competency based curriculum, and career explorations including a workforce skills curriculum and paid internships.

University High School
ABCD University High School (UHS) services approximately 100 students annually through a unique partnership between ABCD and Boston Public Schools-Boston Collaborative High School. Eligible students are 16-22 years old who have fallen behind at least one grade level or left high school without completing their diploma requirements. UHS embraces competency-based learning and students graduate with an educational plan, knowledge, skills, and the support to achieve their goals, as lifelong learners, in education, careers and civic participation.

THE EMPLOYMENT RATE FOR PEOPLE WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA IS 17.4 PERCENT HIGHER THAN FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE ONE.
“ABCD and its programs save lives. I don’t think I would have made it past age 21 without Ostiguy High. It holds a special place in my heart.”

Was there ever a turnaround like this? As a 17-year-old high school student, Jimmy Green was addicted to opioids and heroin. Failing every course, he left school toward the end of his junior year. In his words, he was “out of school and unemployable.”

Three years later he is a sophomore at the top of his class at Lesley University where he receives scholarship aid and lives in substance free housing. He works 25 hours a week. A psychology major with a social work minor, he looks to a future where he helps others get their lives back.

What is behind this life-saving comeback? He says it is ABCD’s Ostiguy High School. First a detoxification and stabilization program in Worcester - Motivating Youth Recovery (MYR) - referred him to South Boston’s Cushing House. There he was encouraged to apply to Ostiguy High School. Jimmy feels that everything changed because of Cushing House and Ostiguy.

“For the first time,” said Jimmy, “I started to participate in my own recovery. I knew that people cared about me. I came to school on time. I made friends. My work went from failing every course to a 3.8 GPA in my senior year. My SATs went from 800 to 1800.” Jimmy applied to four colleges and was accepted at all of them.

He credits his family and Cushing House and ABCD Ostiguy High School for his recovery and success. “Ostiguy is a place where people like me learn to see life through a different lens,” he said.
SummerWorks
ABCD’s SummerWorks jobs program put over 700 at-risk youth to work this summer in positions at more than 160 non-profit worksite including hospitals, libraries, child care centers, summer camps and government agencies. Job readiness, mentoring, financial literacy programs and career preparation are part of the summer experience.

Future Protectors Initiative
In 2017, ABCD launched a two-year Department of Labor-funded project to guide court-involved or at-risk youth into justice/service career paths. Participants are drawn from high-crime, high-poverty areas and earn credits via dual high school-college enrollment, taking a Criminal Justice course at Urban College of Boston. They take courses leading to First Aid, CPR and OSHA certification, access internship opportunities via WorkSMART, hold SummerWorks jobs positions with the Police Academy or fire department, partner with mentors in chosen fields and have access to other ABCD programs and services.
Kiabeth Pagan

“ABCD and the Dorchester Neighborhood Service Center (DNSC) changed my life. From the time I came here as a child in the after-school program up until today, they have always been there for me.”

Kiabeth Pagan, age 16, gets a gold star for participation in ABCD Youth Programs! When her family moved to Dorchester several years ago, Kiabeth found she lived down the street from the DNSC. She and her siblings were quickly enrolled in the DNSC After-school Program. Then, as a 13-year-old, she signed up for ABCD Youth Engaged in Action or “YEA!” She loved it!

“We learned how legislation is created...we visited City Hall and the State House,” she said. “We participated in community events and attended financial education workshops. It was a life-changing experience for me.”

At age 14, as an ABCD SummerWorks enrollee, she worked with children ages 5 – 12 years old in the DNSC summer camp. That summer she learned about WorkSMART and signed right up! This year-round ABCD program for low-income youth collaborates with the Boston Public Schools and community groups to place enrollees in paid after-school jobs subsidized by ABCD. The teens also receive tutoring, mentoring and homework support. They need to stay in school to be eligible.

Kiabeth has known hardship, with her family often struggling to make ends meet, at times living in a shelter. Always, she said, ABCD has been there for them with help that includes fuel assistance, free tax filing, Thanksgiving turkeys, and more.

“For me, ABCD has been a lifeline,” she said. “I was an abuse victim. I was quiet and shy. Now, thanks to ABCD, I see that it is important to be a voice for your community and I want to speak out. I love school and learning. At Mary Lyon School in Brighton I even take courses at Harvard University! I want to be a therapeutic cosmetologist – combining social work with cosmetology – helping people – especially abuse victims – to feel both beautiful and empowered!”

