



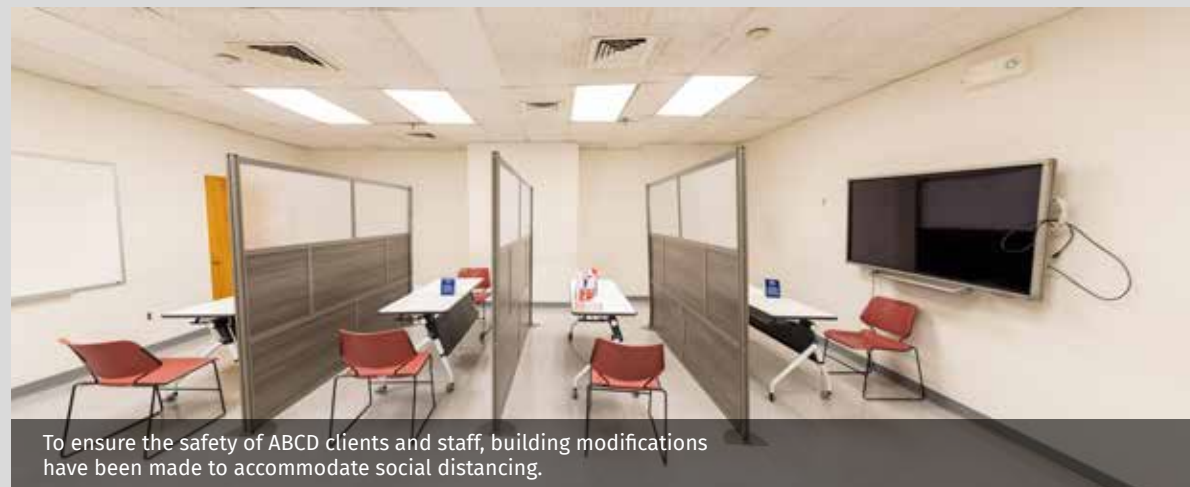
EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGES

— ABCD ANNUAL REPORT 2020 —

ABCD RISES TO THE CHALLENGE

Our greatest lessons are often learned during times of adversity. This year ABCD turned adversity into action.

What started as a time of promise and growth with events such as the opening of the new Savin Street Head Start Center, the annual Legislative Breakfast and the annual Black History Month event quickly turned into a master class on how to pivot without a moment's notice.



To ensure the safety of ABCD clients and staff, building modifications have been made to accommodate social distancing.

In this era of renewed commitment to racial and social justice, the clenched fist illustration on the front cover was inspired by and is a tribute to the Black Power movement.

With the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacting the world, ABCD responded by making major adjustments to serving more than 14 communities. **Most programs were transitioned to a hybrid virtual working environment to protect the health and safety of clients and staff.** As ABCD focused on long-term **strategic plans**, it also scaled up **emergency services** including food distribution to neighbors in crisis.



A COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY



When we say “better lives” we mean for all people. But, how can our community members have better lives if Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) are deprived of access to the same resources as others? The COVID-19 crisis amplified the systemic health and economic barriers in many of the neighborhoods we serve. It became undeniable that basic rights, such as access to adequate, quality and unbiased health care, have been held back from black and brown people for centuries.

Today, 80 percent of the people ABCD serves are BIPOCs, and we must acknowledge that in addition to a virus that was killing them at a disproportionately higher rate, Black people have always dealt with extreme racism and law enforcement brutality. The brutality was recorded and on display for the world to see. The lack of accountability for racial injustices — such as the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of Minneapolis and Louisville police departments — prompted national and global protests and undeniable racial unrest.

That unrest fostered change. It created a groundswell with the potential to transform this country into a more just and equitable place. Fairness and safety aren't only about equality; they're about equity. They're about equipping each of this nation's residents with access, opportunity and safety.

Honoring the Legacy of U.S. Rep. John Lewis

As racial unrest gained momentum in America, we lost one of our nation's greatest civil rights leaders, U.S. Representative John Lewis. This great man's passing reminded all of us that we can and must do more.

Rep. Lewis, who spoke at the 2001 ABCD Community Awards Dinner, spent more than six decades standing up for equity, equality, civil and human rights. He was a true beacon of hope, a fighter of racial injustice and a man who knew when it was time to get into “good trouble.”

He broke barriers, set precedents, and motivated others, even in death.

ABCD's commitment to racial equity is one we take seriously. With renewed dedication, we established a Racial Equity Working Group to make progress through education, advocacy, community investment and collaboration with others involved in the hard work of creating change. **Our statement isn't just pretty words on paper. It is a commitment to action.**



Photo credit: Don West



ABCD Board Chair Yvonne Jones



U.S. Senator Ed Markey

Message from the Board Chair

Yvonne Jones

As this challenging year draws to a close, I am grateful to ABCD for its rapid and tireless response to the ravages of COVID-19 on low-income Boston-area neighborhoods and the vulnerable people struck hard and fast by the virus, the loss of jobs, and the despair of isolation, illness and escalating poverty.

My neighborhood of Dorchester saw the city shut down around us, but many residents still had to go to work – driving buses, staffing supermarkets and pharmacies, working at hospitals and long-term care facilities. The impact of the virus on our low-income communities and people of color who were already struggling due to systemic racism and long-standing economic disparities was harsh and painful.

But ABCD was there – with food for the hungry, rental assistance and landlord mediation to prevent eviction, warm winter clothing, blankets and comforters to fend off the cold, support for the elderly, fuel assistance to keep apartments warm and so much more.

As a retired educator, I was especially heartened to see ABCD's response to the sudden need of children to meet remote learning requirements in low-income neighborhoods plagued by digital divide issues. ABCD provided tech-savvy assistance to make virtual learning happen. ABCD also went above and beyond in supporting its Head Start families and alternative high school students.

Thank you ABCD for being there for me, for my neighbors and for so many struggling to survive the worst public health crisis of the past century. Details of ABCD's extraordinary work this year are in this report. I thank my fellow dedicated 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

Board Chair



Message from the President/CEO

John J. Drew

"Let's recommit to work toward our common goal: a nation where ALL OF US are winners, all of us have shelter, food and education."

– Nelson Mandela

Dear ABCD family and supporters,

The coronavirus pandemic has unleashed unprecedented horrors on the planet. More than 430,000 lives have been lost across America. Unemployment in Massachusetts spiked to 650,000 in June 2020, leaving families and elders struggling to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads.

