

April 2021

abcd INSIGHT

Monthly News & Updates

ABCD pays tribute to Irvienne Goldson in Memorial Video



Beloved colleague and friend Irvienne Goldson, Deputy Director of ABCD Health Services, passed away unexpectedly in December 2020. Her colleagues, community partners, and friends honor her memory and legacy in this special tribute.

ABCD Utilizes CARES Act Funds to Create Partnerships and Increase Important Resources and Programs for the Community

It's been more than a year since COVID-19 hit the globe and shut Boston down. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was immediate. It changed people's lives almost overnight. Low-income families were hit the hardest. Many families lost their jobs and income. The financial strain caused by the pandemic increased the immediate need for assistance with basic necessities. People were hungry and couldn't pay their rent or buy groceries. That is why ABCD's response has been immediate and about helping people with their needs right away.

Since the beginning, ABCD's services have been available without interruption. Our food pantries increased the amount of food they provided to our communities. Our students at our high schools, University High School and Otisguy High School, were switched to remote learning and provided with Chromebooks. That was just a portion of the work.



PHOTO CREDIT: REUTERS/Brian Snyder

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Through our efforts with \$9 million of funding from the CARES Act, ABCD has been able to provide jobs and job training, food access through pantries and delivery services, and pay bills including heat and rent costs. Although we have been able to help more than 21,000 people since last March, ABCD knew that if we partnered with other organizations, we could help thousands more.

ABCD has been working with more than 25 community partners to provide programs and services that will help the people most in need and hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources like food assistance, rental assistance, education access, job training, youth programs and many more have been expanded through CARES Act funding. On the other side of this pandemic will be a new normal and ABCD has been taking every step to prepare and help our community members survive, succeed and thrive.

The organizations we have partnered with through our CARES Act funding are as follows: JFK Center, Urban College of Boston, Higher Ground, Allston Brighton Community Development Corporation, Project Hope, City Mission, Jeremiah Program, More than Words, Operation A.B.L.E, Greater Boston Food Bank, Breaktime, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, Everett Family Resource Center, Boston Chinatown Main Street, Cape Verdean Association of Boston, ICNA Relief, Metro Housing Boston, Winn Companies- Connecting Communities, Boston Medical Center, Allston Brighton Health Collaborative, CommonWheels, Malden Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Everett Community Aid Network, Mutual Aid for Medford and Somerville, Malden YWCA, Housing Families, Massachusetts COVID-19 Contact Tracing Team.

[Learn More](#)

ABCD and The Greater Boston Food Bank Announce Groundbreaking Partnership to Reduce Hunger

For tens of thousands of Greater Boston residents, the Covid-19 pandemic intensified mounting hardship; many have been pushed to the financial brink and, for the first time, are going to bed hungry.. In response, long-time partners ABCD and The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) have

[combined efforts to launch a groundbreaking \\$2 million initiative](#)

to help stabilize families by stocking their cupboards with fresh fruit, vegetables, and other nutritious food.



ABCD is directing \$2 million in federal CARES Act funds to GBFB, which will distribute 2.5 million pounds of food to some 260,000 individuals in the next six months.

“By expanding this important partnership, the Fresh Foods project will keep hungry people healthier during an already difficult time,” said John J. Drew, ABCD President/CEO. “The need is urgent and together we have the resources to help children, elders, and families immediately.”

“Partnerships are key in the work to end hunger in our communities, and ABCD has been essential in GBFB’s COVID-19 response,” said Catherine D’Amato, president and CEO, The Greater Boston Food Bank.

Experts have cited a 66% increase in the demand for emergency food in Eastern Massachusetts since the pandemic began last year. Suffering is rampant, but collaborations like this offer vital solutions. In fact, they are essential to combating poverty and providing access to the resources that struggling families need to move through crisis and on to a stable future.

ABCD Thanks Legislators, Proposes Solutions at Annual Breakfast

On March 10, 2020, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency due to the coronavirus pandemic.

On March 24, 2021, ABCD held its annual Legislative Breakfast via Zoom to report on the impact we have had on our neighbors who were thrown into crisis--impact we could not have had without the compassion and support of these lawmakers.

Hosted by Rep. Chynah Tyler (D - 7th Suffolk District) and Rep Paul J. Donato (D - 35th Middlesex District), the virtual meeting enabled ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew and EVP/COO Sharon Scott-Chandler to share how ABCD has helped thousands of families avert crisis by providing food, rental assistance, home heating, the early education and comprehensive services of Head Start and much more.