Photo by Don West
Youth Engaged in Action – “YEA!”
This summer YEA! offered a meaningful summer experience to Boston, Malden, Medford, and Everett income-eligible youth. The 13-year-olds from inner-city neighborhoods – too old for camp and too young to work – learn how to manage their finances, maintain a safe and responsible presence online, and be an active voice in their communities.

Career Explorations
This program offers older and out-of-school youth opportunities to explore careers in fields that include Culinary Arts, Early Childhood Education, Health, and Building Trades.

WorkSMART
ABCD’s WorkSMART program surrounds inner-city teens with the support systems to stay in school and graduate while providing work experience that motivates them to pursue higher education and careers. WorkSMART offers year-round, supervised, paid work experience with comprehensive case management and tutoring support to BPS students from low-income homes. Youth must stay in school to qualify.

IN 2017, ABCD WORKSMART AND SUMMERWORKS BROUGHT MORE THAN $1.1 MILLION TO BOSTON NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGH WAGES TO LOW-INCOME YOUTH.
“Building Pathways has made the future happen. No more running from one job to the next. I can pay off my bills. I can help my family. For the first time, I have a little wiggle room.”

At age 31, Devon was working two jobs… at a furniture store days and a sports bar at night. He had always needed a couple of jobs to make ends meet. Then a friend told him about Building Pathways and he signed up for the pre-apprentice program. For six weeks he lived the program – no pay – 6 a.m. start. “I was there at 5 every day,” he said. “I couldn’t get enough of it. I knew it was an investment in the future.”

There was classroom work: math, English, interviewing skills. And shop work with the opportunity to experience every union trade – electrician, carpenter, plumber. He chose elevator engineering. “One of the best trades in the world,” he said.

Devon – a Boston native who grew up in Roslindale and now lives in Hyde Park – is an elevator engineering apprentice with Local 4 working on a high rise on Seaport Boulevard. He works from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday and makes $28 an hour, twice what he earned in his previous jobs. He also gets health insurance, an annuity, a 401K, and regular pay increases over the four-year apprenticeship.

In four years he’ll be an elevator mechanic and union member, earning $45 – 50 an hour. He loves this work. The future is happening.

Building Pathways is sponsored by the Building & Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District in partnership with Action for Boston Community Development and the Boston Housing Authority.
Financial Wellness

ABCD’s financial wellness programs provide low-income residents with the knowledge and resources they need to navigate their current financial situation and design a plan to increase their future earnings. ABCD Financial Wellness staff work with partners and volunteers to provide Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, ensuring that thousands of eligible workers in low-income communities receive the tax credits they earn and deserve: Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Senior Circuit Breaker and Premium Tax Credit.

**THIS YEAR THE ABCD-VITA PROGRAM BROUGHT $8.4 MILLION INTO LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY.**

Career Development

ABCD’s adult workforce development center offers education, training and support services for low-income adults.

**G.A.T.E.: Generations Advancing Together Through Education**

Funded with a four-year Department of Labor grant and with seasoned workforce partners, the “G.A.T.E.” program provides a two-generation approach to workforce development, serving low-income parents who need child care to enter training programs and build careers. G.A.T.E. offers access to child care vouchers and funds three training programs with partner agencies: Banking and Finance and New Roots training for immigrants with degrees/professional experience in their native land with Asian American Civic Association; Certified Nurse Assistant and Pharmacy Technician with Jewish Vocational Services; Office Skills Administration with YMCA Training Inc.

**Building Pathways**

Building Pathways prepares and places men and women who were unemployed or earning minimum wage in union apprenticeships in the building trades – at union wages. As apprentice electricians, plumbers, bricklayers, carpenters, roofers and other construction trade specialists, they earn in the $30 an hour range by the second year of apprenticeship and move up to $33 to $50 an hour when they become journeymen in their trade. The program is sponsored by the Building & Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District in partnership with ABCD and the Boston Housing Authority.

Housing Services & Assistance to the Homeless

ABCD helps homeless families and individuals and those at risk of homelessness in the Boston, Malden and Everett areas to obtain or maintain safe and affordable housing or shelter. ABCD staff members provide comprehensive services to families and individuals, always respecting the dignity of those served. Programs include Prevention; Stabilization; Emergency Housing including a “Scattered Site” shelter housing 35 homeless families; supportive services to more than 150 families with 300 children living in motels; and assistance with resources and referrals to more than 350 families annually.

