



mbhp@home

Information and resources for program participants and their families

Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership SUMMER 2011

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Expands

The \$500,000, five-year Boston Foundation grant received by MBHP in 2010 is helping even more MBHP tenant families improve their educations, job opportunities and assets.

Seventy-four new families—39 of them in the Fairmount Corridor neighborhoods of Dorchester, Hyde Park, Mattapan and Roxbury—joined the MBHP Family Self-Sufficiency program during the first nine months of the grant.

Hyde Park resident Anitra Anderson recently joined the program—for the second time.

“The first time was so I could get out of debt,” she explained. “Now that I have my credit fixed I want to get ready to buy a house.”

Anderson has done the math. Because she pays most of her rent herself, she said she could pay

almost the same for a house payment, plus build equity in her own home. She plans to advance her career—and her earning potential—by earning a college degree while in the FSS program.

The newly enrolled Fairmount Corridor families represent a 50 percent increase in Fairmount participants since before the initiative was launched. The Boston Foundation grant helps concentrate the efforts in the Fairmount corridor because census tract data shows these neighborhoods are in need of greater economic support and stabilization services.

Additionally, the initiative dovetails with other Boston Foundation investments in the corridor, including support for the Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaboration, which focuses on issues of transit

equity, real estate planning and economic development.

Key to the success of the initiative are the partnerships MBHP is forging with neighborhood-based agencies. Working with community development corporations (CDCs) and other agencies allows MBHP to leverage services and resources right in the neighborhoods.

Formal partnerships have been established with Quincy-Geneva/New Vision CDC, Southwest Boston CDC, Lena Park CDC, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, Urban Edge, and Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation. Others are in the works.

“The MBHP Fairmount Initiative Family Self-Sufficiency Expansion presents a key opportunity for families to achieve their home

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Family Self-Sufficiency Path To Success Scholarships Awarded

MBHP is proud to congratulate Sonia Medeiros and LaWanda Myrick, the first two recipients of the MBHP FSS Program-based Path to Success scholarships.

MBHP teamed up with MBHP Board Member Matt Martinez of Beacon Hill Property Group, UMass Boston, and other collaborators to sponsor a scholarship for at least one of MBHP’s rental assistance tenants. However, due of the generosity of the scholarship funders and in-kind donors, two scholarships recently were awarded.

Medeiros and Myrick each will receive a scholarship in the amount of \$4,000 (\$2,000 from private funds and \$2,000 in matching funds from

UMass Boston) for the school term starting in September 2011. The award supplements any financial aid and student loans.

Medeiros plans to study business management and accounting, and Myrick plans to study accounting starting this September at UMass Boston.

Their scholarships are for one full school year and are renewable for up to four consecutive years as long as the scholars meet the program’s continuing eligibility requirements. Vocational assistance to help them secure gainful and relevant employment between academic years and upon graduation will be provided.

To qualify for the Path to Success Scholarship, an applicant must receive

rental assistance through MBHP and must be a participant in MBHP’s FSS program. Additionally, the tenant must be accepted to UMass Boston.

MBHP provides housing and other stabilization services to the scholar as he or she works toward increased financial stability. Scholarship dollars not used after tuition, books and fees are paid can be used for other expenses such as childcare and transportation.

MBHP thanks the following organizations that have contributed money, goods or services toward the scholarships: John Connors and Boathouse Inc., Boloco, Boston Celtics, D&D Insurance, Mt. Washington Bank, and Rosie’s Place.

News Briefs

New Form Format

During the next few months, MBHP will be converting many of the forms found at www.mbhp.org to “fillable/printable” forms. These new forms will be noted with an asterisk (*).

Anyone who has access to the internet will be able to download the forms, type in the required information, print and sign the completed form, and mail it to the appropriate address. The new format will be more convenient to use and will help avoid errors in interpreting handwriting.

Sign up for Our E-newsletter

Within the next month or so, MBHP will launch a new and improved e-newsletter for tenants. This innovative, user-friendly way to share information, news and updates will pair up with the existing *MBHP@home* newsletter to get the most up-to-date news to our tenants. Additionally, we will be sending out a survey to get feedback on what types of workshops would be of the most interest and help to our tenants.

We are updating our database in preparation, and we need your help. Please take a minute to e-mail your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to priscilla.williams@mbhp.org.



KIDS CAN'T FLY

Protect your child from window falls

- Install window safety guards
- Open windows from the top down
- Keep furniture away from windows

For more information call: 617-534-5197
Boston Public Health Commission • Childhood Injury Prevention Program
Mayor Thomas M. Menino

Healthy Homes Update

Last summer, MBHP teamed up with the Boston Public Health Commission (BHPC), Northeastern University and the Boston Housing Authority for a grant-funded Healthy Homes initiative.