Now as vaccines are administered and we see hope and renewal ahead, let us keep the great Nelson Mandela's words close to our hearts. The deadly COVID-19 collapsed the worlds of those already at the bottom of long-term differences in income and asset-building, further heightening economic disparities. Millions of working families fell into poverty and joblessness, creating the most severe recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

As you will read in this report, ABCD has been there from the beginning – on the ground – meeting desperate needs, providing food, preventing evictions, stopping foreclosures, delivering heating oil, paying utility bills, finding work for the jobless and much more. We will continue until the new normal spreads across America. And we will be there for the aftermath.

The pandemic has resulted in major economic collapse on the backs of those people already struggling – racial minorities, women, low earners, those without college degrees, workers in the service industries.

The underlying gaps – income inequality, lack of affordable housing, poor broadband access – are now very evident. It is imperative that our country address these gaps before we stagger out of this pandemic with too many still relegated to the economic back of the bus.

I want to thank our outstanding volunteers, including the dedicated members of the ABCD Board of Directors and all our neighborhood advisory groups, our many supporters, our committed, hard-working staff members for their stalwart support on the front lines throughout this unprecedented crisis, and our wonderful giving community who stepped in, in a major way, to help those in dire need.

John J. Drew

President/CEO



Message from the Executive Vice President/COO Sharon Scott-Chandler

What challenges did families and elders already struggling to make ends meet face when the pandemic descended? Those served by ABCD may say it best.

"You don't want to tell your child there is no food." Jamie, age 57, Everett. When COVID-19 struck, she worried constantly about keeping her family fed. Then the refrigerator died and all their food was lost.

"My granddaughter lost her job due to the pandemic. Now she can't make her car payments and we are afraid it will be repossessed when it's almost paid for." Paulette, age 69, Dorchester. She raised her granddaughter, who lives with her.

"I am back at work, but there is no money for food. And because of my job, I can't get to food pantries when they are open." Danielle, age 31, Malden. A single mother of three, she is far behind with bills after having to leave work when her children's schools closed.

For Jamie, Paulette, Danielle and tens of thousands like them served by ABCD, COVID-19 shut down jobs and resources, leaving them vulnerable to hunger, homelessness and despair. ABCD was there from day one with food supplies, rental payments, heating assistance and an unending support system to help them through the crisis.

Tenacity and flexibility characterized the ABCD response. With the receipt of federal CARES Act funding, ABCD reacted immediately, providing crisis intervention and direct relief through emergency food programs, rental/mortgage assistance, eviction protection, technology assistance, heating aid and more. Longtime ABCD programs that fill critical needs such as Fuel Assistance, Head Start, Housing and Workforce Development were expanded as new initiatives were launched.

ABCD broadened its outreach and impact developing CARES Act-funded partnerships with other community agencies including Asian American Civic Association, Urban College of Boston, Kennedy Center, Higher Ground Boston and more.

My deepest gratitude goes to our ABCD staff, board members and volunteers on the front lines, who brought urgently needed resources along with hope and caring to those in desperate circumstances. THANK YOU!

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



In Memory Of Irvienne Goldson

In December, our dear friend, colleague, and trailblazer **Irvienne Goldson** passed away suddenly. Irvienne joined ABCD Health Services in 1992 as manager of education and training and rose to become Deputy Director of our Community Prevention program. Her rare leadership and unflagging commitment to the Boston community made her not only respected but beloved.

She was fiercely committed to justice and access to reproductive health, HIV and STI prevention and adolescent sexuality education. She was a mentor, teacher, and tireless advocate who saw health and racial equity as human rights. She taught us to be brave and to advocate for others.



Irvienne changed the lives of thousands of young people in Boston and beyond.

Young Black and Brown girls, women and men were her family, her joy and her reason for being. She believed in and fought for justice, and we will continue to fight in her memory.

To support the ABCD programs and issues close to Irvienne's heart, please go to bostonabcd.org/donate

NEW INITIATIVES

ABCD Emergency Relief Initiative

In response to the health and economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic, ABCD developed new and expanded programming to respond directly and efficiently to the needs of the communities devastated by the pandemic — people who have been impacted far more severely than others.

The work includes online and telephone-based outreach, needs assessment, wellness checks, information and referral, case management, and more.



ABCD CONNECT

617.348.6239 (617.34**TODAY**)
abcdconnect@bostonabcd.org



with a priority focus on Head Start, elders, medical high risk, youth, scattered site and at-risk households. Through the partnership with **Stop & Shop's** online delivery service, **Peapod**, ABCD provides a menu of fresh and healthy food direct to the doorstep.

ABCD also offered grocery gift cards to households with special dietary needs or that cannot receive food deliveries as well as essential goods, such as formula, diapers and hygienic items.

ABCD CONNECT: THE REFERRAL HOTLINE
At the heart of ABCD's Emergency Relief Initiative is **ABCD Connect**, an information and referral program for clients and advocates who have questions or unmet needs relating to a variety of issues, especially those affected by COVID-19. We deliver professional guidance including immediate access to a case manager and referrals to specific programs and services.

FOOD AND ESSENTIALS
ABCD expanded Food Delivery programs considerably to meet escalating needs. We established a service enabling the purchase and delivery of \$110 in groceries monthly to 550 ABCD households throughout 2021,



RENTAL AND MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE
Early in the pandemic, ABCD began offering support to individuals and families in Boston, Everett, Malden, and Medford who were facing eviction or foreclosure to help them remain in safe and secure housing. Partnerships with key funding sources including the Cities of Medford, Malden and Everett helped make this relief possible.

DIRECT RELIEF
So many of our neighbors were in such distress that we developed a unique Direct Relief program to help meet expenses that typically aren't covered by government programming. These include car repairs, child care, internet, phone/cell phone, transportation, and past due utility bills. By partnering with the cities of Medford and Malden and other funding sources, ABCD began offering support to individuals and families facing eviction or foreclosure to help them remain in safe and secure housing.



ABCD Chosen to Lead MASSHIRE METRO NORTH CAREER CENTERS
Following an exhaustive selection process, ABCD in July 2020 became operator of the MASSHIRE Metro North Career Center with offices in Cambridge, Woburn and Chelsea. Seasoned community leader and former government official Ron Marlow, Director, ABCD Workforce Development, provides leadership for this critical ABCD initiative, which serves both job seekers and employers.