In Malden, a Mobile Housing Outreach Team provides services to homeless individuals living on the streets to get them into shelters and substance abuse treatment programs, develop a housing plan and meet other needs to achieve placement in permanent/supported affordable housing. ABCD has been funded through a one-year grant to develop a rapid rehousing program for families and individuals.

**Elder Affordable Housing**

Over the years, with funding from the federal Department of Housing & Urban Development’s HUD 202 program, ABCD has developed four elder housing complexes in the low-income Boston neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan and the North End, providing 206 units of elder affordable housing for seniors in need.

**KEEPING A FAMILY IN THEIR HOME SAVES TAXPAYERS $44,000 PER YEAR IN SHELTER COSTS.**
“ABCD has opened the doors of opportunity for me and I won’t give up. I will keep working until I become a Registered Nurse.”

Nickeisha Francis, age 31, came to the United States from Jamaica in 2016 with her young son Ajari, now age 2, and a dream of building a new life. With Ajari at ABCD South End Early Head Start, she learned of ABCD’s “Generations Advancing Together Toward Education” or G.A.T.E. program – an initiative providing services to low-income parents who need child care in order to complete a training program. Funded with a Department of Labor grant, G.A.T.E. offers access to child care vouchers and funds three training programs with partner agencies.

Nickeisha chose the Certified Nursing Assistant program and worked hard to complete it. Living in a homeless shelter in Dorchester, she traveled by public transportation early each morning to bring her son to ABCD Head Start and attend the training program that ran downtown in collaboration with Jewish Vocational Services from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. daily for 14 weeks.

She praised the ABCD support system, describing how teachers at Head Start came in early so she could report to the training agency at 7:30 a.m. for her final exams. “They were there for me! They said ‘You go girl! Get that license!’” With her CNA license in hand, Nickeisha was placed with a health care agency and works 20 hours a week, seeing three clients in their homes daily, meeting their needs for health care. She is working with her G.A.T.E. advocate on the logistics of housing and child care that will enable her to work longer shifts.

“I will keep working,” she said, “until I can go to college and become a Registered Nurse.”
**Energy Programs**

ABCD’s energy programs keep vulnerable households safe in the life-threatening cold of New England winters… and make a dramatic contribution to reducing energy costs for low-income families in communities statewide.

**Energy Conservation Programs**

**Funded by utilities, ABCD and “LEAN” provide $50 million annually in energy conservation services for low-income households; program called one of most successful in nation**

Since 1981, when ABCD began implementing weatherization and other energy-saving measures in low-income households, those programs have saved low-income consumers and the public more than $175 million in energy costs. With funding of approximately $50 million from Massachusetts utility companies and in partnership with the Low-income Energy Affordability Network (LEAN), ABCD provides energy conservation services to more than 12,000 Massachusetts low-income, multi-family housing units annually. Services include heating replacements, electrical upgrades, refrigerator replacements, shell insulation and air sealing improvements to hundreds of low-income housing developments in Massachusetts. Along with partner Action, Inc., ABCD’s award-winning leadership in energy conservation in a major utility initiative has brought energy efficiency to hundreds of low-income housing developments in Massachusetts. In 2017, the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy cited the LEAN network – started by ABCD and Action, Inc. in 1998 – as one of the most successful programs of its kind in the nation.

**Fuel Assistance**

As the official Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program provider for Boston, Brookline, Newton, Malden, Everett, Medford, Melrose, Woburn, Winchester and Stoneham, ABCD received more than 26,000 applications for critically needed fuel in the bitter 2016-17 winter. The federal fuel assistance allocation provided a maximum benefit of $1,100, up slightly from the $1,050 in 2015-16, but only enough to fill an oil tank twice. Payments are made from ABCD directly to the fuel vendor. Most ABCD fuel aid customers had used up their benefits before Christmas.

**Elder Services**

ABCD empowers older, low-income and disadvantaged adults to stay vibrant, secure and engaged, with the resources they need to enjoy optimum quality of life in their later years.

