

Dorchester Reporter

"The News and Values Around the Neighborhood"

Volume 41 Issue 2

Thursday, January 11, 2024

50¢

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS Boston is meeting its challenges with strength, says Mayor Wu

BY CHRIS LOVETT
REPORTER
CORRESPONDENT

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu began her 2024 State of the City address Tuesday night by basking in the glow of last month's parade for the national Pop Warner football champions, the Dorchester Elite Eagles, and the Boston Lady

Raiders cheerleaders—a celebration that followed 18 years of disappointments. But, when it was time for the obligatory words about why the state of the city was strong, she talked about housing.

"It is thanks to the people of Boston that tonight I can say the state of our city is strong," she

said, "not because the challenges that remain are simple or small, but because they're big and they matter and we are rising to meet them."

Among the particular challenges mentioned by
(Continued on page 5)

Right: Mayor Wu took the stage at the MGM Music Hall on Tuesday evening.
Seth Daniel photo



Biotech job center opens at old Globe site

Bioversity welcomes first training class

BY CASSIDY MCNEELEY
REPORTER
CORRESPONDENT

Advocates for a workforce training center meant to prepare people of color for careers in an area where they are under-represented – the Commonwealth's bio-tech sector – celebrated the opening last Thursday (Jan. 4) of a 4,000-square-foot space for that purpose inside Southline Boston, the former Boston Globe building on Morrissey Boulevard.

The program, entitled Bioversity, a partnership with the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences and Mass Bio, a trade group that is funding the effort,



The scene inside Southline Boston on Jan. 4 for the opening of Bioversity, a training center housed inside the old Globe complex. Seth Daniel photo

admitted its first cohort of 20 students to their eight-week certificate training course this week on Monday (Jan. 8).

Of this group, 16 are Boston residents and 4 are from Dorchester, including 26-year-old Audrey Browning, who told

the Reporter, "I like that we got the opportunity to use this brand-new space and hearing how much was put into it and all the donations, that's super sweet. 'I'm so proud of Boston and MassBio and everyone else who put this together and I

am so thankful. The fact that it's the first cohort, I love that. This is a great opportunity for me and everyone else."

Elected officials past and present were on hand for the opening of

(Continued on page 16)

Group seeking a pilot model for migrants moving into Mattapan

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

Just months after cutting the ribbon on the successful Morton Station Village affordable housing project on the Dorchester/Mattapan line, Caribbean Integration Community Development (CICD) said it hopes that this year it will be able to launch a new model for dealing

'I opened my home to a migrant family, perhaps you can do it too.' - Opinion, Pg. 8

with the migrant housing crisis that is rocking the state and filling up hotels, hospitals, and airports throughout the region.

The issue of migrants crossing the southern border ballooned in 2023, and many of the Haitians who made their way to Boston arrived with no

where to go in the short term and no housing in the offing for the long term.

CICD's Donald Alexis said his organization has taken time away from working on its current pipeline of development projects to have its personnel address the mi-

grant housing situation across its footprint – Mattapan – where many of the Haitian migrants first land looking for help.

"We've been talking about how to create a model at a scale that will make it worthwhile for everyone," Alexis said last week. "This is going to require some federal
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Columbia-Savin Hill civic okays taking \$750k from Morrissey builders

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

The Columbia Savin Hill Civic Association on Monday voted to accept a \$750,000 donation from a real estate development team that is intent on building out a campus of mixed-use buildings on Morrissey Boulevard over the next decade.

The money would come from Centre Court LLC, which won approval from city planners last month to build a seven-building campus at 35-75 Morrissey Blvd that includes the site of the former Channel 56 television studio.

The civic group and its leadership team has been mulling the benefits and potential costs of accepting the donation since last fall. During a discussion that preceded the vote on Monday evening, proponents noted that the development plans have already been approved.

"We're accepting this with no strings attached and no expectations or requirements," said Don Walsh, who chairs the civic group's Community Benefits Committee. "The city has already approved this development. They're giving us the money after it has been approved, not before."
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Ayo Edebiri
wins Golden
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for Best Actress
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Police, Courts & Fire

Two teens killed in Morrissey crash

A rollover crash on Morrissey Boulevard last Thursday (Jan. 4) left two teenagers dead and a third in grave condition, according to State Police, who said that the car they were riding in had been reported stolen that night from Jamaica Plain. One of the deceased was a 14-year-old male from Dorchester. Their names have been withheld because they are under 17 years of age.

“The second deceased occupant, also a teenage male, has been tentatively identified; his age and city of residence will not be released until identification is confirmed,” the police statement read. The teen who was said to be in grave condition has not been identified yet. A fourth occupant of the car— a 2014 Hyundai— is a 15-year-old Dorchester boy and is expected to survive.

“A firearm was located in the crashed vehicle and was secured by the State Police Ballistics Unit,” the statement said.

The incident closed the roadway for several hours on Thursday morning between UMass and Freeport Street. The expressway ramp onto Morrissey was also shut down as the investigation continued.

...

A fight between two women behind 27 Washington St. in Dorchester last Tuesday (Jan. 2) ended around 8:50 p.m. when a man shot one of the combatants. The woman was taken to a local hospital with injuries not considered life threatening.

Witnesses told police the man fled into 20 Castle-gate Road. According to a BPD account, “Officers knocked and announced themselves, but no one came to the apartment door. After multiple attempts, three occupants exited the apartment, and it was later determined that one was the shooting suspect.”

Avante Young-Dabney, 19, of Dorchester, was charged with armed assault with intent to murder, assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon, illegal possession of a firearm, illegal possession of ammunition, and discharging a firearm within 500 feet of a dwelling.

...

A man who was found shot to death outside 34 High St. in Dorchester at 5:28 a.m. on Jan. 1 has been identified as Nilton Fernandes, 24, of Dorchester. No arrests have been reported in the murder.

...

A South Boston man already charged in two fire-

JP Morgan Chase opens Uphams branch



Officials from JP Morgan Chase, Dorchester Bay EDC, and city and elected officials at the opening of the Chase branch in Uphams Corner on Dec. 4. The bank also has sites in Mattapan and Nubian squares.

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

JPMorgan Chase last month opened a new branch in Uphams Corner’s historic Pierce Building in Uphams Corner. The unveiling marked the latest development in a partnership between JPMorgan Chase and Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (Dorchester Bay EDC), which owns and operates the building.

“We’ve long viewed Dorchester as a place we wanted to be,” said Jennifer Campbell, the bank’s market director for greater Boston. “We look forward to building new relationships and helping our customers during life’s most important moments, like opening their first savings account, buying their first home, or planning for retirement. Working with Dorchester Bay EDC and as one of their anchor tenants makes this space that much more unique and exciting.”

JPMorgan Chase has committed \$1.25 million to support Dorchester Bay EDC’s small business programs, which seek to provide equitable access to resources and culturally competent technical assistance for business owners of color in Dorchester, Roxbury, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, and Roslindale as they continue to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

Through the grant, the EDC has served 15 small businesses through their business coaching and technical assistance programs. Commercial space subsidies have also supported 15 small businesses, including 8 that have Latino owners, 4 with Asian owners, and 3 that have Black owners. The awards add up to \$319,000, with an average of \$21,000 awarded to each business.

Dorchester Bay says that by providing commercial space subsidies to local small businesses, the grants have helped sustain employment opportunities in Uphams Corner, with 72 jobs retained and 4 jobs created. The businesses include six restaurants and food service providers, 3 barbershops, 3 multi-service providers, a flower shop, a furniture store, and a community organization, Uphams Corner Main Street.

“Uphams Corner is poised for significant growth and investment. Dorchester Bay EDC is committed to ensuring that local residents and businesses can thrive in the neighborhood,” said CEO Kimberly R. Lyle. “We are excited to partner with JPMorgan Chase to expand opportunities for the community to build a strong financial future.”

JPMorgan Chase opened its first branch in Massachusetts in 2018; it now has 49.

arm cases was ordered held without bail pending a dangerousness hearing following his Jan. 4 arrest on a variety of gun charges at Centre and Redwood streets in Dorchester, the Suffolk County District Attorney’s office reports.

Boston Police were already conducting a firearms investigation involving Frederick Hines, 23, when he walked out of an apartment at Centre and Redwood around 7:10 p.m. last Thursday, the DA’s office said.

“Officers safely removed a firearm from a cross body bag worn by Hines across his chest,” the DA’s office reported. The firearm was determined to be a black Glock 17 with a painted gold slide loaded with one round in the chamber and 25 rounds in a magazine capable of holding 30 rounds.

The gun was equipped with an “auto sear” that converts guns into automatic weapons, allowing for the rapid fire of bullets with just a single trigger pull, and turning the gun into what is legally considered a machine gun.

Hines, already facing two separate gun cases in Dorchester Municipal Court, was charged with possession of a large-capacity firearm, possession of a machine gun, possession of a loaded machine gun, carrying a loaded firearm, illegal possession of a firearm and illegal possession of ammunition, the DA’s office said.

City confirms that meningitis caused death of 8-year-old boy

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) said this week that an 8-year-old boy from Dorchester had died recently as a result of contracting streptococcus pneumoniae meningitis – also known as bacterial meningitis. BPHC said there was no cause for public concern as the case seems to be isolated. The boy was identified only as a Boston resident, but sources indicated he was a Dorchester resident and a Boston Public Schools student.

Streptococcus pneumoniae, also known as Pneumococcal disease, is a bacterial infection that can affect the lungs (e.g., pneumonia), ears (e.g., otitis), sinuses (e.g., sinusitis), lining of the brain and spinal cord (e.g., meningitis), or blood (e.g., bacteremia). Pneumococcal infections are most common during the winter and in early spring when respiratory diseases are more prevalent.

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MODERATED BY
REHEMA ELLIS
Education Correspondent, NBC News

The BPDA will host a virtual public meeting on Thurs., Jan. 11, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. to discuss the proposed White Stadium project featuring a presentation by Boston Unity Soccer Partners, LLC and the new Women's Soccer League team in Boston. See ad on Page 3 for information on logging in.

Civic Summit, an event focused on uniting neighbors, civic leaders, and non-profit advocates featuring panels will be held on Sat., Jan.13, at the Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground at Boston University. This event will feature a fireside chat with Mayor Wu, a networking tea hour, and five additional sessions hosted by community leaders. Up to 200

community members can register for the free event here: boston.gov/civic-engagement/civic-summit-2024. Featured sessions include: “Empowering Change: How to Fund Your Inspiration,” led by Eric Leslie, Founder and Lead Organizer of Union Capital. “Becoming a Civic Leader - Training the Next Generation of Leaders,” featuring panelists Lee Pelton, president and CEO of The Boston Foundation; Matthew Broude, co-founder of The Queer Neighborhood Council; Kristen McCosh, the Disability Commissioner for the City of Boston; Brianna Bourne, Boston University Class of 2024. “EmpowerED: Leveraging Social Media for Community Impact,” led by Emily Schario, head of

content for Boston Globe’s B-Side, and “Sustainable Cities: Empowering Communities for a Greener Future,” a fireside chat with Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Boston’s first Green New Deal Director and a cabinet-level senior advisor to Mayor Michelle Wu, and Jaye Meakem, Boston Harbor Now’s Community Engagement Manager. Boston University is the lead partner of the Civic Summit. Boston University and The Boston Foundation are event supporters.