For employers, the Career Center works to understand hiring needs to source qualified candidates for employment. For job-seekers, the Career Centers connects them to job, training and career opportunities. This dual mission has taken on heightened importance in an economy in which the labor market has been slammed by COVID-19 layoffs with jobs, training and career opportunities.

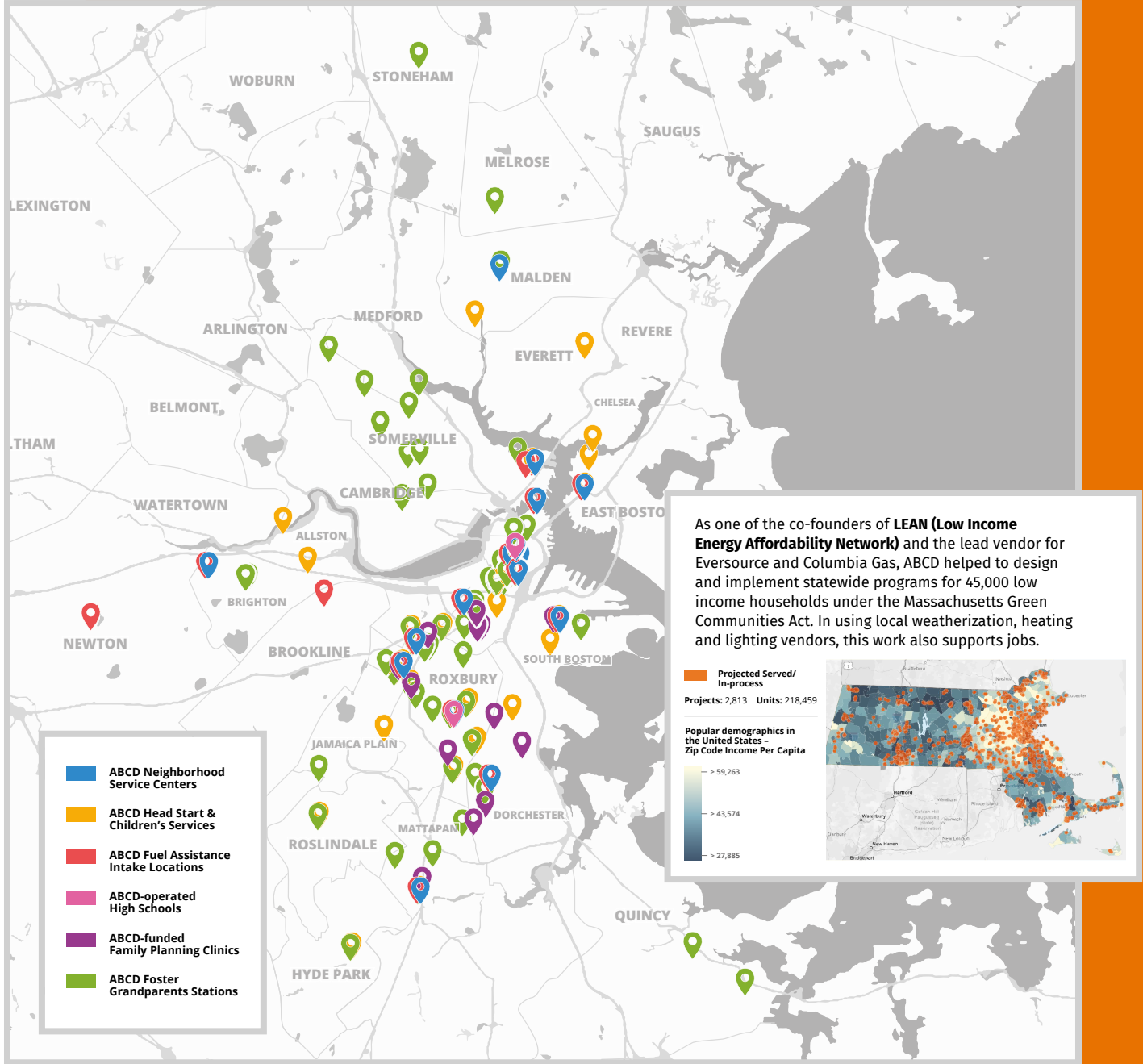
ABCD is leveraging its strengths and experience providing opportunities for residents of low-income communities to serve job-seekers during the current unemployment crisis. Those seeking employment can search for a new job, pursue a career or learn an in-demand skill to be competitive in today's workforce. ABCD works with a variety of state-approved training programs to provide free or low-cost courses for eligible job-seekers who are collecting unemployment or are low-income.

The Commonwealth's MassHire Metro North Workforce Board chose ABCD to manage Metro North Career Centers based on the extensive ABCD workforce development experience, strong ties to the community and expansive partner network.

Each year, ABCD serves more than 100,000 Greater Boston residents.

The ABCD Community Coordination department operates **11 neighborhood centers** and two partner agencies — the Asian American Civic Association and John F. Kennedy Center – to provide food and essentials to fight hunger in every Boston neighborhood as well as in Malden, Medford, and Everett. But the ABCD neighborhood network extends much further.

In fact, **hundreds of additional sites** offer a broad range of programs as well as the ABCD Thelma Burns building. See the map for details.



RIISING TO THE COVID-19 CHALLENGE: MEETING NEEDS, ADAPTING PROGRAMS

For ABCD, like all others, COVID-19 has meant that 2020 was a year unlike any other. ABCD programs adapted quickly to meet mushrooming needs in low-income communities while maintaining mandated shutdowns, social distancing and mask-wearing. The following pages paint the pandemic-influenced picture of ABCD programs meeting acute needs during an unprecedented time: **HUNGER, HOUSING, DIGITAL DIVIDE, CHILDREN, YOUTH, JOBS, ENERGY, ELDER, HEALTH, FINANCIAL WELLNESS, FUNDRAISING AND VOLUNTEERS.**

AMERICA THE HUNGRY



In late March, with the city shut down and tens of thousands were suddenly out of work, getting food to increasing numbers of people in need became a priority. Socially-distanced lines snaked down streets and around blocks. **Between March 18 and December 31, ABCD neighborhood centers provided 10,064 emergency services to the community including food, diapers and wipes, hygiene kits, and school supplies.** ABCD's efforts were supported by partners Cradles to Crayons, Lovin' Spoonfuls, Greater Boston Food Bank, City of Boston, Hillsong Church Boston, and others.

Between Head Start and the neighborhood centers, **ABCD provided 206,481 meals** from March to December, including food, grocery gift cards and formula. Staff members called elderly clients to check on their well-being. ABCD also partnered with the City of Boston Age Strong Commission to provide 15 bags of food per day for distribution to elders.