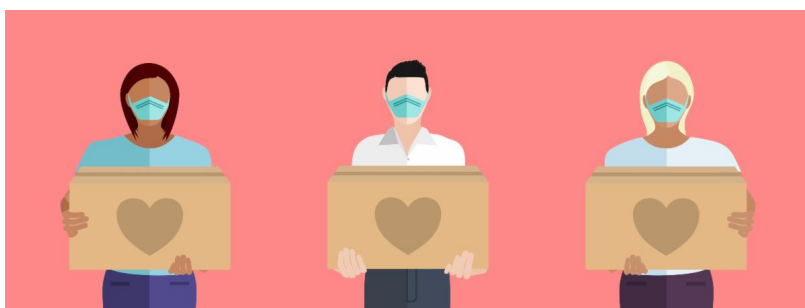
The forum also allowed Drew, Scott-Chandler, and ABCD Board Chair Yvonne Jones to thank these public servants who have come through for their constituents during this disastrous, life-altering year.

“We’ve had to meet extreme needs, help neighbors who are victims of this crisis through no fault of their own,” said Drew. “We couldn’t do what we do without you. We’re grateful for your friendship and your support.”

ABCD program directors also took the opportunity to emphasize legislative priorities including funding for workforce development and education, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) whose benefits include better child health and education outcomes, and affordable housing and homelessness prevention.

The legislators, including Sen. Sal DiDomenico, Rep. Rob Consalvo, and Rep. Kevin Honan voiced their ardent support for the organization’s work. In closing, Rep. Tyler, noting that she got her start at ABCD’s Walnut Grove Head Start, said, “ABCD is hands in addressing the most dire needs of the people of Boston and throughout the Commonwealth. And we are here for you.”

Generous Support Fuels ABCD’s COVID-19 Relief Work



Since March 2020, with support from generous corporations and individuals, ABCD has provided critical services to the most vulnerable households in Greater Boston that have been impacted by the pandemic. ABCD ramped up food security programming with the

help of grants received since December from an anonymous foundation (\$50,000), Eastern Bank (\$50,000), the Massachusetts Community Foundations Grant Program for COVID-19 Relief and Cambridge Community Foundation (\$25,000), the A.C. Ratshesky Foundation (\$25,000), and Cambridge Savings Bank (\$10,000). The gifts enabled ABCD to increase food pantry distributions, provide grocery store gift cards, and offer food deliveries direct to clients’ homes in Boston, Everett, Malden, and Medford.

The United Way and the Malden Together Fund contributed \$31,000 for direct relief and rental assistance to Malden residents who were rocked by job loss and pandemic-related health crises. And significantly, individuals and companies donated nearly \$340,000, bolstering ABCD’s capacity to provide life-changing and sometimes life saving assistance to our neighbors.

ABCD would like to express its deepest thanks to these partners and to those who have supported our work long before the pandemic began.

Helpful Resources

FCC Announces Discount Broadband, Resources

The Emergency Broadband Benefit is an FCC program to help households struggling to pay for internet service during the pandemic. This new benefit will connect eligible households to jobs, critical healthcare services, and virtual classrooms.

The Emergency Broadband Benefit will provide a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

The Emergency Broadband Benefit is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household. To learn more about the FCC Broadband Benefit, visit

Stay Up to Date on COVID Vaccine Access and Information

If you have questions about the different COVID-19 vaccines, visit [this CDC resource](#), and you'll find a general CDC FAQ [here](#). The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has created an in-depth [online resource](#) for all things COVID, and if you're a Massachusetts resident and need help with booking an appointment, click [here](#).

Recommended Reading: ABCD's Work in Context

[Bottlenecks Hold Up Aid as Renters Fall Behind](#)

The New York Times

[Apartment Rents Rise; Perks, Discounts Fade](#)

The Wall Street Journal

[Battle for affordable child care wages on Beacon Hill, in Washington](#)

The Boston Herald

Give Today.

The ABCD COVID-19 Relief Fund supports individuals and families with urgent needs for food, baby formula, diapers and wipes, cleaning supplies, rental assistance, transportation and more. We hope you will consider making a donation today so that ABCD can continue and expand this essential work.

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