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), has announced the launch of the 2024 Boston Parks Winter Fitness Series. This

program is sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and offers free virtual classes from Jan. 7 through April 6. Certified fitness instructors will offer a range of winter classes, including Afrobeats Dance, Cardio Kickboxing, Chair Yoga, Dance Fit, Strength and Balance, Strength and Conditioning, Yoga, and Zumba. Class descriptions, dates, and times have been posted on the winter fitness website: boston.gov/fitness.

Franklin Park Zoo will offer free admission on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 15.

SEND IN EVENT NOTICES TO
NEWSEDITOR@DOTNEWS.COM

Codman Sq. ready for new café at Farmer’s Market, Shawmut

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

A new café venture will debut at the Codman Square Winter Farmer’s Market this month, and then pivot to opening a kiosk stand next to Shawmut Station in February.

The announcement came during the Codman Square Neighborhood Council meeting on Jan. 3, an in-person and online hybrid meeting that kicked off 2024 for the group. Chair Cynthia Loesch-Johnson announced that the House of Seven Café would be running a pop-up coffee, tea, and café during the Codman Square Winter Farmer’s Market, which opens on Jan. 27 inside the Great Hall at Codman Square.

Owner Tamicka Brown said she was excited to bring her café pop up to the Winter Market with soups, sandwiches, coffees, and teas alongside the vendors on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Brown also announced that she would be opening her café temporarily in February at the former Farmer’s Market kiosk next to Shawmut Station, which is officially on Epiphany School property. It will serve coffee, teas, holistic teas, and other items yet to be determined each weekday

from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Things are still being worked out with the city, but Brown said she hopes to be up and running by early February.

“This will be our grand opening for setting up in Codman Square until we can get a location in a brick-and-mortar store there,” she told meeting attendees.

Said Epiphany School Director John Finley, “We at Epiphany are delighted about the House of Seven Café. It will be a huge asset in the neighborhood, and our community will do everything we can to help it succeed.”

The Market, run by Richard Scott, expects to have local vendors, baked goods, meat purveyors, and fruits and vegetables from Riverdale Farms.

• **Holmes details budget cuts** – He delivered some shocking news to those at the meeting in saying that he expected Gov. Healey to make mid-year state budget cuts – known as 9C cuts – very soon. This, he said, means that several earmarks and budget items secured for local organizations might not come through. “We are \$600 million down from where we should be and there might be 9C cuts,” he said. “The governor



The Codman Square Neighborhood Council, along with elected officials Rep. Russell Holmes and Councilor Brian Worrell, gathered at the Great Hall on Jan. 3 for its first meeting of 2024. Seth Daniel photo

has to align the budget.”

Holmes said he has received phone calls from organizations in the neighborhood that got earmarks in June 2023 but haven’t gotten paid yet. Many had already spent the money or conducted the programming and were waiting for the state to submit reimbursements. Those payments, he said, might not come.

The last time mid-year 9C cuts were utilized was under former Gov. Deval Patrick, and prior to him under former Gov. Mitt Romney.

Holmes said the State Budget next year will be a huge challenge. “Next year’s budget at the state level will be one of the first challenges we’ve had in a long time,” he noted.

• **From three-decker to six-family** – The owners of 61 Lithgow St. were before the council as one of the first to convert their traditional three-decker into a six-family building by dividing the existing units down the middle.

Owner Bierina Idrizi said she and her brother live there with their parents and operate a construction company. For some time, they’ve rented out one of the units while living in the other two but haven’t got the desired tenants – noting that short-term students seem to be the only tenants that respond.

They have five parking spaces in the backyard and that won’t change, but they will demolish

an old garage building for better access. All the new units would be around 850 square feet on average and would be two-bedrooms. There was no opposition at the council or in abutters meetings.

• **Worrell is City Council vice chair** – Brian Worrell reported to the meeting that he had been chosen as the vice chair of the City Council this year – effectively the second in command behind Council President Ruthzee Louijeune. He noted that a pilot program run last year regarding snow removal has now become part of permitting. The program changes how snow is removed from city and state properties by focusing on high-traffic

pedestrian areas first. That results in quicker removal at stations like Ashmont and Shawmut Stations – and hopefully at business districts in Codman Square.

• **A state Senate candidacy** – Juwan Skeens, a member of the Redefining Our Community (ROC) neighborhood group, announced that he would be running for state Senate in the First Suffolk District this year – a seat now held by Nick Collins. Skeens ran for city council at-large last year as a write-in after not getting signatures required to get on the City Election ballot.

The Council will meet next at the Great Hall and on Zoom Feb. 7 at 7 p.m.

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Mattapan is first to be mapped for Wu’s reforms to zoning process

By Chris Lovett
Reporter Correspondent

A city initiative that would ease the path to new development in Boston’s commercial centers faced a trial run Monday night, drawing mixed reactions at a virtual meeting organized by the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council (GMNC).

The proposed changes are part of the “Squares + Streets” initiative that has been launched by Mayor Wu to modernize the city’s development process. If adopted, the changes would reduce regulatory hurdles to more density and active use in areas with more traffic and proximity to transit stops. In line with earlier work by residents and the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) on PLAN Mattapan, adopted last year, the neighborhood is the first in the city to be mapped for the initiative in detail.

“We’re not trying to rezone to fundamentally establish new context here,” Kathleen Onufer, deputy director of planning for the BPDA, told participants in Monday’s virtual meeting, “but to build on the context [that is already] there, and that we’re going to be willing to revisit and update on a regular basis to keep our zoning up to date.”

Under the plan, most of the zoning changes would take place close to or along main streets—Blue Hill Avenue, Morton Street, River Street, and Cummins Highway. In some of these areas, the changes would allow size, density, and use comparable to that of existing buildings, some of which had been allowed only after a lengthy process for a zoning variance. In Boston, the process allows for more vetting by residents, with original plans by developers often scaled back before getting approval from the Board of Appeal.

“Updated zoning is going to hopefully benefit everyone,” said Onufer. “Right now, because our zoning doesn’t match both what’s on the ground and definitely doesn’t match what we want to see happen, it means that projects are a project-by-project negotiation.” She went on to explain that the goal of the initiative is “to really get in front of development and make sure that we have rules in place that match what we’ve planned for here.”

Many of the concerns raised at the presentation were less about individual projects than about their neighborhood impact, especially after the rise in property values stemming from the expansion of



CICDD Director Donald Alexis, Dr. Shalair Armstrong, Cleon Byron, and Brianna Millor, chief of community engagement at Mayor Wur’s State of the City speech.

transit service on the Fairmount-Indigo line, with two stops in Mattapan. One Mattapan resident, Ruth Georges, pointed to an increase in her local tax bill.

“I’m not saying that I don’t agree with rezoning. I think that in this rezoning, this is a perfect opportunity to take into consideration residents who are low-to-moderate income, and those who simply can’t afford it, because they have dependents,” said Georges. “And so, I think to not include something that had a scale in increasing taxes or a cap on how much is increased based on how much development is coming, is indirectly feeding into long-term gentrification in these areas. Great things will come in, but those who live here won’t long be able to afford them.”

Onufer noted that the city’s assessed values for local taxes typically lag behind market levels, only to catch up when a property is sold, often at a much higher price. But she acknowledged that local taxation was also beyond the direct control of planners and subject to state laws. She told Georges, “I think it’s something that we’re very aware we ought to keep close eye on and continue to work with our colleagues to make sure we’re setting it up for success.”

A GMNC board member, Allentza Michel, also suggested creation of a zoning overlay that could more closely peg the affordability of new housing to an area’s income level.

Under the “Streets + Squares” initiative there would be five levels of development. In Mattapan, the highest level, allowing for the most height, density, and active street-level use—as well as access for people

with disabilities, would be near Mattapan Square, north and east of Cummins Highway.

On mostly residential streets farther from the square, the new zoning would allow for more four-story residential buildings or smaller-scale apartment complexes—development that was previously permitted only after a zoning variance. There would also be yard-space requirements to make development compatible with adjacent housing on less active side streets, but also to make room for trees to moderate the effect of “heat islands.”

In other areas of Mattapan, the new zoning would make it easier for three-deckers to have ground-floor commercial use, or for upper-level housing above ground-floor commercial space. Some residents at the virtual meeting warned that more active use, even where limited to smaller businesses, could result in more trash and congestion from double-parking for pickups and deliveries, and from customers.

“Even in the smaller lots, those same issues that have to deal with public safety, that have to deal with public sanitation, all apply even on the smaller lots, because usually they’re convenience stores,” said GMNC Chair Fatima Ali-Salaam. “They trigger parking issues and all that. They’re also about deliveries. Everything that you see inside of a larger project still happens in those smaller lots because they are on a corridor like Blue Hill Avenue.”

Onufer acknowledged that, even with access to off-street loading bays, some drivers for deliveries and pickups will try to save time or increase convenience by double-parking. She said that parking and sanitation would have to be regulated not strictly as development, but through the city’s licensing, permitting, and code enforcement.

According to Onufer, the BPDA could vote on the “Squares + Streets” zoning for Mattapan as early as next month, followed by a vote on adoption by the city’s Zoning Commission. She also noted that the new zoning could also be affected by work on the transportation action plan for Blue Hill Avenue, under the BPDA and the MBTA.

“Our goal in doing this is not to sort of do this once and walk away and not come back for twenty-five years,” she said, “but to make sure we keep this zoning up to date and working, and so that means revisiting.”



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Wu highlights housing, schools in State of the City speech

(Continued from page 5)

Science from its current site in Roxbury to West Roxbury. But she did announce multiple partnerships between public schools, community colleges, and Mass General Brigham. And, under an agreement announced in the speech, the Boston Community Leadership Academy 7-12 Pilot School in Dorchester’s Columbia Point will join with UMass Boston to become the district’s first university assisted “community hubs school.”

Said the mayor: “Together we’ll give our high school students direct access to college coursework and resources, partner educators from both institutions, and create a seamless pathway into UMass Boston for our graduates as we renovate a state-of-the-art high school campus embedded in the Columbia Point community.”

That move was hailed after the speech by state Sen. Nick Collins (D-South Boston/Dorchester), who said, “It’s going to set up the McCormack for success in a way we’ve been trying to achieve for a while.”

Wu also announced plans to expand other programs for children, from early education to summer work and learning opportunities, including a summer job for every BPS high school student who wants one.

Another partnership she cited is between the city and the local franchise in the National Women’s Soccer League to renovate White Stadium at Franklin Park. The plan has been greeted with concerns about access to facilities by student-athletes from the Boston Public Schools, but Wu emphasized the potential gains. “Our students will have access to a world class grass field,



Mayor Wu embraces her husband and children on stage after the State of the City address.

eight-lane track, brand new locker rooms and conditioning, and study spaces to call home,” she said. “We’ll also create a new booster fund for BPS athletics to cover expenses for uniforms, extra equipment, and dedicated transportation.”