The initiative is aimed at improving the home environments of families with low incomes by eliminating toxins and hazards and, as a result, improving the health of the families.

All MBHP inspectors have been trained in Healthy Homes practices, with the next step being certification.

Additionally, MBHP has referred eight Boston households with children with asthma to BHPC for Healthy Homes services. Ten property owners have been identified for services and training to help them

alter the environments in their apartments to help eliminate asthma triggers such as smoking, dust and rodents. Some small property owners have received window guards.

Soon MBHP inspectors will start referring tenants for Healthy Homes services for sanitation-related issues.

Kids Can't Fly!

Summer is here and windows are open—make sure yours are safe! Falls are a leading cause of injury to children age 5 and under. It only takes seconds for a fall to occur. Window falls can cause serious injuries and/or death, but they can be prevented.

In response to the ongoing tragedy of children falling out of windows, the Kids Can't Fly campaign educates communities about how to prevent window falls and promotes the use of child safety window guards.

Kids Can't Fly safety tips for tenants:

- Lock all unopened exterior doors and windows.
- Keep beds, furniture and anything a child can climb on away from windows.
- Open windows from the top, not from the bottom.
- Be sure children are always supervised.
- Talk to your property owner about installing window guards.



Tenant Nubia Rodriguez working with MBHP Program Representative Julissa Vera.

On Location in Chelsea

On May 31 and June 1, MBHP visited Chelsea Neighborhood Developers and met with Chelsea rental assistance tenants to process their recertifications. The partnership, which helps tenants to better access neighborhood-based resources, is a model that MBHP is expanding to other neighborhoods.



Team MBHP: Hector Cruz, Steve Laferriere, Ben Applegate and Jessie Edsell-Vetter.

Thank You Team MBHP!

Kudos to Marathon Team MBHP for raising more than \$23,000 for MBHP programs and services that help those most at risk of homelessness!

The 115th running of Boston’s famous marathon was April 18, 2011. John Hancock Financial Services generously awarded MBHP three nonqualified runner entries for this year’s race. MBHP selected three runners, each of whose experience in both running and fund-raising made him most likely to succeed in the training and fund-raising portions of the program.

MBHP Program Representative Ben Applegate, WinnManagement



MBHP Executive Director Chris Norris and award-winner Zulema Romero-Mendivil of Jamaica Plain.

MBHP Thanks Our Property Owners at Annual Event

On March 3, MBHP thanked its more than 4,300 property owners and managers for providing affordable housing for our more than 7,600 tenants. Massachusetts Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz delivered the keynote speech, and three property owners/managers were recognized for going above and beyond for MBHP and its tenants: Chelsea Neighborhood Developers and WinnManagement, Zulema Romero-Mendivil, and Braintree Village and Peabody Properties.

Executive Property Manager Hector Cruz, and Watertown Community Housing Senior Housing Project Manager Steve Laferriere—with the support of team manager and trainer, MBHP Case Management Specialist Jesse Edsell-Vetter—dedicated uncounted hours of training and fund-raising to running the marathon for MBHP.

Thank you, Team MBHP, for your time and dedication to preparing for the Marathon and for helping MBHP help those most at risk of homelessness.

Inspection Reminder

Periodic inspections are an important part of the rental assistance process to ensure tenants have safe places to live. They make sure that apartments are safe and that they comply with housing quality standards.

Tenants are reminded that it is their responsibility to be available for inspections. Should a tenant be unavailable, he/she can have someone 18 or older or the property owner present with a written, signed authorization to enter the unit.

Also, please contact your program representative if your phone number has changed so you can receive the automated phone reminder about an upcoming inspection. Reminder calls are made a couple of days in advance of the inspection date.

These two simple reminders can reduce the incidents of “no shows” and save you, the property owner and the inspector time and hassle.



Esther Schlorboltz and Aida Franquiz from Boston Private Bank and MBHP Boston College PULSE intern Carolyn Wong filling the bags assembly line style.

Boston Private Bank Welcomes Families Home

Thirty-five families who are transitioning from homelessness to housing will get some start-up household items, thanks to Boston Private Bank & Trust Co. Boston Private Bank donated the money to purchase such items as dishes, glasses, towels, toothpaste and more. Then

on April 27, Boston Private Bank staff visited MBHP to help fill tote bags with the items. The tote bags will be given to families who are moving from shelter into apartments.

Free and Almost Free Family Fun



Boston Pops Warm-Up Concert

Sunday, July 3, 8:30 p.m.

The Hatch Shell, Boston

As part of the annual Independence Day celebration, the Boston Pops Orchestra performs a free warm-up concert at the Hatch Shell. The oval opens up at 4:00 p.m. for access to the lawn area.

