

Eastern Bank Foundation®

ADVANCING ECONOMIC EQUITY & MOBILITY

Eastern Bank Foundation Convenes Safe and Affordable Housing Leaders for Community Advocacy Awards & Roundtable



TDM PHOTOGRAPHY

2023 Community Advocacy Award Honorees, Eastern Bank Foundation & Eastern Bank leaders came together May 16 to celebrate the work being done to help combat the safe and affordable housing crisis in our region and discuss challenges and solutions.

Each year Eastern Bank Foundation recognizes nonprofit leaders and organizations focused on our region's most critical community needs with the Community Advocacy Awards. This year, we brought together safe and affordable housing honorees from around the region for a celebration and roundtable.

The dynamic conversation centered on challenges and ideas on zoning, access to capital, the key role of grassroots organizations, the importance of business leaders advocating for change, and the significance of philanthropy in partnering on innovative solutions. How the affordable housing issue intersects with systemic inequities such as high childcare costs, low wages, gaps in education, and racial injustice was also discussed.

We applaud these passionate community champions and their organizations and are committed to continuing to invest in helping our region's affordable housing nonprofits do their vital work:

JESSICA ANDORS, Executive Director, Lawrence CommunityWorks (LCW)

"We have a hard-working community of immigrant families, and some are paying more than 70% of their income for rent."

LCW takes a holistic and transformative approach to complete neighborhood development with affordable housing design, development, and stewardship as part of this. Their flagship equity-driven development project in the East Island/North Canal Mill District includes 80 units of green, highly affordable new housing, a Latinx grocery store, a new outpost for the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, and fresh locations for two youth programs.

WILL ARVELO, Executive Director, Cross Roads House

"Homelessness can happen to most of us under the right circumstances and that does not take much."

Cross Roads House is the second largest homeless shelter in New Hampshire and serves three counties on the Seacoast. It provides strong case management, advocacy, and wrap around services for individuals and families, and recruits and educates landlords willing to rent safe and affordable units to its residents. Their

goal is to help people move towards a home with dignity and purpose with 95% of residents staying more than 90 days at Cross Roads obtaining permanent housing.

YUN-JU CHOI, Executive Director, Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA)

"45% of the population of Lowell is housing burdened yet push back for affordable housing remains."

CBA is a membership-based community development corporation dedicated to resident empowerment and sustainable community revitalization for current and future residents of Lowell, Dracut and Haverhill. They house 1,600 people in 529 affordable rental units, provide foreclosure, financial and workforce development counseling and training, keep a strong eye to veteran housing, and work successfully with supportive housing service providers.

LYNDIA DOWNIE, President & Executive Director, Pine Street Inn

"With a 96% retention rate in our permanent supportive housing, we know firsthand placing people in a stable, safe home with staff assistance works."

A Boston pioneer, the Pine Street Inn offers a "holistic" spectrum of services to 2,000

people daily, helping them anywhere in their homelessness journey — from street outreach and emergency shelter to permanent housing and workforce training. As part of their core goal to assist people in moving towards a lasting home, they will reach a property management milestone of 1,000+ apartments later this year with projects in development in Back Bay and Jamaica Plain.

AARON GORNSTEIN, President & CEO, Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH)

“In 2021 the median renter household making less than \$30K a year had \$380 left over after paying rent — that’s the lowest amount in over 20 years.”

POAH acquires and rescues at-risk affordable housing so it can remain attainable and provide healthy homes that support economic security, racial equity, and access to opportunity in perpetuity. Their neighborhood redevelopment projects, such as the Whittier Street public housing in Boston and Clarendon Hill Apartments in Somerville, revitalize distressed affordable housing areas. With over 4,800 units across MA, NH and RI, they run one of the country’s largest Family Self-Sufficiency Programs to help their residents build income and assets. (Aaron not pictured in group photograph.)

CHRYSAL KORNEGAY, Executive Director, MassHousing

“The level of rent burden people are carrying is beyond troubling. It has resulted from a lack of housing supply available to serve people at all income levels and the need to create more healthy, livable, and diverse communities.”