Wu also mentioned that the city would act on recommendations for the restoration of Franklin Park and start a community process to imagine and locate a new home for the Elma Lewis Playhouse. As to the park itself, it will have its own administrator and dedicated staffing at what the mayor said would be the highest level in more than fifty years.

Toward the end of her speech, Wu brought up her experience as a child being taken by her mother to an art museum on regular days of free admission. She enlarged on the particular by announcing a new program in Boston that will allow free admission on the first and second Sundays of each month for Boston Public School students and family members at the Museum of Fine Arts, the Children’s Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Science, the New England Aquarium, and the Franklin Park Zoo.

“The institutional partnerships will make a difference for families,” said Sen. Collins. “It makes them less intimidated. I went to Boston Latin in the 7-12-grade

model, and the Museum of Fine arts was an intimidating institution for me.”

Reacting after the address, City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune wrote, “It was a really good speech, addressing our persistent housing issues by deeper investments to prevent displacement, continued focus on our schools to ensure the sky is the limit for our kids and their families, and making the vibrancy of our city accessible to everyone with free access to some of our most beloved institutions. I’m hopeful.”

In a speech that began—over shouts of protestors—with memories of a parade and reached a crescendo over housing, the destination was home—more precisely, a definition of feeling at home in a city. “Because” as Wu explained, “home is so much more than a house, though it’s a good start at a park down the street for kids to run around in, and a unit below so grandma can live close. Make it a place where you can put roots knowing they’ll blossom, surrounded with schools that inspire and connect. Open the doors wide to give your community the world. When your neighbors win big, throw a parade. Home is all the little points of light that give tomorrow its glow. It’s the place and the people you refuse to give up on.”



Councillor John FitzGerald with his staff, Amanda Curley, Liam Rimas, and Julie Ryan. Seth Daniel photos



Jeffrey Sanchez, Dep. Supt. Eddy Chrispin, and State Rep. Chris Worrell.



Marvina Patterson, Josette Williams, and Chelsea Pope.

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Reporter's

People

News about people in and around our Neighborhoods

Meeting disabilities head on with Boston Marathon run

Neponset mom will race as guide for blind, deaf mate; fundraiser set for Saturday

By Cassidy McNeeley
Reporter
Correspondent

Heather Pierce of Dorchester grew up playing youth hockey in the neighborhood and went on to become a Division 1 defenseman at Northeastern University. Now that she's "done with hockey," the 29-year-old new mother has traded in her skates for sneakers as she prepares to compete in April's 128th Boston Marathon in a special capacity: as a running guide for Hannah DeFelice, who is deaf and blind.

The team will be racing in support of The Play Brigade, a non-profit that advocates for disability

equity and inclusion in healthcare, education, and recreation. As a supplement to that support, Pierce is holding an ice-skating fundraiser this Saturday (Jan. 13) from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Devine Rink in Neponset.

Pierce, who studied American Sign Language and English interpretation at Framingham State University, works at The Learning Center for the Deaf in Framingham, which is where she met DeFelice.

"Hannah ran cross country at UMaine so that's how we kind of bonded, because we were both college athletes,"



Dorchester's Heather Pierce, left, with her running partner Hannah DeFelice.

said Pierce. "That's how we first became friendly and then we were like 'Oh, we should do the marathon' and then we got accepted by Play Brigade."

The Brigade was founded by Dawn and Justin Oates, who were inspired to help kids and people with disabilities when their third child, Harper, was born with a debilitating spinal cord injury.

"It's not just about little kids and playgrounds, [it's] about teaching communities what true

inclusion is," said Dawn, "and how they can take steps in whatever area they are in to be more inclusive, to create a world that is more welcoming and wanting to support people with and without disabilities."

DeFelice is living proof that people with disabilities can do many things if they set their minds to the tasks. And as her guide, Pierce helps her overcome the barriers that exist in an able-bodied world.

"When you're running as a guide you're just

on the entire time," she said. "There's a puddle, there's a curb, you have to signify that there's a step, there's a dog. It's crazy but it makes the run go by really fast for me because my brain is on the entire time. I'm always looking for the next hazard."

When running, Hannah and Heather the teammates communicate by tactile signing and using a tether. "The way she prefers to communicate with me," said Pierce, "is that when she's running, I'll use a little bit of tactile sign language, use my hand on her shoulder to show there's a step ahead. And we have a tether that we run with. If I pull it in a certain way she knows how to move. We're almost creating our own signs."

Unlike her partner, Pierce has had no race experience. "I really enjoy being a guide runner. It's just been a different experience for me because I've always been training to be a better hockey player," she said. "I'm done with hockey and I'm trying a whole new career and I'm a new mom trying to find myself again. Having someone to run with and have a teammate again and just be a part of something, I've been really enjoying that."

Pierce and DeFelice

typically complete their long runs on Saturdays, and this coming one is special with the Devine Rink fundraiser.

"I really wanted to make this event replicate what we're trying to do on a larger scale. I reached out to friends who will be volunteer interpreters. I reached out to some of my hockey friends who are going to be guide skaters," Pierce said. "I reached out to DCR and to the state to make sure there are sleds there for any wheelchair users. I really went the extra mile to show that if we just work hard and come together, we can make events more accessible."

Dawn Oates is happy to see the pair running and recognizes the importance of their fundraising event. "We need this marathon team," she explained. "This is our primary mode of funding so that we can keep doing the work we do."

Those interested in participating on Saturday can find tickets on Eventbrite or Venmo at \$10 per ticket to @hmottau26, or pay at the door. In addition to ASL interpreters, guide skaters, sleds, and crates, participants can also rent skates for free. Attendees do not need prior skating experience, and all are welcome.

Project STEP's MLK concert set for Jan. 14 at Kroc Center



Join Project STEP for their annual community concert on Sun., Jan. 14, from 3-5 p.m. in the Kroc Center on Dudley Street celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through music and conversation. The program includes performances by Project STEP students and is free and open to the public. Students like Aaliyah (pictured) receive an instrument (violin, viola, cello, or bass), private instruction, group instruction, mentorship, masterclasses, orchestra, concert tickets, and more. Project STEP places importance on how our society values the diverse cultures and ethnicities of our communities.

Coalition names Dot native Benders to Capital task force

(BCC) recently launch its two-year research and analytics study focusing on three crucial sectors: Capital, Education, and Project Impact. The Capital task force will compile and assess the efficacy of interventions to expand access to commercial real estate financing for developers of color and opportunities to mobilize capital to investors of color.

To help with the compilation and assessment, BCC has selected Sharniece Benders, a Dorchester native, to serve as a member of the task force team.

She is assistant vice president of Capital Markets at Berkshire Resi-



Sharniece Benders
Task force appointee

dential Investments in Boston with 13 years of relationship management experience working across multiple disciplines in her portfolio. She received her Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies and English from Suffolk University.

The Strand will play host to premiere of 'Hoops' in July

Company One (C1) has announced three new plays for its 25th season, including one – "Hoops," by Eliana Pipes – that will be staged at the Strand Theatre in Uphams Corner from July 12 to Aug. 10 and produced in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture and Boston Playwrights' Theater.

C1's season also marks

a new chapter in the theatre's four-year Public Art for Public Good initiative. It will be the first full season during which all plays and events will be 100 percent free with the option of purchasing Pay-What-You-Want tickets.

Adapted from the Hoops Project by Nicole Acosta, the play will be directed by Tonasia Jones. Pipes brings 5,000

years of history to life with this celebration of Black, Latine, and Indigenous culture. Based on a series of intimate interviews, the vibrant and playful collage of self-adornment and heritage shows off just how much power a pair of hoops can hold.

Hoop earrings are more than just an accessory, according to Pipes. From Chicago to



Eliana Pipes
Company One photo

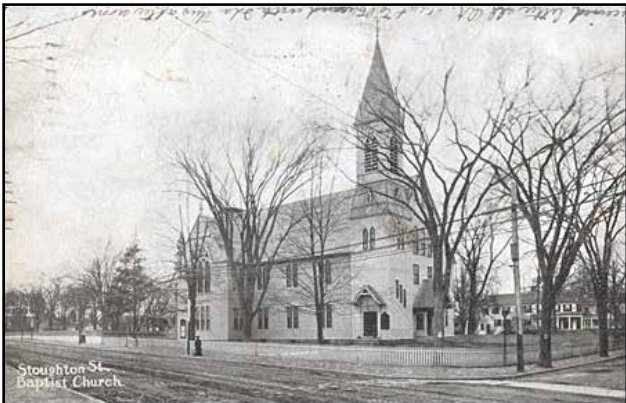
Oaxaca to right here in Boston, these earrings shout "I'm here, and there's nothing you can do about it."

YESTERYEAR ARCHIVE

DORCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Stoughton Street Baptist Church



At left, the first Stoughton Street Baptist Church; right, a postcard view, circa 1910, of the remodeled building.



The Stoughton Street Baptist congregation was organized in 1845. The society soon built a church at the corner of Stoughton and Sumner streets, now 50 Stoughton St. The building was nearly destroyed

by fire in 1878, then reconstructed and enlarged by 1888. Today, the building, which is owned by the Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is the Boston Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church.

These posts can be viewed on the blog at dorchesterhistorical-society.org. The Society's William Clapp and James Blake Houses are open to the public on the third Sunday of the month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Editorial

It’s time to give Louijeune her due



The newly seated Boston City Council made a unanimous decision last week to elect Ruthzee Louijeune to lead the body as its president for the next two years. The at-large councillor topped the ticket in November’s balloting, and just hours later, she announced that she had the requisite votes in place to replace Councillor Ed Flynn as president.

It was a savvy move and it paid off when she won the gavel on Jan. 1 to applause from a gallery packed with her supporters. Louijeune didn’t just win the most votes citywide on Nov. 7. She backed the right candidates in the election, made smart alliances with existing colleagues, lined up her votes, and locked them in publicly. She deftly and quickly filled the void, shutting down the dithering that critics often point to as a negative trait of city government. That skillset bodes well for keeping councillors focused on the stack of pressing matters that we elected them to attend to.

But, of course, that won’t stop the grievance caucus on the council – and their mouthpieces at the *Herald* – from stomping their sour grapes into whine. Instead of giving Louijeune her flowers, the next-day story in the Braintree-based tabloid led with Councillors Flynn and Erin Murphy griping because another colleague, Julia Mejia, had rebuffed their eleventh-hour attempt to nominate her to challenge Louijeune.

Mejia, who had no shot at winning, wisely declined, sparing herself and the council a fruitless “debate” ahead of a lopsided win for Louijeune.

The attempt to sow division —and the tabloid spin— was another pathetic play from a lobby on the right that seems increasingly desperate and unmoored. It’s the same “woe is me” nonsense that fueled the faux outrage directed mainly at Mayor Wu over a holiday party invite flap a few weeks before.

Why not take a moment to appreciate the achievement of one of our own, a homegrown talent who excelled in our public schools and has gone on to distinguish herself and her parents by breaking barriers heretofore unbroken in this city?