FINDING FAITH IN THE FUTURE

ELWIN MAGIVNEY

ABCD Allston-Brighton Opportunity Center

"You just have to remember that God loves you and that there are more good people out there than bad."

Photo credit: Alessandra Bisalti



After working all of his life, 58-year-old Elwin Magivney became homeless earlier this year when his landlord sold the Brockton house where he rented an affordable apartment. Living on a disability income of just \$800 a month, he had no money for another apartment. Elwin now sleeps in an RV camper set on the back of his truck. The Brighton church where he worships and sings in the choir lets him plug into their electricity.

Elwin is in kidney failure, requiring dialysis three times a week. His heart is kept beating by three stents and a pacemaker. He suffers from diabetes. Last year he lost his food stamps due to funding cutbacks.

"I always had a home," he said. "I drove those giant semi-haulers. I worked construction. I managed a gas station." He also volunteered at his church and at the Salvation Army, where he was a holiday bell ringer. He continues to help out at the church.

Elwin was recently referred to ABCD's Allston-Brighton Opportunity Center where they provide him with food from their food pantry and vouchers to a local farmer's market. "That was wonderful," he said. "I sat in the sun and ate ice cream. I had forgotten how good something simple like that that can be."

As winter approached, the Opportunity Center was working with ABCD Housing Services to help Elwin move out of crisis and into an affordable home.

VOLUNTEERING

THE GIFT OF TIME, ENERGY AND COMPASSION
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.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, ABCD volunteers made a difference every day working in food pantries, making deliveries to homebound seniors and providing other services safely as the pandemic surged. Bicycle couriers from CommonWheels in Allston-Brighton carted food and essential supplies to those in need. ABCD Foster Grandparents mastered ZOOM technology and drew screen-time smiles and cheers from children who pre-COVID would sit on their laps for stories and hugs. ABCD volunteers of all ages and abilities were there for children, families and seniors throughout the ABCD network.



CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY HERO VOLUNTEERS!
Every year ABCD honors more than 20 volunteers from our neighborhoods and programs at the ABCD Community Heroes Celebration. Although this event did not happen in 2020 due to the pandemic, we celebrate in our hearts and on these pages the hundreds who were here for us during the worst public health crisis in a century – *you are our FRONT LINE HEROES! THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!*

Check out these 2020 ABCD volunteer achievements!

- Hillsong Church congregants partnered with ABCD for a Backpack Distribution event, collecting donations of backpacks and school supplies for families in need;
- Salem State University students engaged in a summer internship program educating ABCD participants remotely on disease prevention and family planning;
- Dental hygiene students from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences created resources for Head Start children and their families;
- Students from Boston College PULSE and Northeastern University Service-Learning programs served as conversation partners with ABCD Foster Grandparents.

ABCD is so grateful for our volunteers — we couldn't do it without you! To volunteer please call 617.348.6591 or email volunteer@bostonabcd.org.

ABCD Volunteer Community Partnerships

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Americorps | Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences |
| Boston College | Massachusetts Commission for the Blind |
| Boston Green Academy | Northeastern University |
| Boston University | Operation ABLE |
| Capital One | Salem State University |
| Cristo Rey High School | VITA |
| Hillsong Church | Priority Nutrition Care |
| Jumpstart | University of New England |
| | Wentworth Institute of Technology |

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

ABCD helps families and individuals who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes to obtain or maintain safe and affordable housing. Through a range of programs, each year ABCD helps several hundred families have a place to call home.

ABCD Rental and Mortgage Assistance

ABCD provided Rental and Mortgage Assistance in Boston, Medford, Malden and Everett with funding by those cities and in Boston with funding from the cities and the CARES Act. Services not only include assistance with back rent and mortgage payments, but provide critical stabilization counseling including working with landlords, budgeting, and payment plans.

In the Mystic Valley communities, more than 500 families and individuals were helped through a \$200,000 initiative with the City of Malden; a \$250,000 grant from City of Medford Community Preservation Act funding; and a \$1.5 million partnership with the City of Everett.

In Boston, ABCD has utilized almost \$189,000 in CARES Act funding to prevent foreclosures and to support families needing rental assistance and help with move-in costs.



“We’re in the midst of a pandemic and everyone is urged to stay at home, but having a home to stay in is getting increasingly precarious.”



RAFT (Residential Assistance for Families in Transition) & ERMA (Emergency Rental & Mortgage Assistance)

In partnership with Metro Housing Boston, ABCD has helped more than 127 families apply for housing assistance.

ABCD Direct Relief for Crisis Needs

To help stabilize families during this pandemic, ABCD has supported more than \$85,000 in requests for help from this new Cares Act-funded program to cover expenses for utilities (not covered by Fuel Assistance), Internet, car repairs, and more.

Shelter Services and the Mobile Homeless Outreach Team

ABCD provided emergency shelter support at Home Suites Inn in Waltham, where homeless families were housed temporarily through June 30, 2020 and continues to offer emergency support and resources to homeless individuals and families throughout the Mystic Valley Areas utilizing the ABCD Homeless Mobile Outreach Van.



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 neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan and the North End, providing 206 units of elder affordable housing for seniors in need.

JOB LOST, HOPE FOUND

STAN PURDY

ABCD Housing & Homelessness Prevention

"This has been the hardest year of my life. ABCD is helping me get through it."



When COVID-19 shut Boston down in April, Stan Purdy, age 61, was laid off from his longtime position as Accounts Payable Clerk in the Boston Bruins Pro Shop at TD Garden. After 25 years there, it was a shock. Even with unemployment, he wondered how long he would be able to keep paying rent on his studio apartment in Malden Center.

His mind was eased when he visited ABCD's Mystic Valley center where for years IRS-certified volunteers and staff members have helped him file his taxes. He found out that ABCD was providing a Rental Assistance Program funded by the cities of Medford, Malden and Everett to aid those displaced by COVID-19 job loss.

It wasn't the first time ABCD had steered Stan toward opportunity.

"I'm a city kid," he said. "I grew up in Boston, the youngest in a family of eight children. I will always remember my first job in the ABCD summer program and what it was like to take home that paycheck!"

Stan was hired out of high school at Bank of New England and learned accounting through on the job training. When the bank opened its Operations Center in Malden in 1986, he moved there. Now he helps out his elderly mother who lives nearby in City of Malden Senior Housing.