MassHousing is a mission-driven agency that confronts the State’s housing challenges to improve the lives of its people. By helping families achieve homeownership and partnering with mission-oriented developers to create and preserve high-quality affordable rental housing, MassHousing is stabilizing families, addressing the racial homeownership gap, and supporting the growth of the state’s economy.

RITA LARA, Executive Director, Maverick Landing Community Services (MLCS)

“Having food, a home and a living wage is essential for community health and family wellness.”

MLCS is a key, East Boston organizer and service provider helping long-time residents avoid displacement from their neighborhoods due to gentrification. They also provide vital wrap around services for education and job training, digital access and literacy, and youth development. Their innovative co-creation and management

of the Housing Support Station of East Boston during COVID-19 helped over 300 families access more than \$1 million in rental aid assistance.

ALISA MAGNOTTA, CEO, Housing Assistance Corporation

“A family needs to make \$210,000 annually to afford a home on the Cape, but the average homeowner makes \$82,000. This is resulting in the loss of 1,000 households every year.”

Housing Assistance is the leading Cape & Islands’ housing agency, serving more than 6,200 clients last year. Steep home prices, scarce rentals, and high second-home demand require innovative solutions to narrow the affordability gap, increase inventory, and engage residents to speak up for housing. They offer a range of programs including financial aid and counseling for childcare and disability care workers and co-developed a mapping tool to pinpoint areas that can support both natural habitats and multi-family housing.



JOSEPHINE MCNEIL, Co-Founder & Executive Director, CAN-DO

“It’s not enough to house people on the brink. Helping stabilize their lives with hands-on services so they can successfully access available housing, economic and social resources is critical.”

CAN-DO partners with local human service organizations and citizen groups to identify and reach out to people and families in Newton at the highest vulnerability for housing insecurity and works with them 1x1. They developed approximately 50 units of housing for people with developmental disabilities, survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and homeless families. Most recently they mobilized a team of volunteers to help residents file 2021 tax

returns to access funds still due to them under the child tax credit program included in the 2021 COVID-19 American Rescue Plan.

CONNOR SCHOEN, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Breaktime

“Every day that a young adult experiences housing insecurity their chance of becoming chronically homeless increases by 2%.”

Breaktime serves people in Boston aged 18-25 who are at a high risk of homelessness, currently experiencing homelessness, or transitioning out of temporary housing — including those from our LGBTQ communities. Working in complement to housing providers and agencies and acting as an advocate to raise awareness and action to break apart unjust stigmas, their mission is to disrupt the cycle of homelessness by empowering young people with the job experience and financial education and support needed to achieve housing security.

SARA STANLEY, Executive Director, HAWC

“80% of homeless mothers have experienced gender-based violence.”

HAWC (Healing Abuse Working for Change) helps individuals experiencing domestic violence live free from harm and fear — including women, children, men, nonbinary, LGBTQ, undocumented individuals, and people with disabilities. They provide a 24/7 hotline, emergency shelter, legal and children’s services, and support groups for more than 2,000 families across 23 cities and towns including Salem, Gloucester and Lynn. They also serve as an advocate and educator around the social and cultural change needed to combat domestic violence.

JOHN YAZWINSKI, President & CEO, Father Bill’s & MainSpring (FBMS)

“We are working to create a model where shelters are a last resort, where we reduce homelessness by helping people find housing and support before they slip into that situation.”

FBMS works to develop housing for individuals and families with the lowest community incomes, serving 41 cities south of Boston. In addition to providing nightly shelter and wrap around services, it is pioneering hotel-to-housing conversions and a new, nationally recognized model for reducing homelessness, The Yawkee Housing Resource Center in Quincy. This campus-like complex features an on-site health clinic, job training and personal finance services, respite beds, and permanent housing units. They have also recently broken ground on a FBMS Resource Center in Brockton.

About Eastern Bank Foundation

To achieve a just, equitable and inclusive society we believe individuals, families and communities who have been historically and systematically excluded from America’s prosperity need access to the resources and opportunities that can help them thrive.

We invest in community-led organizations to promote structural change that builds economic inclusion, mobility and social justice, with one of our core focus areas being to secure safe and affordable housing. For more information, please visit www.easternbank.com/foundation.