Louijeune’s elevation to council president last week marked a notable moment for Haitian Americans, one of the city’s largest immigrant groups and one that has contributed mightily to Boston’s continued growth and economic success. It was particularly poignant for many Haitians and their allies that Louijeune’s election coincided with Haitian Independence Day, a holiday that marks the creation of the world’s first Black republic after a successful revolution against French colonizers and slavers.

If none of that moves you— if you’re so burdened by bitterness as to be indifferent to the sentiment of a historic turn— then perhaps just admire the skill and strategy that for so long was the exclusive province of Bostonian men with lineage in Galway or the Amalfi Coast. To the victor goes to the spoils— and in Boston City Hall last week, the best person won.

–Bill Forry

The Reporter

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For a few days during Christmas week, my home gave respite to a refugee family

They’re refugees, and they’re homeless. How about at your home for a few days?

SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Like many people who live in this beautiful neighborhood, full of great old houses, I am over-housed. When mortgage rates come down and the right opportunity presents itself, I will downsize, In the meantime, answering Gov. Healey’s plea for help, I decided to open my home to recently arrived refugees.

I hosted my first family during Christmas week. They are mother, father, and two children, three and one year, from Haiti. After being connected with them through the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants, I worked through the Brazilian Worker Center (BWC) in Allston. BWC is one of the non-profits the state is working with to run family welcome centers. I had to undergo a background check, and the BWC told me they had performed one on the family that stayed with me.

They speak no English, and I speak no Haitian Creole, but I am lucky to have friends who do. We managed limited communication with their help, and by using Google Translate. The family, looking frightened and exhausted, seemed grateful. My understanding is that when people arrive here, they are shuttled among the family welcome centers, which only operate during the day, so some of them end up sleeping on the floor at the airport and in other places like the Cambridge Registry of Deeds site that has been in the news lately. These places are not fit to be shelters. By giving this family a place to stay for a few nights, I gave them a respite. They didn’t have to move every day between daytime and nighttime shelter, as they wait for a more permanent placement.

The family arrived here with no winter coats or other cold-weather gear. The mom was wearing sandals without socks, and the dad was wearing slippers. I have a friend who migrated here from a warm-weather climate, and she told me how exhausting she found the cold to be on her arrival. I can’t even imagine. So, I put out a call to a group of friends. We pooled our money and offered to take the family shopping for the things they would need to be at least a bit more comfortable as they try to navigate our slow-moving immigration system.

The father was reticent about taking help, saying through a translator that he felt bad about being in such need; he wanted to be able to provide for his family. We did our best to assuage his discomfort, and one friend and I took the mother to Target, where we bought coats, shoes, hats, gloves, hygiene products, and diapers. Because of the language barrier, it was difficult for us to make her understand that she should feel free to choose what her family needed. She seemed a bit frightened and very tentative. If you ask me, though, she was brave. Taking the kind of leap that she had to take to come here, and then trusting

that the two strangers who took her shopping meant her no harm is its own form of courage. At one point, with the help of a friendly Target employee who spoke Haitian Creole, we figured out that the mother was just 25 years old – a kid – homeless and responsible for two little ones in a strange country where few spoke her language. Again, hard to imagine.

The friend who accompanied us to Target was born in Spain, and her mother was forced to flee to France after Franco’s victory in the Spanish Civil War. She told me that her mother was taken in by a grumpy old French woman who gave her ice cream.

People who come here from Haiti and other countries are fleeing unspeakable violence and poverty, and they are looking for work that will provide a better life for their families. They are, indeed, overwhelming our safety net at the moment, with the help of political grandstanding that uses them as pawns in some sort of a game, but despite that, we should do all that we can to welcome them. If you are in a position to help, you might consider stepping up. Maybe someday a child of one of these people will immortalize you in the way my friend has immortalized the grouchy old French lady.

At Target, we managed to get what everyone needed, and as we headed to the cash registers, my friend and I both noticed the mother looking at a bright pink sweater with big red hearts on it. She smiled. We grabbed one in her size, and somehow made her understand that we wanted her to have it. She demurred. We insisted. She beamed. When she left my house on Saturday, she was wearing it, and smiling as she gave me a big hug and said thank you. I wanted to ask if I could take a picture of her in the sweater, but I didn’t want to invade her privacy. So, I’ll just have to remember how happy she looked for that one fleeting moment. I know the rest of her day was likely hard to deal with.

They left after spending four nights in a comfortable bed with heat, a private bathroom, and plenty of food that they could cook for themselves. They left the rooms they used cleaner than they found them. In the days since, I have been thinking of them often, hoping that they are not sleeping on the floor at the airport, but they likely are. I wish I could have let them stay longer, but I couldn’t. But I can open my house again, and I can share this story so that my neighbors can consider what they might do if they have extra room in their homes in our amazing, welcoming neighborhood.

Author’s Note: I am not signing this piece, because I know there are some cruel people out there who think migrants should not be helped. I don’t want my house, which will be used for this purpose, to become a target.

Letter to the Editor

US is enabling Israel assault on Gazan people

To the Editor:

When I got my Dec. 28 issue of the Dot Reporter, I was struck by the front-page article about disparities in health outcomes and life expectancy between largely white communities and neighborhoods of color in Boston. We cannot assert with confidence that all lives are equally valued in our racially tinged city if we are not shocked by this. That’s why we say and act on the idea that “Black Lives Matter.”

Far away from Boston, Palestinians lives in Gaza do not seem to matter at all. More than 22,000 Gazans have been killed by Israeli bombing attacks, according to the Associated Press. The majority of the victims are women and children, while tens of thousands more have been wounded, often grievously.

Much of Gaza has been made uninhabitable by the Israeli bombing; hospitals, schools, universities, mosques, churches, and many cultural institutions have been targeted repeatedly. According to the UN, almost two million Gazans have been forced by the bombing to flee their homes to crowded and squalid conditions in the south of the Strip without adequate shelter – and where they have also been targeted by Israel’s military.

The conditions resulting from the Israeli assault, together with its blockade and limits on the entry of food, water, and fuel, have caused widespread hunger, with hundreds of thousands of Palestinians civilians facing outright starvation. The medical system in Gaza has virtually collapsed under the weight of Israeli attacks, so the likelihood of severe disease epidemics that could claim many more lives is increasingly dire.

All of these horrors are excruciatingly documented in the 84-page South African indictment of Israel for the crime of genocide submitted to the International

Court of Justice.

This may seem far away and of little relevance to people living in Dorchester. But if Israel has been directly committing genocide and other war crimes in Gaza, it is our own US government that has been its decisive enabler. The Israeli war planes operating over Gaza, the attack helicopters, and nearly all the bombs being dropped are made in the USA. These weapons are transferred cost-free to Israel, courtesy of the US taxpayer, along with billions in annual US military aid to Israel. The White House and the leaders of both parties in Congress are now pushing for a further \$14 billion in US taxpayer funds to support the Israeli war effort.

Given the lack of enforcement powers by the International Court, and the US veto power in the UN, it is possible that Israel’s leaders – and our own — may escape punishment. But they will certainly face the judgement of history.

Just before Christmas, Palestinian pastor Munther Isaac preached a sermon in Bethlehem that included these words: “Leaders of the so-called ‘free’ lined up one after the other to give the green light for this genocide against a captive population. They gave the cover. Not only did they make sure to pay the bill in advance, they also veiled the truth and context, providing political cover... I feel sorry for you. We will be OK. Despite the immense blow we have endured, we will recover. We will rise and stand up again from the midst of destruction, as we have always done as Palestinians, although this is by far the biggest blow we have received in a long time. But again, for those who are complicit, I feel sorry for you. Will you ever recover from this?”

Jeff Klein
Dorchester

Muhammad Ali-Salaam, 78; zoning guru, bridge-builder for Muslim community

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

For decades, if there was a problem that seemingly couldn't be fixed, Mattapan's Muhammad Ali-Salaam was the person that the city sent in to take a look, and solutions usually followed in short order.

Mr. Ali-Salaam, who passed away on Jan. 4 at 78, moved to the city in the early 1970s with a young family and over time became a trusted employee at the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) – the agency now known as the BPDA.

“My dad, he loved Boston and all of the people in it,” said his daughter, Fatima Ali-Salaam, the oldest of the eight children born to Muhammad and his wife of 58 years, Waheeda. “He was a nice and gentle person and never put himself in the spotlight, which is the way he wanted it...He wasn't crass or cruel and he didn't do things loudly...He wrote the book on engagement – broke the mold. You knew he cared.”

Born in the Republic of Panama, Mr. Ali-Salaam immigrated to New York City with his parents as a child in the 1950s. They moved to Washington, D.C., when he was a teen-



Muhammad Ali-Salaam “was able to find middle ground and consensus where there were competing interests,” said an admirer. “There was a particular twinkle in his eyes that made it so you couldn't tell him ‘no.’”
Courtesy photo

ager, and he met Waheeda and got married there. Then came the move to Boston in the 1970s, where he later accepted a job at the BRA, which was then led by the late Steve Coyle. He and his family settled in Mattapan, where they have lived for almost 50 years.

Fatima said they were a family that read the newspapers daily, and talked at home about art, architecture, culture and, especially, civics.

“My mother and father always made sure we were involved,” she said. “You weren't just book smart, but you were to actually understand what

you were reading, your surroundings, and the people around you. He didn't think you should just live somewhere, but you should be involved.”

Darryl Smith, of Dorchester, said that Mr. Ali-Salaam was his professor and mentor at Roxbury Community College some 40 years ago. Smith followed his mentor to City Hall, where even today Mr. Ali-Salaam is highly regarded, though he left his city job in 2011 to work as a liaison for the US Dept. of Justice and the FBI.

“I dub him the ‘encyclopedia’ of the BRA,” said Smith, noting that Mr. Ali-Salaam significantly revised zoning for Roxbury, Jamaica Plain and other neighborhoods. “When we had issues... Muhammad was the go-to guy to be able to take a problem and solve a problem – to get something that was stuck at point ‘A’ to move to point ‘B.’ He was a great man of principle – quiet and consistent.”

Current BPDA director Arthur Jemison recalled that Mr. Ali-Salaam was a “true leader and one of only a few people of color serving there at the BRA when Jemison worked there during his previous stint at the agency.

“He was committed to giving community members a voice in planning and zoning in their neighborhoods,” said Jemison. “He had a broad impact across the city, and he was instrumental in getting people in Roxbury and Mattapan better access to city services through planning, in the 1980s and 1990s. He will be sorely missed in the Boston community.”

The attorney Joe Feaster worked with Mr. Ali-Salaam in his City Hall capacity and more recently as a member the Communities of Color organization, which was co-founded by Daryl Smith.

“Muhammad the man was a quiet and gentle force and one thing I would say about him is that he was a states-



Muhammad Ali-Salaam is shown with Mayor Tom Menino in a photo circa 1995. Menino counted Ali-Salaam among his key allies. *Darryl Smith photo*

man,” said Feaster. “He was able to find middle ground and consensus where there were competing interests. There was a particular twinkle in his eyes that made it so you couldn't tell him ‘no.’”