**Foster Grandparents**

ABCD’s 170 Foster Grandparents work with children with special needs in Boston, Quincy, Cambridge, Somerville, Malden, Medford, Everett, Melrose and Stoneham at 53 partner sites including Head Start, child care centers and public and private schools. They help young children prepare for school, work with them on literacy and mathematical skills and mentor young people from diverse cultures.

**Food Dollars**

Funded by the AARP Foundation, “Food Dollars” educates seniors on healthy eating and budget management, helps to reduce food insecurities and provides information and resources to elders on SNAP, food pantries and farmers markets.

**Neighborhood-based Services**

ABCD’s neighborhood centers provide programs for seniors in their communities, including hot lunches, food pantry “brown bags,” bus trips, holiday parties, exercise programs and more.
I love the children and they love me too. I know all their names. At home I felt very lonely since my husband passed away. Now I feel happy each day.”

Jian Kun, age 81, came to Foster Grandparents two years ago after a friend told her about the program. She had lost her husband and was trying to figure out how to pass the time. Her two sons and their families live in the suburbs and she only sees them on weekends.

A resident of senior housing in Boston, Jian Kun enjoys the 10-minute walk to Nurtury, a child care center and partner of ABCD on Tremont Street, where she volunteers in a classroom of 3-4-year-olds who call her grandma and love to read and play with her.

Jian Kun was born in Hong Kong and completed high school there. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Guang Zhou, China, and taught college-level horticulture there. She came to the United States in 1992 with her husband. His whole family was in Boston. She raised her family and worked for the Chinese Golden Age Center, Castle Square Tenant Organization and Quincy Pen Co.

Now she arrives at Nurtury at 7:30 each weekday morning and is greeted with cries of “grandma” and enthusiastic hugs from the preschoolers. She reads and draws and builds Lego houses with them. They go to the park; they sing and dance in group “circle time.”

ABCD Elder Services Director Anne Corbin praises Jian Kun for her enthusiasm and willingness to help the program in every way possible. “She is a leader among our 45 Chinese-speaking volunteers. She is always willing to help out!” said Anne.

“I am so glad to be an ABCD Foster Grandparent,” said Jian Kun. “The children make me very happy.”

Photo by Don West
Health Services

ABCD provides community-driven, community-based health promotion and disease prevention initiatives that aim to overcome documented health disparities in low-income neighborhoods and enable all community residents to achieve optimum health and wellness, regardless of income levels.

Family Planning Services
ABCD Family Planning clinical services are delivered in 52 primary care sites and reach more than 29,000 men, women and teens in Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, Quincy, Waltham, Everett, Malden, Revere and Chelsea.

Community-based Prevention Programs
These programs reach youth and adults in their community who may not use – or trust – conventional sources of care and information. They include: Young Women’s Health Leadership Academy; Sister2Sister; Adolescent Sexuality Education; Community Health and Wellness; Social Media Campaigns; and HIV/STI Testing Initiatives.

Teen birth rates have decreased in Boston by 29 percent from 2009 to 2012 and have continued to fall. Much of the credit is due to the access to comprehensive sexual health education, contraceptive services, proactive policy changes at the city and state level and cooperative efforts of community-based organizations. Young people have been at the forefront in leading public prevention health efforts to reach this important goal.

Volunteer Program

Volunteering is a way of life at ABCD. Fifty-one committed volunteers serve on the ABCD Board of Directors and over 100 serve on 14 neighborhood boards. More than 2,000 volunteers meet critical needs in Head Start, Elder Services, Youth Programs, ESOL, immigration services, tax assistance and food pantries every year, resulting in over 35,000 hours served. Volunteers also provide needed support for all-important fundraisers such as Field of Dreams at Fenway Park and Hoop Dreams at TD Garden.

From college interns to corporate employees to enthusiastic retirees, volunteers are vital to the success of ABCD programs. To volunteer, please call Volunteer Coordinator Madeline Eleazar at 617-348-6591 or email volunteer@bostonabcd.org.
A network of 14 neighborhood centers, managed through the Community Coordination Department, provides access to ABCD services for struggling families in every community.

Linking into this primary network are the hundreds of additional ABCD program sites in every Boston neighborhood where ABCD programs and services are provided: Head Start, Foster Grandparents, Health Services, Fuel Assistance, SummerWorks, and more.

Specific Neighborhood Network/Community Coordination programs include: Adopt-A-Family/ABCD Toy Drive; Immigration Services; Food Insecurity; and Civic Engagement.