"ABCD was always there for me and my family," said Stan. "I hope that on the other side of COVID-19 there's a job for me. I'm ready!"

Photo credit: Alessandra Bisalti

A MASTER CLASS IN PANDEMIC RESPONSE



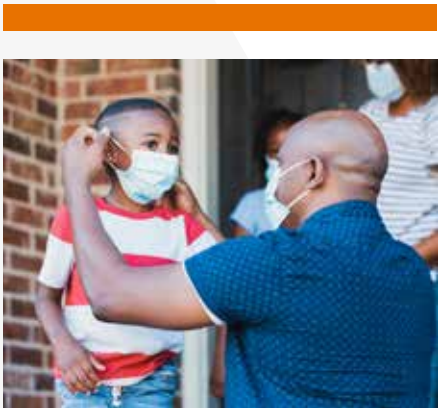
Head Start goes virtual; provides food, educational and social supports

In March, Massachusetts declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and all schools and childcare centers were ordered closed. With **\$2 million** from the federal

Office of Head Start, **ABCD Head Start & Children’s Services, which serves more than 3,000 children and families in Greater Boston**, responded with a swift and massive effort.

Initially transitioning to a full virtual environment, teachers and family advocates were in constant touch with families by phone and email and posted Head Start and Early Head Start educational plans and activities online for children at home. Because children receive nutritious meals at our centers, **we provided more than 2,000 families with ongoing meals and basic needs packages containing food, diapers, gloves, wipes, and formula as well as educational support packages.**

As state restrictions eased, the master class in mobilization continued with renovations adhering to strict state early education safety guidelines as we reopened 20 locations. Parents were given several options for early care and education, with **ABCD Head Start serving children and families with full day-full year, part day-school year, in-person, hybrid and virtual learning programs.**



Head Start & Children’s Services focuses on school readiness, social and learning skills, and physical wellness from the time children are infants - when the brain develops fastest - until they are approaching kindergarten. ABCD Head Start and Early Head Start programs provide high-quality early education and comprehensive services including health, nutrition and family services and are centered in intensive parent engagement.



Child Care Choices of Boston (CCCB)
CCCB 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 several thousand families and child care providers. In 2020, CCCB distributed **more than \$64 million in state-funded vouchers to more than 13,000 children.**

Following EEC safety guidelines and after extensive center renovations, ABCD Early Head Start reopened in July.



BRIGHT, EAGER, READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

JUANA VALDES & RAYMOND SOTO, JR.
ABCD Head Start & Children's
Services, Jamaica Plain

*"ABCD has opened doors for Raymond
and me every step of the way."*

Photo credit: Alessandra Bisalti



Juana is 55-years-old and looks 30 with a smile and laugh that make people smile back. She has raised Raymond from age eight months and credits ABCD Head Start with providing support and guidance that has helped make her 4½-year-old grandson so bright, outgoing and eager to learn.

"Raymond loved Head Start from the first day," she said. "He loved having other children to play with and learn with and the wonderful teachers and Foster Grandparents there to love and support him. He learned numbers and letters and how to get along with children and adults. It's just a great program!"

Juana has chosen to educate Raymond virtually this year to ensure his safety from COVID-19. They Zoom with Head Start from his special at-home "classroom" and stay on track with meeting the developmental and educational goals for his age group.

Juana came to the United States from Puerto Rico at age 18 and settled in Hartford, Connecticut where she continued her education and became a special needs teacher. She has two children and four grandchildren.

Marisela Pizarro, Family & Engagement Supervisor, ABCD Head Start, has supported Juana and Raymond from their early days at Jamaica Plain Head Start and says: "It's always a joy when the parent or grandparent or guardian is as totally involved and invested in the child as Juana is with Raymond. We work together for the best possible outcomes for him and we are also able to help her with many aspects of her life. That's what Head Start is all about!"

INVESTING IN FUTURES

YOUTH SERVICES

ABCD leadership, educators and staff work with schools, businesses and community partners to provide several youth programs that open doors for young people who face systemic barriers, offering them opportunities to earn, learn and achieve success.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic tested our agility, ABCD transitioned all programs to virtual environments in very short order – and introduced two new programs. **HOPES**, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Restaurant Association, offers training in the culinary field to court-involved youth, and **RYSE**, which offers an exciting range of career training and certifications through online education leader **Coursera**.



The two alternative high schools run in partnership with Boston Public Schools stayed on course. **University High**, designed for economically disadvantaged students who have struggled in traditional settings, celebrated students' success during outdoor commencement ceremonies, following stringent health and safety protocols.

Ostiguy High School, which operates in partnership with BPS and the Gavin Foundation, opted for online graduation ceremonies. "Ostiguy" is a "recovery" high school serving 75 young people in recovery from substance abuse.

ABCD Youth Programs went remote on March 17 with Ostiguy and University High Schools moving to an online format along with the Boston Public Schools. All concerned worked together to make remote learning work effectively.



In normal years, **SummerWorks**, ABCD's signature summer jobs program, places under-resourced Boston-area youth in paid positions at nonprofit employer sites. In 2020, participants connected online, completing project-based work and trainings leading to certification in Google Suite, as well as in productivity and leadership.

WorkSMART, a variation on the SummerWorks theme, is offered to eligible Boston high school students and adds academic supports to career-readiness, mentoring, and a supervised internship to the mix.

Career Explorations offers older and out-of-school youth opportunities to explore careers through training and work experience opportunities, while **YEA! (Youth Engaged in Action)**, with support from partners Capital One and Junior Achievement, provides a meaningful summer experience for income-eligible 13-year-olds.

In 2020, through online workshops, group projects, and guest speakers including Boston City Councilor Ricardo Arroyo and Boston Police Department Superintendent Nora Baston, youngsters in ABCD YEA! and SummerWorks learned about civic and community engagement, job-readiness, financial management, online safety, and business innovation.



ON THE RISE

MORGAN SPIVEY

ABCD University High School

"I had been enrolled in four other high school programs, but when I came to ABCD University High I knew I was home."



Morgan Spivey is a high-energy 19-year-old who has weathered many life changes and now is working hard to fulfill her dream of becoming a registered nurse. A January 2021 graduate of ABCD's University High School, her next step is Mass Bay Community College, where she will major in nursing.

"I just couldn't find the right fit for me and school," she said, "I was a METCO student at Melrose High. After that I attended two Boston charter schools and tried an online GED program. Then I heard about UHS. I came here and everything clicked. This is my home."