Mr. Ali-Salaam was a driving force behind the Museum of African American History in Roxbury and a founder of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center (ISBCC) at Roxbury Crossing – the largest mosque in New England. These were pursuits that were difficult, and even brought about death threats, friends recall.

“After God, he was the

one most responsible for building that mosque,” said Yusufi Vali, former executive director of the ISBCC. “He worked for the city at a time when Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan and people of color were not connected,” Vali added. “He and a group of people he mentored became that deep connection to the neighborhoods. If people there needed services, they became the de facto neighborhood liaisons.”

Vali also said that he was a great “bridge” within the Muslim community to bring together African American Muslims and immigrant Muslims, who, though

relationships were challenging, and experiences different, found commonality through Mr. Ali-Salaam in the building of the ISBCC.

Feaster said that while he was well regarded in all corners of the city, “something in Mattapan should be named after Muhammad Ali-Salaam,” he said. “That is certain.”

A funeral service has been held at the Gardens Cemetery in West Roxbury. In lieu of flowers, donations are welcomed at the Museum of African American History (maah.org).

Dot's Ayo Edebiri wins Golden Globe

Dorchester native Ayo Edebiri won a Golden Globe on Sunday for best performance by a female actor for her portrayal of a Chicago woman working as sous chef in “The Bear,” a TV show on Hulu.. The 28-year-old Boston Latin School alumna has been working as an actor and TV writer for several years after attending New York University.



Edebiri plays sous chef Sydney Adamu on “The Bear,” which is set in a family-owned Chicago restaurant. The popular show has been picked up for a third season, which is currently in production.

“Everybody at the Bear — that's my family. I love you guys so much, it's an honor to work with you, to grow along side you,” said Edebiri in her acceptance speech. “Oh and my real family also, I love you guys, too.”

Edebiri has also been nominated for a Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series.

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LOVE CAN DO THAT."**

—DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

**Brandy
Fluker Oakley**
State Representative 12th Suffolk District

Chilly dippers welcome 2024 with plunges at Savin Hill Beach

BY **CASSIDY MCNEELEY**
REPORTER
CORRESPONDENT

For some people, the New Year begins with watching a twinkling ball drop down the side of a building in New York City or drinking a champagne toast with friends. For others – like a bunch of Dorchester neighbors – it begins with a dunk into the chilly waters of Malibu beach or a mile or so over in South Boston at L Street for the annual plungefest there.

Mark Culliton and his two sons, Oliver and Julius, were among a group of hardy souls who jumped into the bay on New Year’s afternoon. “This is the third year in a row that we’ve invited friends to come and do a polar plunge at Malibu and had maybe 20-25 folks who went in,” said Culliton, who organized the outing with his neighbor and friend Laura McNeil.

“Laura did most of the heavy lifting in getting people out,” Culliton said in an interview with the Reporter. “We met rock climbing at a spot over in Southie so a bunch of folks from the climbing gym just invite friends to come and join us.”

This year’s event took place at 2:40 p.m. because the plungers only do their



A group of neighbors ran into the chilly waters of Dorchester Bay at Savin Hill on Jan. 1. Mary DiCicco photo

thing at high tide.

“It’s a great way to start the new year and we’re psyched to be doing it in Dorchester,” said Culliton, who has lived in the neighborhood since 1999. He’s the founder and CEO of College Bound Dorchester and the co-founder of Boston Uncornered, a nonprofit that seeks to end systematic generational urban poverty and violence. When he’s not working to improve his city, Culliton can be found running marathons, rock climbing, and jumping into freezing water.

“I always say a plunge is a control-alt-delete for your brain to restart and a new way to welcome in the new year with a fresh new look,” he said. “We love it and do it regularly, so we try to get people to come and join us all the time.” Anyone interested in doing so can email Culliton at mark@uncornered.org.

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Monday, January 15, 2024

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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Len Cabral

Stories of Hope and Joy

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, February 22, 2024

Black History Month

Internationally renowned storyteller Len Cabral shares stories of the power of hopeful actions and shared joy in honor of Black History Month. Folktales, myths, and personal accounts come to life with humor, wisdom, and compassion that will inspire listeners of all ages.

RESERVATIONS: The Celebrate! series is appropriate for family audiences and children ages 5 and up. Wearing masks is encouraged but not required. Visit jfklibrary.org/celebrate, email jfk.celebrate@nara.gov, or call 617-514-1644 and leave a message to make a reservation. Children are seated on the floor with their caretakers. Limited seats are available for people with disabilities, seniors, and others unable to sit on the floor. Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

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Legal migrants unable to work are flooding ranks of homeless

The number of homeless families in need of shelter has exploded in the past year, largely driven by an influx of immigrants coming into the country legally but unable to work under federal immigration laws. Since Nov. 10, 1,393 families have applied to live in Emergency Assistance housing, according to a Jan. 2 statement from the Healey administration.

Approximately 22 families are arriving per day now, down from about 35 to 40 per day in late summer, according to an Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities spokesperson. Despite a state right-to-shelter law, Gov. Healey unilaterally capped the shelter system at 7,500 families last fall. That waitlist has also been rising, jumping from 242 on Dec. 12 to 391 by Dec. 28.

The new report from the Healey administration offers details on what happens to families that are eligible for emergency shelter but placed on the waiting list and deprioritized amidst a shortage of units in which to place families.

“Families on our waitlist are provided assistance with transportation to locations within Massachusetts of their choosing and information on additional

state resources and assistance in finding housing,” the report said. “For example, EOHLC administers the HomeBASE program, which can provide eligible homeless families with help paying first/last month’s rent and security deposits, moving expenses, stipends to help with ongoing housing costs, and other costs that can help families stabilize an existing housing situation or stably rehouse.”

The housing secretariat also partners with the Department of Transitional Assistance and MassHealth to connect families with available benefits, it said.

“Lastly, when space is available, families on the waitlist are offered overnight shelter at state-run overflow sites – in Quincy, Revere, and Cambridge – as well as through sites administered via our partnership with the United Way,” the report said.

Lawmakers steered \$250 million more into the shelter system this winter, and the mid-December report suggested that more than \$350 million in additional funds may need to be authorized to keep the system funded through June and to “avoid imminent run-out dates for key programs.”

In what has quickly become a more and more

expensive line item, the latest report also shows that the state spent an additional \$42 million on the shelter system in just the last two weeks of 2023. A mid-December report said \$205 million had been spent on emergency assistance housing in fiscal year 2024; Tuesday’s report reveals \$247 million has been spent on the program this fiscal year.

Healey has repeatedly said her administration is focused on getting work authorizations to help migrants who are eager to earn the money needed to leave the state shelter system and support their families financially. According to the new report, the number of people living in shelters who can legally work in the US has more than tripled.

As of Dec. 12, 813 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the EA system were authorized to work in the US; by Dec. 28, that number had grown to 2,713. The Healey administration and the US Department of Homeland Security hosted clinics in November to help immigrants work through the authorization process, and said 2,910 individuals received help.

STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

Group seeking a pilot model for migrants in Mattapan

(Continued from page 1)

money. Cities have been doing a lot of heavy lifting with their budgets and doing the best they can. The private capital community has to also help but the challenge is you need to create a model where there is a return for the money. We’ve been looking at a couple of sites around Mattapan, but the lack of capital has hindered us from moving.”

Right now, he said, CICD is hoping to launch a fundraising campaign in the next 30 to 45 days to get the idea of

constructing a model off the ground locally. The group has identified the St. John’s & St. James parish in Roxbury as a mission-allied partner. He said the lift is a heavy one, and the pathway is uncertain, but CICD can’t watch from the sidelines.

“This is a subset of the population we wanted to serve from the get-go,” said Alexis. “Now we have an opportunity to do that work no matter if it’s hard or there is a lack of resources or some other problems. It’s something we have to do as an organization – take

this step and fulfill this obligation.”

The ideal model would be to create short-term housing with resources, job training, and English classes on site by utilizing existing partners in the community. The housing would be tied to milestones of progress for those living there – learning English, graduating from a trade program are two examples – and then moving on to a next step. “We think [it will take] about nine months or ten months [for them] to get to a place where they can start feeling comfortable to live in a co-housing



Donald Alexis
Seth Daniel photo

situation,” Alexis said. “We don’t believe this is housing someone comes to and stays forever.”

Right now, he said, all involved are doing their best, but having people

living in church base-ments in Mattapan or being hosted by a family in the neighborhood isn’t going to produce the best outcomes. Likewise, the images of families living for weeks in the airport or at an area hospital – let alone stories about those who have been living in hotels for more than one year – are only going to create more burden.

“These are the Band-Aids on the problem. If I leave my home country... and make that ultimate choice to go to another country, it’s because I want something better for my family.”

Alexis believes that CICD can create the place to which people go when they first arrive and get a boost for their efforts to get on their feet as quickly as possible, move on from the property and become employed, independent, and contributing members of the community.

“If all of these people are working, buying things, and contributing to the economy, it could be a plus – especially when you hear about worker shortages everywhere you turn,” he said.

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State sues BHA on conditions at a Franklin Field apartment

UNIVERSAL HUB
The state Attorney General's office last week sued the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) over its treatment of a family with two girls with asthma and developmental issues, charging that the authority ignored repeated complaints for three years about the unsanitary conditions in their Franklin Field apartment that were so bad the girls had to seek emergency care at a local hospital two to three times a month.

The filing lays out the following scenario:
In 2016, the BHA moved a woman, her mother, and the woman's two nieces, who were living with them, into a four-bedroom Franklin Field apartment that was already overrun by "mice and other pests," as were other apartments at the development. Conditions grew worse as the BHA

ignored repeated complaints.
The authority's repeated ignoring of both the woman's requests and documentation from her family's doctors about the harmful impact of them being in close daily contact with mice, their droppings, their urine, and mold – which started sprouting in 2018 – violates both state housing anti-discrimination law and a Boston-specific fair-housing law. It is seeking compensatory and punitive damages on behalf of the family.

Not long after moving into the unit on Ames Street in Franklin Field, they found that "the radiators were filled with mice droppings, there were droppings and chewed holes in all the furniture despite routine cleaning, and the entire family were living in fear of seeing mice, at times seeing more than five

The Charge: The Boston Housing Authority's repeated ignoring of both the woman's requests and documentation from her family's doctors about the harmful impact of them being in close daily contact with mice, their droppings, their urine, and mold – which started sprouting in 2018 – violates both state housing anti-discrimination law and a Boston-specific fair-housing law.

mice every hour. ... The family "did not want to cook or eat in the unit due to fear of contamination by mice droppings and urine."
In 2018, the family began noticing "a strong mildew smell in the unit" and black mold growing on ceilings. In October 2019, the nieces' doctor contacted the city's Inspectional Services Department to request an inspection. On Oct. 24, 2019, ISD notified the BHA that the apartment was in violation of the state sanitary code.

In response, the BHA sent someone out to swab some bleach on the mold and repaint the affected areas, but the mold soon

returned.
The authority did nothing out of the ordinary about the mice - it simply continued what it was doing - so the rodents never left. If anything, the number of mice - and their droppings and urine - only increased, forcing the woman and her nieces to spend time in relatives' homes away from Franklin Field for several days a month to try to get some respite.