Jasmin Vohalis, ABCD Employment & Training Resource Specialist, is awarded a Certificate of Completion in the ABCD Social Work Internship Program supervised by Milly Arbaje-Thomas. The program provides meaningful internship experiences while increasing ABCD’s capacity to serve clients and expand programs. (l-r) Michael Vance, Milagros Arbaje-Thomas, Bianny Suncar, Kathy Vo, Jasmin Vohalis, Sharon Scott-Chandler and John J. Drew.


In celebration of Three Kings Day in early January, the three Magi - Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar – arrive at Jamaica Plain APAC/Citywide Boston Hispanic Center with gifts for this very pleased little boy and many neighborhood children.
RESIDENTS WHO HAVE MASTERED THE LANGUAGE EARN 25-40 PERCENT MORE THAN THOSE WITH LIMITED ENGLISH CAPABILITY.

Solutions Series

For the past four years, the ABCD Solutions Series seminars have explored dilemmas of economic opportunity with informed, dynamic speakers and panelists. This year the forums attended by a wide range of Greater Boston residents – policy makers, human service providers, business and nonprofit leaders, students, and staff from state and municipal agencies – included:

- Four More Years? How Higher Education Became a Barrier
- I’ll Need Child Care for That! Connecting Employment, Training and Child Care
- To Have And To Hold: Rethinking Homeownership as a Path Out of Poverty
- Your Neighborhood. Your Health
- Fixing the Design: Smart Growth & Transit-oriented Development

The Solutions Series is coordinated by the ABCD Planning & Grants Department in collaboration and with support of several ABCD programs and departments.
ABCD Opportunity Centers

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Brighton, MA 02135
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(617) 426-9492
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21 Meridian Street
East Boston, MA 02128
(617) 567-9857 ext. 201
Shirley Fajardo, Operations Manager
Patricia Powers, Board Chairperson

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30 Bickford Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 522-4250 ext. 201
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Charlestown, MA 02129
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South Boston, MA 02127
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Boston, MA 02118
(617) 267-7400 ext. 234
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ABCD South Side
19 Corinth Street
Roslindale, MA 02131
Ashy Hosseinmardy, Director

Front Door

27,000 ABCD membership cards in the community!
One-stop shopping! Walk through one door, not many. That is the goal of the ABCD Front Door program’s cutting-edge technology system. It offers an innovative approach to providing services via free community photo membership cards for ABCD customers, with 27,000 members of the community now using Front Door cards to facilitate service provision in Boston, Malden, Medford and Everett. Front Door offers a new model for integrated service delivery, a model that increases effectiveness and ultimately helps more customers become self-sufficient. Front Door staff provide electronic referrals, eligibility screening and other functions that increase efficiency in delivering services and break down the silos separating programs.
ABCD honors volunteers, supporters; Harry Belafonte, Byron Pitts inspire audience
ABCD applauded 19 community volunteers and honored neighborhood activists and corporate supporters at a festive Community Heroes Celebration on November 4.

More than 1,000 guests celebrated Boston-area community heroes at the Boston Marriott Copley Place. They were inspired by the words of humanitarian and singer Harry Belafonte and award-winning journalist Byron Pitts. CHC emcee Jack Williams helped to present an award to his former WBZ-TV co-anchor Liz Walker, now Pastor of the Roxbury Presbyterian Church. ABCD’s own VP of Human Resources and Administration, Harold Mezoff, was feted for 50 years of service. Longtime ABCD supporter Penni McLean-Conner, Eversource Senior VP & Chief Customer Officer, was honored for her significant work as 2016 CHC Events Chair.

The 2016 ABCD Hall of Fame inductees were New England Council President James Brett, who was introduced by Congressman Joe Kennedy III, and State Representative and neighborhood champion Gloria Fox. Nineteen local community heroes received awards.

Gala Community Heroes Celebration Rocks Boston!

ABCD Executive VP Sharon Scott-Chandler greets Keynote Speaker Harry Belafonte, artist and social activist, and U.S. Senator Edward Markey.

Special Guest Speaker and award-winning journalist and author Byron Pitts addresses the crowd.