Morgan, who has suffered from depression and anxiety, needed a place to live and UHS counselors worked with local agencies to find a subsidized apartment for her.

"UHS turned my life around," she said. "They taught me that it's all right to open up about your problems. I saw that the people here genuinely wanted to help me."

A Roxbury native and the youngest of seven children, Morgan chose nursing after visiting and supporting a premature niece in the NICU at Boston Children's Hospital. That experience and internships at Children's and Harvard Medical School gave her a clear understanding of the critical role health care workers play, and she wants to join that team.

Photo credit: Alessandra Bisalti

STAYING CONNECTED

ELDER SERVICES

The COVID-19 pandemic magnified issues that are always a concern for lower-income elders, particularly their vulnerability to the virus itself, but also basic needs such as food, medication and health. And then there’s the ache of isolation. So we stayed connected and got creative.



The **ABCD Foster Grandparents** program, part of the federal AmeriCorps Seniors program for volunteers age 55 and older, are 150 strong. But when COVID-19 took hold, their vital role as friends and mentors to young children, many in ABCD Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms, came to a halt.

ABCD continued to pay their stipends and stayed in touch with each volunteer to talk through their feelings of isolation and address any needs. In lieu of our annual recognition brunch, our staff celebrated each of them in person and delivered gift bags that included gift cards and PPE.



The program also went high tech, distributing iPads and training “grandparents” to use Zoom and WeChat. Because connecting is a two-way thing.

ABCD is a neighborhood-based organization, and our many locations connected older residents with community resources and provided groceries through food pantries and delivery programs, and offered special programs. For instance, thanks to a grant from the City of Boston’s Age Strong Commission and generous North End restaurant partners in ABCD’s annual Buona Sera: An Evening with Friends fundraising event, residents of several senior apartment complexes received specially-prepared lunches each month.

MORE THAN COMFORT. HEALTH.

FUEL ASSISTANCE



ABCD’s Energy programs keep vulnerable elders, children, adults and families warm, healthy, and safe in the life-threatening cold of winter. They also dramatically reduce energy costs for low income families in communities statewide.

The COVID-19 pandemic affects the health of people of color disproportionately; in fact, in 2020, Black people died at 1.7 times the rate of white people, according to the COVID Tracking Project’s Racial Data Tracker. That means that many of the neighbors we serve were at even higher risk than usual. Home heating was critical for many.

Fuel Assistance

With federal funding from the **Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** for Boston and nine surrounding cities and towns, ABCD processed more than **15,000** applications in November and December with four months remaining in the 2020-2021 season.

SAVE MONEY, SAVE THE PLANET

ENERGY CONSERVATION

ABCD Energy Conservation services provide vulnerable Boston households with heating system and appliance replacements, weatherization, lighting, and more. These efforts result in millions of dollars of annual savings and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

As one of the co-founders of **LEAN (Low Income Energy Affordability Network)** and the lead vendor for Eversource and Columbia Gas, ABCD helped to design and implement statewide programs for 45,000 low income households under the Massachusetts Green Communities Act. In using local weatherization, heating and lighting vendors, this work also supports jobs.





FUELING A FAMILY'S GROWTH

THE PAULETTE GRAY FAMILY

ABCD Energy, Children's & Youth Services

"From early childhood programs to summer jobs for my teenagers to staying warm in winter, ABCD has made a huge difference for me and my family."

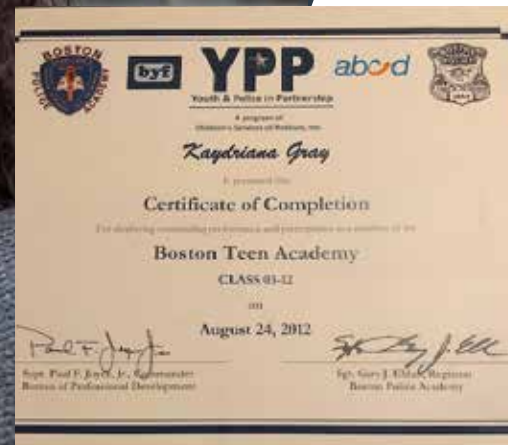


Photo credit: Alessandra Bisalti

A Roxbury native, Paulette Gray is the mother of four living children, grandmother of 14 and great-grandmother of 2. She has been there for all of them over many years – and ABCD has been by her side.

"ABCD has provided fuel assistance," she said. "Then they replaced the furnace and weatherized the house, which has saved so much on heating bills."

Paulette raised her granddaughter Kaydriana, who's now 23 and starting an associate degree program in Early Childhood Education at Roxbury Community College. The ABCD Head Start alum was inspired by her experience with ABCD SummerWorks where, as a teenager, she worked with children at a neighborhood summer camp.

"ABCD SummerWorks taught me how to be a valued employee," said Kaydriana.

Last fall Paulette took on the care of four-year-old great-grandson Bryson whose mom works full-time. Armed with daily curriculum plans and a laptop computer, a day with Bryson includes intensive pre-kindergarten remote learning. She also cares for Bryson's 8-month-old sister when her day care provider is not available. Being able to heat the house helps the whole family stay warm and healthy.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

ABCD's Financial Wellness programs support under-resourced residents with managing their money and planning for the future. Youth programs feature financial literacy modules, and ABCD staff work with partners and IRS-certified volunteers to provide free tax assistance through the federal VITA program.

In 2020, the pandemic necessitated the transition to a virtual environment. With the filing deadline extended to July 15, ABCD helped 3,117 residents complete their state and federal tax returns, which resulted in \$7.9 million in refunds – channeling money back to struggling households and revitalizing businesses in low-income neighborhoods.

One program goal is to ensure that filers receive the tax credits they earn and deserve, and 44 percent of all completed returns were eligible for the often-overlooked Earned Income Tax Credit.



Using virtual tax visits with a document-sharing platform **114 IRS-certified ABCD volunteers** provided free tax preparation services to **3,117 customers** prior to the July 15 tax-filing deadline, resulting in **\$7.9 million in refunds** channeled back into the economy.

ACCESS TO SKILLS, CAREERS, GOALS

ABCD's career development programs offer education, training and support services for underserved adults striving to achieve financial security and success through meaningful work and careers. In 2020, all programs went virtual.

MassHire Metro North Career Center

Following a comprehensive and competitive process, ABCD became the operator of the MassHire Metro North Career Center on July 1. ABCD staff provide job training and placement services remotely as residents struggle with pandemic-related job loss.