When staying at the apartment, the four women slept in a single bed because the girls were too scared to sleep in their own after a mouse crawled into bed with one of them.

In December 2020, the

woman asked BHA to transfer her family to another unit, but the BHA ignored her request – and follow-up requests and letters from her nieces' doctor and her own doctor, saying the problems were making her own health problems worse, in part due to anxiety and her attempts to keep up with the problems on her own by cleaning the apartment twice a day.

In August 2022, ISD again inspected the apartment and again concluded that it was in violation of the state sanitary code. Despite that, and a fourth formal request from the woman for help, the agency did nothing at the time.

On Jan. 22, 2023, a BHA extermination contractor removed fourteen mice from the apartment and found that the bait stations in the unit had been "wiped clean" due to the severity of the infestation. As a result, the contractor designated 20A Ames as a "High Priority Unit."

On March 15, the BHA sent a property manager to take a look at the apartment. The next day, that manager called the woman to discuss an "emergency administrative transfer" to another

unit. On May 1, the woman and her nieces (her mother had died in 2022) moved into a new unit on D Street in the BHA's West Broadway development in South Boston.

On Sept. 26, attaching a letter from her nieces' doctor saying they require "modifications in order to feel safe in their new home, and in order to monitor any unpredictable behavior resulting from these diagnoses," the woman asked the BHA for window guards, a video doorbell, and security cameras and requested the authority address "inadequate and ripped screens" that were allowing bugs into the unit and "continually leaking toilets that were creating conditions likely to lead to mold growth."

As of last month, none of that work has been done. The state contends that adding the requests were for "reasonable accommodations" to the family's physical and mental health issues. The authority has until May 6 to answer the complaint.

This article was first published by Universal Hub on Jan. 8. The Reporter and Universal Hub share content through a media partnership.



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Licensing board says 'no' to beer sales at Grove Hall store

The Boston Licensing Board last week rejected a request from Cristian Market at 411 Blue Hill Ave. in Grove Hall to add beer to its inventory, citing strong opposition from nearby residents about the already easy access to beer at six other stores within a half-mile of the market.

The board denied owner Cristian Alexander Lopez's request without prejudice, which means he can re-apply within the next year. But members cautioned they're going to need some proof that Lopez has garnered at least some neighborhood support for the beer he wants to add.

At a hearing on Jan. 4, Lopez said what would differentiate his beer sales is that, unlike all the nearby liquor stores, he would be offering beer as a complement to the food he sells. He argued that many of his customers have mobility issues and that he would offer them easier access to beer, adding that "eight months of the year Boston's in a chokehold with ice."

At a voting session the next day, however, board members all said they found his arguments for the "public need" for beer to be weak, especially when combined with a poorly presented floor plan of where the beer would be located in the store.

"I don't believe we can force these on a neighborhood where there is so much opposition," board Chairwoman Kathleen Joyce said. Board member Liam Curran agreed, saying that had the plans shown something unique to the neighborhood, "we would at least see some people piping in" with support.

REPORTER STAFF

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Zoning Board gives unanimous okay to Greenhills project

BY REPORTER STAFF

The owners of Greenhills Irish Bakery at 780 Adams St. won approval from the city's Zoning Board of Appeal on Tuesday to raze their current store and replace it with a larger bakery topped with three additional floors containing nine condo units.

Dermot and Cindy Quinn have run the bakery for 33 years now. Their attorney, John Pulgini, said they are looking for temporary space nearby to keep the bakery open during construction of the new bakery, which will have 2,000 square feet on the ground floor, with a 1,200-square-foot kitchen in the basement.

The condos would range between 627 and 861 square feet, and one will be sold as affordable. The new building will have no parking of its own, but, Pulgini said, the owner of a parking lot behind their building has said he has up to 20 spaces available for rent to new residents. He added that the building is a five-minute walk from the Mattapan Line and seven minutes from Ashmont station.

For all that, parking proved to be a bone of contention at the hearing.

Vincent DePalo, attorney for John Lydon, who

owns two nearby commercial buildings with 14 retail tenants, blasted the proposal, saying all those new residents in a commercial district would only clog up parking spaces and harm the "mom and pop" stores he leases to.

The Greenhills project, he said, sets a precedent for more such parking-space takers, adding that despite repeated requests, Lydon "has not had any substantive discussions with the developer" to discuss his concerns.

One of Lydon's tenants, Heather Younger of Top Shelf Cookies at the corner of Adams Street and Gallivan Boulevard, said she already struggles with parking on a daily basis and that she has had people tell her they won't come to Adams Village because parking is so difficult.

"I can't be in support of anything that makes parking more difficult" for her customers, she said.

Pulgini, calling Lydon's concerns "kind of disingenuous," said he has, in fact, had several conversations with both Lydon and DePalo and that both have his cell number. He noted that Lydon is himself proposing a bar with planned occupancy of 120 people at his building at Adams



A rendering shows the Greenhills proposal.

and Gallivan - with a 1 a.m. closing time - and said that has way more potential for affecting traffic than nine condos.

The Quinns "are not blow-ins," Pulgini said. "They have been working their butts off for 33 years."

Teen girl charged with assault near Tech Boston Academy

A teenage girl has been charged with assault following a Dec. 12 incident on the campus of TechBoston Academy. The juvenile, who has not been named because of her age, is alleged to have a record for crimes committed elsewhere in Boston, according to Boston Police Officer Shawn Harris, the community service officer for Area B-3 who described the incident during the Codman Square Neighborhood Council meeting last week.

"It's at least the tenth violent incident that she's been part and parcel of," said Harris. "We're hoping to get her the help she needs."

Harris said the Dec. 12 assault occurred around 5:30 p.m., well after school had been dismissed, when a group of girls approached another teen-

ager and asked if she had "messed with Wainwright" - a reference to the city park and street near Codman Square. The girl was then attacked. Harris said the main attacker was well known to police for taking part in violent incidents at South Bay Mall and Downtown Crossing early last year.

Harris also told council members about an incident at the school on Dec. 15 around 11 a.m., when police were called after a report of an assault and robbery on a student. Harris said the victim was walking out of a classroom when two students attacked him and allegedly stole his iPhone 14 and some cash. They were described as laughing when they hurled a racial epithet at the victim before leaving.

-SETH DANIEL

mercial buildings, but that if the board required it, the project could be lowered by the 2 feet to meet zoning. The board raised no issues about the height.

The board's unanimous approval included a proviso that the Quinns work with the BPDA and Boston Transportation Department to figure out ways to minimize parking impact during construction.

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Healey: ‘Belt-tightening’ needed to balance budget

By COLIN A. YOUNG AND SAM DRYSDALE
STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

Gov. Healey and her budget team hit the reset button on Monday, announcing a plan to cut \$375 million from the current year’s funding plans amid flagging tax collections, downgrade the amount of tax revenue expected this budget year by \$1 billion, and build the next state spending outlook on the assumption that even less tax revenue will come in next year.

By paring back spending over the next six months, tapping investment earnings that are generally not used in budgeting, and planning for minimal revenue growth next year, administration officials said they think they will be able to get through fiscal year 2024 without having to make additional cuts and then build a balanced budget for fiscal year 2025, which is due in two weeks.

“We expect that while the economy’s is growing,

it’ll be a bit slower. There are some positive signs — the interest rates not increasing and the prospect of them coming down later this year, I think, bodes well for what we’re seeing in terms of our growing out of this,” Secretary of Administration and Finance Matthew Gorzkowicz said. “So, we see this pretty much as creating a glide path to FY26. We see this as sort of a 12-to-18-month condition where we have to do some belt-tightening. But overall, ... we don’t see this as being a recessionary environment and we believe the economy will continue to grow in [FY] 25.”

Halfway through fiscal year 2024, the state has collected \$769 million or 4.1 percent less tax revenue than the projections used to craft an annual budget featuring steep spending increases and a record bottom line of \$56 billion. It’s not that tax revenue has declined — in fact, it has increased a hair compared to the same point one year ago, up \$60 million or 0.3 percent -- but the limited revenue

growth has not been enough to line it up with the appetite for spending reflected in the annual budget Healey signed in August.

To address what the governor said is a “budgetary shortfall totaling \$1 billion” and to reset the foundation for future budgets, the administration announced a multi-pronged plan on Monday.

The strategy includes \$1 billion worth of “solves” to close the gap – a net \$375 million in spending cuts along with \$625 million in newly-tapped non-tax revenues. The plan is meant to address the existing revenue shortfall of \$769 million while also providing some breathing room for the second half of the budget year, when, Gorzkowicz said, he expects additional months of below-benchmark collections.

The governor’s cuts affect 66 line items and Gorzkowicz said the state does not anticipate making any layoffs as a result. Among them is a gross \$294 million reduction in MassHealth fee-for-service payments. An administration official said there are no eligibility changes, but MassHealth had room to trim because the ongoing redetermination effort has eliminated more people from MassHealth enrollment than expected by this point and because utilization of some key MassHealth services is below what was expected.

A small portion of the cuts, less than \$20 million according to the secretary, affect local earmarks. But, Gorzkowicz said, 99 percent of those cuts are 50 percent reductions, “meaning that nobody is losing their entire funding stream, but they are seeing a

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So-called 9C budget cuts needed to fill \$1B gap

reduction.”

One of the pressures on this year’s budget has been the explosion in costs for the state’s emergency assistance shelter program, which Healey has unilaterally capped at 7,500 families amid a massive surge in demand driven partly by migrants coming to America from other countries. The administration expects the shelter system will cost \$932 million in fiscal 2024

(compared to \$325 million budgeted) followed by \$915 million in fiscal 2025. Healey’s team has proposed draining a roughly \$700 million savings account to cover those costs.

“Let me be clear, none of the budget reductions are a result of the recent emergency shelter crisis,” Gorzkowicz said. “These revenue reduc-

tions are a result of underperforming revenue.”

The unilateral cuts made by the governor are known as 9C cuts because of the section of state law that grants her that authority. But the 9C knife cannot cut equally across the budget; the governor only has the power to reduce spending among Executive Branch agencies. Local

aid to municipalities, the state’s courts, the Legislature, and Constitutional offices are all safe from the midyear appropriation-trimming exercise.

The last 9C cuts came in 2016 at the direction of Gov. Charlie Baker, who sliced \$98 million from the \$39.25 billion state budget and caused an uproar among legis-

lative Democrats. While House Democrats were not made available to discuss the cuts, top Senate Democrats mostly were okay with the governor’s actions Monday.

Gorzkowicz also announced Monday that he, Rodrigues, and House Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz have agreed to base the fiscal year 2025 budget –

which Healey has to file with lawmakers by Jan. 24 – on a consensus revenue forecast of \$40.202 billion plus an additional \$1.3 billion in surtax revenue.

“We believe that revenues, while growing, will be growing more slowly. And so our consensus revenue number is essentially flat in terms of new growth,” Gorzkowicz said.

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SUFFOLK DIVISION

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Frederick W. Oliveira of Dorchester, MA. Frederick W. Oliveira of Dorchester, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

Published: January 11, 2024

DOT JAZZ SERIES

Winter 2024

Peabody Hall, Parish of All Saints, 209 Ashmont St.