Jack Williams and Reverend Liz Walker, award-winning broadcast journalists who were once “regulars” hosting the ABCD Galas where they expertly orchestrated nights of famed speakers and enthusiastic crowds, came together again – Jack as emcee extraordinaire and Liz to receive a special award for her contributions to the community.
It was a standing ovation for Special Honoree Harold J. Mezoff, ABCD Vice President of Administration & Human Resources, whose wise and empathic presence has graced ABCD for more than 50 years. (l-r) John McGahan, Sharon Scott-Chandler, Harold Mezoff and John J. Drew.

On September 6, ABCD Hoop Dreams at TD Garden was hosted once again by enthusiastic and longtime supporters: LA Clippers coach Doc Rivers, Celtics Coach Brad Stevens and acclaimed sports columnist Bob Ryan.

Corporate employees came together to compete on the Celtics home court in a basketball tournament that supported ABCD’s WorkSMART program. Over $100,000 was raised. ABCD thanks the team sponsors: Eaton Vance, LogMein, MassMutual, Media All-Stars, Oracle, The Varano Group and Vertex. Additional sponsors included Aetna, CeltiCare Health, Eastern Bank, and The Anthem Group.
Field of Dreams Celebrates 20 YEARS of Serving Youth!

Fenway fundraiser has fulfilled more than 20,000 dreams
ABCD’s 20th annual softball benefit at Fenway Park hit another home run for inner-city youth fielding teams into the evening under the famed Fenway lights and raising $400,000 for the 2017 ABCD SummerWorks program! ABCD thanks the Boston Red Sox for their ongoing commitment to this important cause as well as the enthusiastic corporate teams and sponsors who support the event. Over the years, more than FIVE MILLION DOLLARS have been raised at Field of Dreams.

ABCD extends its deepest appreciation to the Boston Red Sox ownership – John Henry, Tom Werner, and President/CEO Sam Kennedy – for teaming up with ABCD once again to help strike out poverty in Boston. We also thank several members of the Red Sox community: Donna Latson-Gittens, MORE Advertising, Pam Kenn, Senior Vice President, Community and Player Relations, and Sheri Rosenberg. Field of Dreams is made possible through the dedication of ABCD longtime friends and FOD Committee Chairmen Lew Eisenberg of Cosgrove, Eisenberg & Kiley, and John Sasso of Advanced Strategies.

Governor Charlie Baker joins ABCD staff and supporters at the 20th Anniversary Field of Dreams Celebration, helping to showcase a check for $400,000 raised in the one-day softball tournament to help inner-city teens in the ABCD SummerWorks program. (l-r) Kyle Draper and Kayce Smith, NBC Sports Boston; Beverly Tangvik, Arbella; Billy Hajjar, B.U.; Rita German, John Hancock; Arthur D’Angelo, 47 Brand; Molly Porter, Boston Children’s Hospital; John Sasso; Tim Galvin, Partners; Pam Kenn, Boston Red Sox; Lew Eisenberg; Leonela Nunez, ABCD SummerWorks teen, Sam Horn, RS alum, Gov. Charlie Baker, Sharon Scott-Chandler, John J. Drew, Destiny Hunter, ABCD SummerWorks teen, John Riordan, Boston Children’s Hospital; Mark Nuccio, Ropes & Gray.

Catching a high fly at Fenway...
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John McGahan, Chair, ABCD Board of Directors, 2014-2017, accepts plaque honoring him for his unwavering dedication to ABCD and improving the lives of those in need. He is surrounded by fellow board officers and ABCD leaders. (l-r) Marie Greig, Sean Daughtry, John McGahan, James Owens Jr., Yvonne Jones, John J. Drew, Edward Katz, Andres Molina and Sharon Scott-Chandler.
Thank you donors

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

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Hundreds of supporters gathered in North Dorchester to dedicate the “ABCD Burns Building” to ABCD Board Member and community activist Thelma Burns. It is now the home of ABCD’s University High School and provides important space for community debates, forums, and meetings. Arriving for the dedication are (l-r) U.S. Congressman Michael Capuano, ABCD Board Chair John McGahan, Mayor Marty Walsh, ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew.

ABCD North End/West End NSC Director Maria Stella Gulla presents State Senator Joseph Boncore with a Certificate of Appreciation for his support of low-income people and neighborhoods at the NSC’s annual Buona Sera fundraiser to aid those in need.

Governor Charlie Baker joins ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew, SummerWorks teenager Destiny Hunter, Jessica Rosario, Director, ABCD Youth Programs and Pam Koen, Boston Red Sox.

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