GATE solves an old and persistent problem: parents would often drop out of training programs because they couldn't afford child care. A successful model, GATE is operated in partnership with Asian American Civic Association, Jewish Vocational Services and ONLC. Since launching in January 2017, 106 participants have completed job training and 79 are working in their chosen field.



ESOL programs provide new Bostonians with the opportunity, free of charge, to learn English or improve their English-speaking skills so that they can find a job, move up in their careers, help their children with school work and meet other challenges of life in America.

First Steps Into Child Care gives enrollees the opportunity to learn and earn at early childhood education centers. They also take an accredited early education college course and upon completion of the program, have the opportunity to apply for a position at ABCD Head Start.



Get Started is a 12-week paid internship at an early childhood education center that also provides the opportunity to take up to two college-level early education courses and apply for a position at ABCD Head Start.

FROM PANIC TO PROMISE

RACHEL CARLE

ABCD Workforce Development
MassHire Metro North Career Center

"When I lost my job, I didn't know where to turn. I was panicking ... afraid we would lose our house and everything we had worked for. All that changed when I connected with the MassHire Metro North Career Center."



For 30 years Rachel Carle, age 57, was a valued high tech employee in the biotech industry. A senior director at a booming Cambridge biotech, she lost her job in the early days of the pandemic. Without her income, the home and life she and her husband had built over many years were threatened. With COVID-19 surging through Massachusetts, companies were cutting back.

When she described losing her job, a position where she solved problems and was part of a dynamic team and earned a solid salary, tears welled up. How would she find work in the midst of the pandemic? Her husband's age and pre-existing conditions put him at risk from the virus. The difficulties seemed insurmountable.

Her perspective changed following referral to the MassHire Metro North Career Center. "I immediately felt supported," said Rachel. "The virtual classes are great! I've learned to prepare for interviews. I practiced answering the tough questions, learned what to ask my interviewers, and even got schooled in writing effective thank you notes."

Rachel said that after she upgraded her LinkedIn profile under Career Center guidance, she was suddenly showered with responses. She also refreshed skills and recent interviews are going well. That is due, says Rachel, to the resources and support she has received at the Center.

Photo credit: Alessandra Bisalti

COMMUNITY BASED, COMMUNITY DRIVEN

HEALTH SERVICES

ABCD Health Services provides community-based, community-driven health promotion and disease prevention initiatives that aim to overcome health disparities in underserved neighborhoods and enable all community residents to achieve optimum health and wellness, regardless of social and economic barriers.



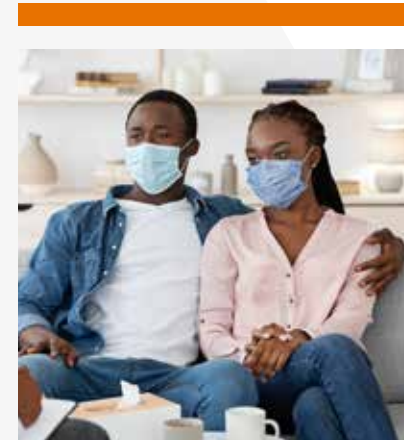
Renowned leader Irvienne Goldson



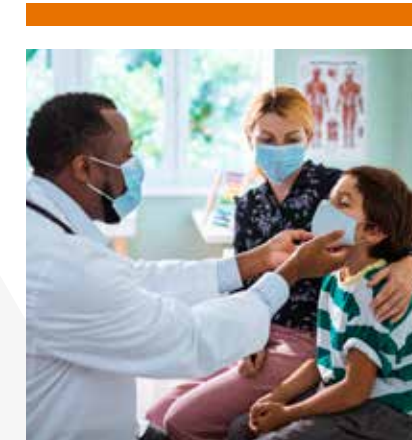
Prior to the pandemic, our Community Prevention program hosted full-house events including a World AIDS Day celebration and Healthy Visions, where guests created vision boards, visited resource tables, and celebrated each other.

During the pandemic, events went virtual, and we collaborated with partners such as the Whittier Street Health Center to provide free COVID-19 testing. We also sent participants prevention care packages that included masks, condoms, lotion, hand sanitizer, and other self-care items.

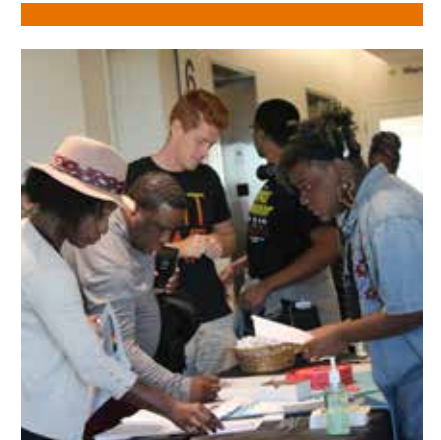
In addition, the **ABCD Family Planning Training Institute** successfully adapted its curricula and transitioned to an online environment – a major undertaking that enabled us to offer courses within months.



ABCD Family Planning provides reproductive health services including comprehensive clinical and counseling services at **20 primary care sites**, reaching **more than 15,000 men, women and teens** in Boston. The program ensures client-centered, voluntary and affordable care that helps low-income residents maintain health and prevent illness, with huge tax-payer savings.



The ABCD Professional Training Institute provides training on family planning, reproductive health and sexuality education for health care providers, counselors, educators and community health workers.



Community-based Prevention programs reach youth and adults 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; and HIV/STI Testing Initiatives. Learn more at bostonabcd.org/health.

TITLE X AT 50: ABCD CHAMPIONS HEALTH EQUITY

Title X turned 50 in 2020. ABCD has been a grantee for 47 of those years.

The first federal program dedicated to providing family planning services, Congress enacted Title X of the Public Health Service Act in 1970. Why would ABCD, a community action agency, embrace reproductive health? Because Title X started as an antipoverty program, seeded during President Johnson’s War on Poverty.

It makes reproductive health services including birth control, annual exams, and HIV and STI testing and treatment accessible and affordable to people who might otherwise be unable to pay.

In the 1960s, many low income women did not have the same kind of access to contraceptives as women with more resources. Teens who got pregnant accidentally tended to remain in poverty’s grip. They were less likely to continue their education and compete in the workforce. Related statistics among women of color were particularly stark.

There were dramatic racial and ethnic health disparities. And birth control was controversial.

We saw health care as a human right.

So we helped start the first community health center in Boston. And we expanded our network, built lasting partnerships. We advocated and agitated. And that hasn’t changed.