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\$20 at the door. College students \$10. Always free for kids under 18.

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Presented by Mandorla Music + Greater Ashmont Main Street

Sat Jan 20, 8:00pm
Fred Woodard Collective
Celebrating the release of this veteran Boston guitarist's new album **Indigo**.

Thurs Feb 15, 7:30pm
Witness Matlou Trio
South African inspired jazz piano.

Sat Mar 16 8:00pm
Wayfaring
Adventurous sounds for voice, clarinet, and bass inspired by American folk, jazz and sacred music.

Virtual Public Meeting

Mattapan Squares + Streets Draft Zoning

JANUARY 17 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/MattapanJanuary17
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 160 931 6378

Project Description:

Please join the BPDA Planning Team for a conversation about the Draft Squares + Streets Zoning for Mattapan. In addition to presenting the Draft Squares + Streets Zoning, staff from other City departments will discuss ongoing projects and efforts that implement PLAN: Mattapan.

Squares + Streets are areas of activity within neighborhood centers and along main streets. The specific geographic areas that will be impacted by this updated zoning were identified as part of the “Corridor Recommendations” and “Node Recommendations” sections of PLAN: Mattapan. New zoning advances recommendations from PLAN: Mattapan of encouraging vibrant, thriving local businesses and cultural spaces throughout Mattapan Square and other neighborhood centers.

mail to: Jack Halverson
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201
phone: 617.918.4461
email: jack.halverson@boston.gov

Close of Comment Period:
1/28/2024

Website:
bit.ly/PLAN-Mattapan

BostonPlans.org | @BostonPlans

Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

City of Haverhill Income-Restricted Rental Opportunity

Essex Street Lofts
86 Essex Street
Haverhill, MA 01832

9 Income-Restricted Rental Units

# of Units	# of Bedrooms	Estimated Square Footage	Rent*	Maximum Income Limit (% AMI)	# built out for Mobility Impairments
4	Studio	413-457	\$1,492	80%	-
4	1-Bedroom	462-635	\$1,685	80%	1
1	2-Bedroom	926	\$1,862	80%	-

*Water/Sewer is included in rent.

Tenants are responsible for all other utilities including gas (heating), electricity (cooling, laundry, & cooking), & cable/internet (optional)

Minimum Incomes (set by owner + based on # of bedrooms + Area Median Income (AMI))		Maximum Incomes (set by HUD + based on household size + Area Median Income (AMI))	
# of Bedrooms	Minimum Income 80% AMI	Household Size	Maximum Income 80% AMI
Studio	\$44,760	1	\$66,300
1-Bedroom	\$50,550	2	\$75,750
2-Bedroom	\$55,860	3	\$85,200
		4	\$94,650
		5	\$102,250
		6	\$109,800

*2023 Area Median Incomes for the Lawrence, MA NH – HMFA

Minimum incomes **do not apply to households receiving housing assistance such as Section 8, MRVP, or VASH.**

Applications are available during the application period from Friday, January 5th, 2024 – Tuesday, March 5th, 2024

To request an online application or to have one sent by email, visit www.EssexStreetLoftsLottery.com, email EssexStreetLofts@MaloneyProperties.com or call (617) 639-3064 Ext 702 | US Relay 711.

If you cannot complete the application online, please call us at (617) 639-3064 Ext 702 | US Relay 711, to request that we mail you one and/or to ask us for any support or guidance you might need to complete the application.

Applications may also be picked up in-person at:
Haverhill Public Library
99 Main St. Haverhill, MA 01830
Monday–Thursday: 9am–9pm
Friday & Saturday: 9am–5pm
Sunday: 1pm–5pm

DEADLINE: Applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than **Tuesday, March 5th, 2024**

Mailed to:
Maloney Properties, Inc.
Attn: Essex Street Lofts Lottery
27 Mica Lane, Wellesley, MA 02481

Information Sessions:

Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 @ 12pm & Wednesday, February 7th, 2024 @ 6pm
<https://maloneyproperties.zoom.us/j/86769259274?pwd=HSB9GoupuwHEzwGslxOYDnmb2erAT2u.1>
Meeting ID: 867 6925 9274
Passcode: 509606
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• Selection by Lottery. Use & Occupancy Restrictions Apply.

• Household Size Preference Applies.

• Preference for Households with Mobility Impairments for ADA unit.

For more information, free language assistance, or reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please call (617) 639-3064 Ext 702 | US Relay 711 or email EssexStreetLofts@MaloneyProperties.com.

Equal Housing Opportunity

Classes underway at Bioversity job center in Southline Boston

(Continued from page 1)

the state-of-the-art lab and classroom space. Attendees heard from Zach Stanley, the executive director of Bioversity and Lauren Jones, who leads the Executive Office of Workforce Development for Gov. Healey. She called Bioversity “a great opportunity to provide pathways for our diverse talent that are often overlooked in industries like the life sciences.”

Stanley said that the Dorchester center will fill a critical need in the state’s economy. “If you look at the data MassBio put out there, the DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) report at the end of last year shows that minority populations, especially Black and Brown, are extremely underrepresented in life sciences companies right now,” he said.

“I think a lot of that comes down to it’s not that people aren’t qualified or aren’t good employees or anything like that; it’s that they are not getting the opportunities or the visibility into what these jobs are.”

All of the students in the first class identify as Black/African American or Hispanic, with 58 percent women. In other categories, 94 percent hold only a high school degree or some college, 26 percent are unemployed, and 52 percent are employed part-time.

“Together, they are an amazing, eager, motivated group,” said Stanley. “The one thing that binds them together is that they took a chance on Bioversity.”

He emphasized: “We aren’t trying to reach just anyone. We are making a dedicated effort to include people who have traditionally been left out of the life science industry.”

The diversity of the cohort correlates with the diversity of the surrounding neighborhood. Stanley and his team hope to see many Bostonians, and specifically Dorchester residents, apply in the future.

“When we think about



State Secretary of Workforce Development Lauren Jones with Jeanne LeClair. Seth Daniel photo

Bioversity in particular, our priority is finding people from Dorchester to go through this program,” he said. “If they can walk here that’s a dream. To take part in our training program and get a job at a company that’s in this building or in the future development in Seaport, that is really what we’re aiming to do here.”

Browning, who was one of 150 applicants for the first class, very much appreciates having this opportunity right in her neighborhood.

“Not everybody drives so being able to take the bus and walk a short distance from the T station or the bus stops makes it super convenient for everyone,” she said. “I love that you don’t have to travel to another city or get on the highway anywhere. The fact that it’s right down the street from me made me super excited.”

Since construction got underway last summer, Stanley and his team have not only built out a special space for their students, they have also “done a huge amount of legwork in continuing to build relationships in and around the community of Dorchester so that people know that we exist but also that we’re an entity they can trust,” he said.

“If they’re going to apply to be part of this program, they can be

assured that they’re going to get good training, ultimately helping them find a full-time job at the end of this program,” he added.

While the specific goals of each student are likely to vary a great deal, they all know that this program will improve their futures.

“A goal that I have after graduation is being able to either further my education or apply for new opportunities,” said Browning. “The fact that I graduated will give me more opportunities for great jobs and to be accepted into other programs.”

Bioversity will continue to support the students after graduation, and so will the city of Boston, said Mike Firestone, who represented Mayor Wu at the event.

“To the students: You are pioneers you are doing something really important, and you are role models. Mayor Wu offers you her congratulations. We are deeply committed to your careers,” said Firestone, who is Wu’s chief of Policy and Strategic Planning.

The second cohort will start classes on March 11. In all, Bioversity plans to train 100 people in 2024 and place them into entry-level jobs.

“Anyone we didn’t accept in this first cohort that we think might be a good fit for future cohorts



Audrey Browning, of Dorchester, was one of the students selected in the first cohort to take classes at Bioversity in the new Southline campus on Morrissey Boulevard. There were four students from Dorchester and two from Mattapan in the 20-person class. Seth Daniel photo



Philip Lam, left, and Mary Kaysen, right, of Bristol Myers Squibb, with Bioversity Director Zach Stanley, center. Seth Daniel photo



Former Sen. Linda Dorcea Forry, Reporter co-publisher, Catherine O'Neill, and State Rep. Chris Worrell. Seth Daniel photo

we want to stay in touch with,” said Stanley. “We know life circumstances can change very quickly but anyone who has applied, we want to give as much of an opportunity if we think they could be a good fit.”

Bioversity is the latest tenant to open inside the 700,000 square-foot Southline complex at 135 Morrissey Blvd. Flagship Pioneering, a biotech venture firm, and Nobull, a sportswear company are already up and run-

ning there.

Dorchester is expected to become home to more life science enterprises in the coming years, with the nearby Dorchester Bay City identified as another business hub.

Columbia-Savin Hill civic okays taking \$750k from Morrissey builders

(Continued from page 1)

Bill Walczak, the newly elected president of the association, agreed: “It’s not unheard of, but we’re out on the cutting edge with this,” he said, “and it’s something that could be very beneficial to the neighborhood and how we function.”

Walczak writes an opinion column that appears regularly in the *Reporter*.

The civic is forming a non-profit 501c4 to serve as the fiscal agent for the funding, and Walsh noted that association by-laws need to be changed to allow for proper handling of this donation and any other future gifts.

“Any spending of the funds will need to be determined by a vote of the members of the civic association,” he said.

There will be a Community Benefits committee meeting on Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Savin Hill Yacht Club to sort out more details, with paperwork to establish the 501c4 status already underway, Walsh said. They hope to receive the money by June.

Some ideas for using the donation have already been floated, such as hiring a full-time executive

director, staging more neighborhood events, and doing advance planning for underutilized areas of the neighborhood like Freeport Street.

“We’re taking it one step at a time,” said Walsh. “The first step is that we needed to say whether we will or will not take the money. [Now] we can work out the other pieces.”

The hybrid in-person/online vote featured 19 votes in the affirmative for those in person, with no in-person opposing. Online votes hadn’t been tabulated by press time, but most votes were in the affirmative with a few abstaining or opposing.

THE NOTEBOOK

•C-11 Officer Mike Keaney reported that the Boston Police Civil Rights Unit detectives are investigating a Dec. 24 incident on the 200 block of Savin Hill Avenue in which a lawn sign that read ‘I Stand with Israel’ was vandalized by unknown perpetrators. The sign was in the homeowner’s yard and a large piece of tape with the word ‘Genocide’ was placed over the sign.

•City Councillor John FitzGerald and two staff members attended Monday’s meeting. FitzGerald announced that Amanda Curley will serve as his chief

of staff and Julie Ryan will also remain on staff. Both worked for former Councillor Frank Baker.

•Members voted to request expedited speed humps and other traffic calming measures for the Savin Hill area – particularly on Savin Hill Avenue by the tennis courts. This comes after several areas, including Bowdoin-Geneva, St. Brendan’s, and the Hancock Triangle were prioritized to get speed humps in late 2023 and early 2024.