Boston Pops and Fireworks

Monday, July 4

The Hatch Shell, Boston

Concert starts at 8:30 p.m. A first-come first-served wrist band booth is setup at 9 a.m. near the Hatch Shell; the wrist bands allow access to the lawn or oval area in front of the Hatch Shell.

Boston Landmarks Orchestra

Wednesdays, July 13–Aug. 31, 7 p.m.

The Hatch Shell, Boston

This series of free outdoor concerts will highlight the works of Mozart and Tchaikovsky.

Revere Beach Sand Sculpting

Thurs.–Sun., July 14–17

300 Ocean Avenue, Revere Beach

New England's largest sand-sculpting event with nationally-known sculptors. For more information, visit <http://reverebeach.com>.

Boston Landmarks Orchestra

Sunday, July 31, 6 p.m.

Pinebank Promontory

at Jamaica Pond, Jamaica Plain

The Boston Landmarks Orchestra will perform classical favorites at this free outdoor concert. Pack a picnic and bring the family!

Boston GreenFest 2011

Thurs.–Sat., Aug. 18–20

Thursday, 5–9:30 p.m.

Friday, noon–9:30 p.m.

Saturday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

City Hall Plaza, Boston

Live performances, more than 200 exhibitors, an EcoFashion Tent, the GreenFilmFest, an environmental scavenger hunt, a Green fireworks display and laser show, and more!

Saint Anthony's Feast in the North End

Thurs.–Mon., Aug. 26–29

Thacher & Endicott Streets, Boston

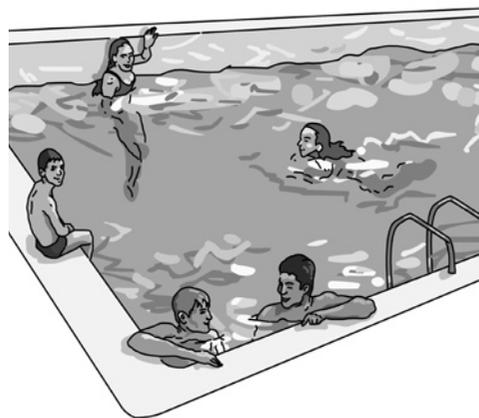
A traditional street festival with an ancient statue of St. Anthony publicly displayed at Thacher & Endicott Streets. See www.stanthonysfeast.com/schedule for event schedule.

Boston Arts Festival at Christopher Columbus Park

Sat.–Sun., Sept. 10–11, noon to 6 p.m.

100 Atlantic Avenue, Boston

Enjoy displays of the works by local artists at Christopher Columbus Park and performances by local artists. Visit www.bostonartsfestival.com for additional information.



Swimming Pools, Wading Pools and Spray Decks

Admission is free at these Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation–managed pools, although parking fees may apply.

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MBHP WORKSHOPS

All MBHP workshops are free, but reservations are recommended as space may be limited. To RSVP, please call (617) 425-6641 or e-mail workshops@mbhp.org. Please note that requests for reasonable accommodations must be made no later than two weeks before a workshop date.

Home Buying 101 (4-part series)

Tuesdays, July 5, 12, 19 & 26 at 6 p.m.

Presented by the City of Boston.

Home-buying workshops for first-time home buyers. Includes information about the mortgage process, managing debt, shopping for a home, and legal concerns.

Apartment Search Workshop

Wednesday, July 20 at 10 a.m.

Provides tenants with recommendations and information about finding a market-rate apartment with or without a rental subsidy.

Utilities Workshop

Wednesday, July 20 at 11:30 a.m.

Provides information on energy discounts, fuel assistance, payment plans and conservation practices.

Affordable Housing 101

Tuesday, July 26 at 10 a.m.

Open only to tenants seeking information about their affordable housing options. Learn about criteria, wait lists and how to apply.

Apartment Search Workshop

Wednesday, Aug. 17 at 10 a.m.

Provides tenants with recommendations and information about finding a market-rate apartment with or without a rental subsidy.

Utilities Workshop

Wednesday, Aug. 17 at 11:30 a.m.

Provides information on energy discounts, fuel assistance, payment plans and conservation practices.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program Expands *(continued from cover)*

ownership, higher education and other economic mobility goals in very concrete terms,” said Gail Latimore, executive director of Codman Square NDC. “Codman Square was pleased to be the first to sign on with MBHP on this important place-based assets- and wealth-building and family economic mobility initiative.”

The FSS program, which is available to all MBHP Section 8 rental assistance recipients, helps families with low incomes increase their assets and decrease their need for public assistance. FSS participants work one on one with advisors, who

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BECOME AN FSS SUCCESS STORY!

Joining this life-changing program is a snap!

To be eligible for FSS, you must be an MBHP Section 8 voucher holder and in good standing with the program. Complete an FSS application—available on MBHP’s Web site, www.mbhp.org—sign it, and send it to MBHP.