Governor Charlie Baker with ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew, ABCD Executive Vice President/COO Sharon Scott-Chandler, and MA Secretary of Health & Human Services Marylou Sudders following signing of Title X Family Planning legislation.

Through the decades, we’ve made extraordinary progress. Today, through longstanding partnerships, we deliver family planning and reproductive health services, integrated within primary care services, through a blend of community health centers, school-based health centers, and hospital-based clinics for a total of 20 delivery sites.

With more than 30 percent of Boston residents born outside of the United States, ensuring linguistic and cultural access is a priority. More than 35 percent of Boston residents live below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and the vast majority of those we serve are people of color.

There are dramatic racial and ethnic health disparities. And reproductive health is controversial.

Health care is a human right. We are in this fight.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE AGE OF COVID-19



With the state’s stay-at-home order in mid-March, several hundred ABCD employees had to adjust to meeting the community’s urgent needs while working remotely. ABCD’s Information Technology team sprang into action, upgrading the organization’s core telecom and IT infrastructure and installing advanced systems to ensure seamless remote capabilities.

The funding is also providing Remote Client Support including outreach, needs assessment, wellness checks, information and referral, case management and brief supportive counseling as well as a Critical Technology for Remote Services program to help reduce the digital divide in low-income neighborhoods.



ABCD numbers Financial Report

- **98% of ABCD revenue** in FY-20 was program specific.
- Payments made on behalf of program participants were **50.6%** of total revenue.
- Contributions to ABCD in FY-20 totaled **\$4,286,803**.
- Administrative costs for ABCD FY-20 made up **3.3%** of total costs.

Uses of Funds

Regional Child Care Resources and Referrals	34%	
Head Start & Child Care Services	25%	
Energy Efficiency Programs	23%	
Crisis Intervention/Fuel Assistance	6%	
Community Services	3%	
Other Programs	3%	
Health Programs	2%	
Housing & Homelessness	1%	
Youth Programs	1%	
Alternative High Schools	1%	
Career Development	1%	

Total revenue for Fiscal Year 2020 was \$191,723,784.

Fundraising During A Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic closed the door on events nationwide and beyond. For ABCD, there would be no Field of Dreams at Fenway Park, no Hoop Dreams at TD Garden, no Buona Sera in Boston’s North End, and no Community Heroes Celebration.

But crisis can be a catalyst. With the pandemic causing massive job loss and health impacts for people and communities that we serve, the ABCD Planning & Grants department wasted no time.

Fundraising opportunities to assist those impacted by the virus and the heightened awareness of systemic racism included: exploring private sector grant opportunities; launching the **ABCD COVID-19 Relief Fund** which has raised more than **\$500,000**; developing cross-departmental task groups to develop a strong proposal that brought **\$9.5 million in CARES Act funding to ABCD along with \$2 million for Head Start and \$2.7 million for Fuel Assistance/Weatherization.**



Gift card donations



ABCD on the Frontlines

Recognizing the dire need in the communities we serve, longtime event production partner Cramer approached us with the idea to produce a video to support the ABCD COVID-19 Relief Fund. They generously offered to produce it gratis.

Our friend and Hoop Dreams co-founder **Coach Doc Rivers** and the dynamic sports commentator **Michael Holley** signed on. Friends shared their harrowing stories and the hope that emerged as they were buoyed by our programs. And President/CEO John J. Drew and EVP/COO Sharon Scott-Chandler discussed ABCD’s immediate and continuing response. On December 18th, we streamed “ABCD on the Frontlines” and raised **\$41,775**. We’re deeply grateful to everyone who contributed their time, energy, and compassion.

IN 2020,

ABCD raised over **\$500,000** in relief funds.

A screenshot from a Facebook Live stream. It shows two participants: Michael Holley on the left and Doc Rivers on the right. Below them is a Facebook logo and the text 'FACEBOOK LIVE' and 'FACEBOOK.COM/BOSTONABCD'.



POVERTY IS COMPLICATED.

ABCD RESPONDS WITH
MANY KINDS OF HELP —
MEETING NEEDS THAT
ARE AS DIVERSE AS OUR
COMMUNITIES.

ABCD Planning & Grants moved quickly when the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Massachusetts caused massive job loss and health impacts for people and communities served by ABCD – people who were already struggling to pay rent and put food on the table.

POVERTY HURTS. BUT ABCD HELPS.

We help families struggling with poverty
chart a path to stability and a better life.



Fundraising opportunities to assist those impacted by the virus, the economic decline, and the heightened awareness of systemic racism included: exploring private sector grant opportunities; launching the ABCD COVID-19 Relief Fund which has raised more than \$500,000; developing cross-departmental task groups to develop a strong proposal that brought \$9.5 million in CARES Act funding to ABCD along with significant funding for Head Start and Fuel Assistance/Weatherization.

We need you as partners in our work to raise people out of poverty, to revitalize communities, to bring hope and opportunity to those in need.

Please consider making a gift to ABCD – so that, together,
we can help our neighbors make progress in their lives.

- **\$50** prepares a job-seeker to find a stable career by offering a resume-building session.
- **\$100** helps older adults live happier, maintain their independence by funding an informative workshop at an ABCD drop-in senior center.
- **\$500** keeps a low-income family safe and warm during the harsh New England winter by providing a full tank of heating oil.
- **\$1,000** nourishes people struggling with hunger by providing one month of food pantry distributions.
- **\$5,000** helps a young person succeed now – and in the future – by funding a full year of subsidized employment, career exploration, and counseling.

To donate, please visit:
bostonabcd.org/donate
or call 617.348.6559

2019-2020

Board of Directors

The heart of ABCD.

The ABCD Board of Directors oversees ABCD and is committed to serving the community, collaborating on strategies to respond to the needs of the most underserved and at-risk families, seniors and communities in Boston and the Mystic Valley region. **This diverse 51-member board represents public, private, and neighborhood sectors, with the neighborhood sector making up the majority of board members.**

“We cannot thank our board members enough for all they do as volunteers serving the community,” said ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew. “They are a community action board with a wide representation of people and organizations. They are our heart, our strength, our solid base for the actions and interventions that make it possible for ABCD to provide ongoing support and opportunity in low-income neighborhoods.



ABCD board members at the February 2020 meeting.



ABCD board member Nathaniel Buckholz



ABCD Vice-Chair, Marie Greig



ABCD Vice-Chair, James Owens, Jr.

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about rising to
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