•Jake Wachman was appointed by state Sen. Nick Collins to the new Morrissey Boulevard Commission. A second meeting of that panel is expected to be held in February at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute on Columbia Point.

•A revamped proposal for the Southline’s planned five-story, 135-foot building behind the existing building on Morrissey Boulevard was met with “consternation” during a recent Planning Committee meeting because a larger version had been green-lighted last year. The new version has a smaller square footage, and fewer parking spaces, and isn’t viewed by neighbors as favorably as the original.



BGCD Gives Thanks for a Wonderful Holiday Season: See details below.

CONNECT THE DOT:
BGCD Gives Thanks for a Wonderful Holiday Season: Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester members experienced so many wonderful celebrations during this holiday season thanks to our staff and community partners, including a fun-filled Holiday party with breakfast with Santa, a meet & greet with the Grinch, carnival games and special gifts for each child. Thank you the many individuals, groups and companies that supported this years toy drive including Laborer's Local 223, Merrimack Valley Credit Union, The Marr Companies, Lee Kennedy Company, Christopher Kimball's Milk Street, RODE Architects, Gray, Gray & Gray, Tom Gannon, Duxbury High School Football, St. Mary's Church of Walpole, TD Bank, Gretchen Haase, Harp & Bard Restaurant, Justin Cross, Home Depot and the Under the Tree Foundation. Your efforts brought so much joy to our children and families.

FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE:
BGCD Partners with MFA Boston for Community Arts Initiative: Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester's Fine Arts program has a long-standing program partnership with the Museum of Fine Arts and the Community Arts Initiative (CAI) that includes 11 other youth organizations. As part of the CAI our members, and those from the partner agencies, have the opportunity to work with a Commissioned Artist to create a piece that will be displayed in the Museum. This process includes on-site sessions as well as visits to the Museum.

Our thanks to the Museum of Fine Arts for including us in this special collaboration.

For more information on Art Programming at BGCD, please contact Fine Arts Director Katy Farrar at kfarrar@bgcdorchester.org.



BGCD Partners with MFA Boston for Community Arts Initiative: See details below.

DID YOU KNOW:
BGCD Keystone Club Holds Donation Drive: Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester's Keystone Club is holding a drive to collect books, toys and clothes for ages 0-3 for our partners at Room to Grow. Room to Grow's program provides critical support to families raising babies born into low-income circumstances. They provide parents and caregivers with essential baby and toddler items, strategies and support to promote their children's development, and connections to community resources that can meaningfully expand their support network. **Donations can be dropped off at our McLaughlin Clubhouse at 1135 Dorchester Ave, Dorchester, MA 02125 until January 15th.**

For more information on partnering with BGCD, please contact Senior VP of Operations Mike Joyce at mjoyce@bgcdorchester.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Keystone Room to Grow Drive
Now - January 15

Elevate Youth Skip Trip
January 13
*Pre-registration required

MLK Jr. Day - BGCD Closed
January 15

Keystone Cupcakes for Caring
January 15

Power Forward Career Cafe
January 24

617.288.7120 | 1135 Dorchester Ave. | www.bgcdorchester.org





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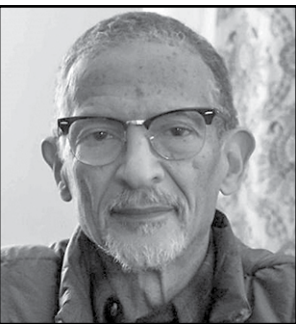
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RECENT OBITUARIES



ALI-SALAAM, Muhammad, 78, of Mattapan. In April of 2011, Muhammad retired from the Boston Redevelopment Authority as Deputy Director of Special Projects. He was instrumental in developing the Museum of African American History and the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury. He is survived by his wife, Waheeda and their children and spouses, Fatima, Pia, Saladin, Ivy, Emilio, Ismail, Ibrahim, and Zakia; father-in-law of Vance, Oystein, William, Mark, and Shakira; grandfather of 10; great-grandfather of 1. Contributions may be made to the Museum of African American History at maah.org.



BEECH-BROWN, Dawn Marie (Henry), 60, of Dorchester. Daughter to the late Llewelyn A. Henry and Margaritta E. Henry. Dawn worked in hospitality and dietary ser-

vices at various companies, including Dudley's restaurant, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston Housing Authority, and the Boston Logan International Airport. She was the mother of Jessica, Melissa, and Joseph Beech from her first marriage, and three stepsons, Allan Brown, Jr., Garnet and Donnel Brown from her second marriage to Allan Brown. She leaves 2 granddaughters; her mother; Margaritta Henry, brothers: Glenroy Henry, Michael Henry (sister-in-law Clairdene Henry), Courtney Henry (sister-in-law, Audrey Henry) and Mark Henry (sister-in-law Ngoc Nguyen-Henry). Aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, host of cousins, friends, and well-wishers.

COGAVIN, Ellen "Fran" of Brighton, formerly of Dorchester. Daughter of the late Thomas and Ellen M. (Mahon) Cogavin. Sister of Mary J. Broe and her late husband Jack of Norwood, Kathy Hogan and her husband Mike of North Chelmsford. Aunt of many nieces and nephews. Also survived by 12 grandnieces and grandnephews. Donations in memory of Ms. Cogavin may be made to the Veronica B. Smith Senior Center, 20 Chestnut Hill Ave., Brighton, MA 02135.

DICENSO, Callum Tomas, 20, of Dorchester, formerly of Pembroke. Callum graduated from BC High in 2022. Son of BPD Detective Kara Connolly of Dorchester, and Carmine DiCenso and his wife Liz of Charlton. Callum is also survived by his big sister Riley DiCenso



O'Brien and her husband, Austin, formerly of Pembroke, now residing in Revere, and his little brother Parker DiCenso, age 4, who lives with his parents in Charlton. Callum is the cherished grandson of Giuseppe and Jeanne DiCenso of Revere, Eamon Connolly of Hanover, and the late Elizabeth "Granny" Connolly-Walsh who is now reunited with her Cal. Cal will forever be missed by his aunts and uncles and his cousins: Bryce, Devon, Shea, Eamon, Conrad, MacLean, and Reece on the Connolly side and Lina, Anna, Alex, Jadyn and Anthony on the DiCenso side. Cal is also mourned by his closest friends, most especially Mitch, Matt, Ethan, Zach and Jaylen, as well as his newer friends from UVM and Sullivan's at Castle Island, where he worked this past summer. Donations can be made to Keeping the Beat Retreat at Children's Hospital, a summer camp for children with cardiac issues.



DREW, Robert A. of Dorchester. Longtime partner of Patrick Delcourt of Boston. Dear friend of Richard Olson, Richard Smith, Eric Tingdahl, and the late Joseph Haley. Son of the late Willard H. and Elda A. (Parker) Drew. Bob

had a career in financial services and data processing, working for FDR, Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Company, Citizens Bank, and most recently Excelsa Technologies. Expressions of sympathy to Fenway Health, Development Department, 1340 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215 or fenwayhealth.org



DZYGALA, Kazimierz "Kaz", 79, of Dorchester, formerly of the West End. He was the son of the late Walter and Genowefa Dzygala. He was a longtime employee of The Boston Water & Sewer Commission. Kaz is survived by his best friend and companion, Josie Zizzo, another West Ender. He is also survived by his daughters, Nancy Delaney and her husband Daren of Wakefield and Sandra "Toots" Dzygala of Revere. He was the "grampy" of 2. Kaz is also survived by his brother, Leon Drysdale of Manchester, NH. He is also survived by grandnieces, family members and friends. Donations in memory of Kaz may be made to Our Lady of Czestochowa Church 655 Dorchester Ave., South Boston, MA 02127.



MARCHIONDA, Albert D. Sr. of Norwood, formerly of Roslindale

and Dorchester. Husband of the late Antoinette (Mastro). Father of Nicholas Marchionda of Norwood and his late wife, Joanne, Donna Powers and her husband, Thomas of Norwood and Albert Marchionda, Jr. Of Hyde Park and his late wife, Robin. Grandpa of 10. Great-grandfather of nine. Brother of Lena Amichetti of Bridgewater and her late husband, Tony, Joseph Marchionda and his wife, Jan of Brockton and the late Guido, Anthony and Ralph Marchionda. Son of the late Nicola and Domenica (Balassonne). Also survived by many nieces and nephews US Army veteran. Contributions in Albert's memory may be made to the Circle of Hope, P.O. Box 421, Norwood, MA 02062.



McDEVITT, James J. "Jack", 87, of Medford. Husband of the late Jane (Heafey) McDevitt. Father of Michael J. McDevitt, Mark McDevitt and Christopher P. McDevitt and his wife, Katherine. Grandfather of 4. Brother of Maureen, Michael, Kevin McDevitt and the late Daniel and Helen McDevitt. Late Veteran, U.S. Army. Late member BC '58.



ROFFEY, Thomas F. Sr., 71, of Marshfield, formerly of Dorchester.

Husband of to Margaret "Peggie" (Monahan) Roffey. Father to Thomas "T.J." Roffey Jr. and his wife Alexandra of Hanson, Brian Roffey of Marshfield, Mary-Kate Roffey, also of Marshfield, and his late daughter, Margaret Mary Roffey. Son to Mary and Gerald Roffey Sr. in Dorchester, Tommy was a brother to Virginia Mills and her fiancé George Caron of Hull, Elizabeth "Betz" Doherty of Quincy, and the late Gerald Roffey Jr. of Quincy. He was preceded in death by his parents. Tommy's was as an electrician with IBEW Local 103 Tommy is survived by numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.



TROWERS, Euphemia, 100, of Dorchester. Wife of the late Leonard Trowers. Mother of Ena Trowers, Norma Jean Sydenhan, Helen Lewis, David Trowers, Heather Kohn, Jennefer Trowe-Smith, Anthony Trowers and the late Leroy Trowers and Sylvia Day. Adopted mother of Ellen, Sheron and Verol. Euphemia is also survived by Numerous Grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Euphemia was employed by Mass General Hospital for over 25 years before retiring.

VALENTINE, Frances D. 82 of Dorchester. Wife of Warren H. Valentine of Dorchester. Mother of Christopher Valentine Sr. of Kennesaw, GA. Grandmother of 7 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. She is predeceased by her sons David and Darryl Valentine. She is survived by a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, and friends.



Cedar Grove Cemetery

A quiet place on the banks of the Neponset River

Contact the office for information on the cost of burial needs, memorial benches and memorial trees.

The Cemetery office is open Monday – Friday 8:00 to 5:00, and Saturday 8:00 to noon. The Cemetery grounds are open year round 7:00 am to sunset – weather permitting.

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CITATION ON PETITION
TO CHANGE NAME
Docket No. SU23C0404CA
IN THE MATTER OF:
NAISHA VANESSA PRATTS
A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Naisha Vanessa Pratts of Boston, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Max Diaz

IMPORTANT NOTICE
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Suffolk Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/01/2024. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 3, 2024
Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.
Register of Probate
Published: January 11, 2024



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@ www.dorchesterbaberuth.org



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League Ages 7-9 9:00 am to 10:30 am

League Ages 10-12 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

go to www.dorchesterlittleleague.org