Or, contact FSS Outreach Coordinator Justine Cabrera at (617) 425-6603 or at justine.cabrera@mbhp.org.

Once your application has been reviewed, you will meet with an advisor who will help you develop your own unique plan. The advisor also will assist you with the necessary paperwork.

While you are in the program, you will be in close contact with your advisor and will actively work toward your plans’ goals.

Questions?

Contact Justine Cabrera

at (617) 425-6603 or justine.cabrera@mbhp.org.

Free and Almost Free Family Fun *(continued from page 4)*

Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, visit www.mass.gov/dcr/metroboston.htm

Brighton

Artesani Playground Wading Pool
1255 Soldiers Field Road
Lifeguard service 6/18–9/5.

Brighton-Allston Swimming and Wading Pool, North Beacon Street
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/21.

Reilly Memorial Swimming Pool
355 Chestnut Hill Avenue
Cleveland Circle
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/28.

Dorchester

Neponset Landing II Spray Deck
No lifeguard service. Closes 9/5.

Hyde Park

Moynihan Wading Pool
920 Truman Parkway
No lifeguard service. Closes 9/5.
Olsen Spray Deck and Swimming Pool, 95 Turtle Pond Parkway
Lifeguard service (deck) 5/28–9/5.
Lifeguard service (pool) 6/25–8/28.

Jamaica Plain

Johnson Playground Spray Deck
Corner of Lamartine and Green streets, Southwest Corridor Park
No lifeguard service. Closes 9/5.

Stony Brook Spray Deck

Corner of Lamartine and Boylston
Southwest Corridor Park
No lifeguard service. Closes 9/5.

Mattapan

Ryan Wading Pool, 350 River Street
Lifeguard service 5/28–9/5.

Roxbury

Cass Memorial Swimming Pool
Washington Street
Lifeguard service 6/25–9/5.

Mission Hill Spray Deck
Behind Boston Police Headquarters
No lifeguard service. Closes 9/5.

West End

Lee Memorial Wading Pool
280 Charles Street
Lifeguard service 6/8–9/5.

Belmont

Beaver Brook Spray Deck
680 Trapelo Road
No lifeguard service. Closes 9/5.

Cambridge

McCrehan Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool, 359 Rindge Avenue
Lifeguard service 6/25–9/5.

Veterans Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool (Magazine Beach)
719 Memorial Drive
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/28.

Chelsea

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool & Wading Pool
184 Carter Street
Lifeguard service 6/25–9/5.

Everett

Allied Veterans Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool, 65 Elm Street
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/21.

Malden

Holland Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool, 108 Mountain Avenue
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/21.

Melrose

Lloyd Memorial Swimming Pool
49 Tremont Street
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/21.

Somerville

Latta Brothers Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool, McGrath Highway
Lifeguard service 6/25–9/5.

Stoneham

Hall Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool, North Border Road
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/28.

Watertown

Dealtry Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool, Pleasant Street
Lifeguard service 6/25–8/28.



Family Self-Sufficiency Program Expands *(continued from page 5)*

help them develop a five-year plan detailing the steps they need to build assets, enhance educational and career opportunities, become and stay employed, increase earnings, become independent of public assistance programs, and move toward economic independence.

Included in the FSS program is a built-in savings component. As participants' incomes increase, they pay a larger portion of their earnings toward rent. The increase is put into individual escrow accounts which, upon graduation, participants can use for college degrees, or to pay debts. Many buy their own homes, using their escrowed money as down-payment. The escrow accounts of last year's FSS graduates averaged \$14,503.

Over the course of the five-year Boston Foundation grant, MBHP plans to:

- Increase the FSS program's overall capacity to 500 families.
- Increase enrollment in GED and post-secondary education and training opportunities.
- Reduce neighborhood dependence on housing and public assistance programs.
- Improve connections to community resources and local CDCs.

LEARN MORE ABOUT FSS AT ONE OF OUR EVENTS

Do you want to learn more about FSS? Join us for a free dinner and the opportunity to win valuable prizes at two upcoming outreach events.

MONDAY, JUNE 20 at 6 P.M.

John Marshall Elementary School Family Nurturing Center
35 Westville Street, Dorchester

THURSDAY, JUNE 30, at 5:30 P.M.

Dudley Village Community Room, 590 Dudley Street, Roxbury

Both events will include a light dinner, an overview of the FSS program, and the opportunity to meet the staff and ask questions. Attendees will have a chance to win raffle prizes valued at more than \$75. MBHP Section 8 participants who attend one of the meetings, are accepted into the FSS program, and complete their enrollment requirements will be entered to win a laptop computer!

**RSVP now! Contact FSS Outreach Coordinator Justine Cabrera
at (617) 425-6603 or at justine.cabrera@mbhp.org.**