‘Aloneness’ drives this artist to study strangers living life

By Daniel Sheehan

Arts & Features Editor

When describing his personal philosophy, the Dorchester-based writer and photographer Jourdan Christopher says the idea of “aloneness” forms “the basis of all his artistic forms. I’ve always felt like people were distant from me.”

In a recent interview with the Reporter, Christopher explained: “I felt like I needed to go out and live life to understand the point of connection with other individuals, when in actuality my humanity is myself my point of connection.”

Recognizing that aloneness in, even in a bustling city environment, is what informed Christopher’s street photography series “Strangers in Boston.”

The photographs – Christopher estimates he has taken at least 70,000 since moving to Boston in 2014 – depict Bostonians in everyday situations: riding the T, crossing the street, loitering outside storefronts. The way he sees it, each of his subjects shares a commonality. “All of these individuals are alone together,” he explained. “Once I figured out every person has an aspect of aloneness, I started to connect to the individual. Even in groups, there’s a sense of their own individuality.”

US Rep. Ayanna Pressley was out early and often for her top choice – Sen. Warren. The first-term Congresswoman announced her endorsement of Warren last November and has become a key surrogate for her in early primary states.

I paid attention and I endorsed because of the values she stands for, not just the idea of something abundant, I didn’t give Elizabeth Warren anything. She earned my endorsement because I paid attention and I (Continued on page 15)

Who’s backing who for president among local electeds?

By Katie Trojano

Reporter Staff

On March 3, voters in Massachusetts and fifteen other states will head to the polls to vote for a candidate in national primary elections. Here in Boston, some political leaders have already made their preference known, with hometown candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren the most common choice, while others are holding off on publicly backing a candidate.

Ronald Cullinane

First elected in 2013

Dan Cullinane: ‘I will not be a candidate for re-election; cites need for family time

Cullinane, who owns and operates An-...
**UMass Board picks Suárez-Orozco as Dorchester campus chancellor**

**BY KATIE LANNAN**  
**STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE**

With a unanimous vote of the University of Mas-  
sachusetts Board of Trustees on Monday, Marcelo Suárez-  
Orozco became the new chancellor for UMass Boston. UMass President Marty Meehan said the  
upcoming search will take place to find new leaders for Argentina’s gathering storm clouds of terror.  
It also marked the end to a winding and at times rocky road to find new leadership for the Dorchester campus. The idea that resulted in the selection of Suárez-  
Orozco as the lone finalist began in August 2019 after 15 months about what a previous attempt fell through when a number of finalists withdrew from consideration after visit-  
ing campus. The campus president, officials praised the pro- 
cess followed in the sec- 
ond search.

This time around, Meehan told reporters, more students, faculty and alumni from UMass Boston were involved from the get-go and came to the campus with a faculty member — psych- 
ology professor Jean Kehoe — serving as the inter- 

time chair of the com- 

“Think over a period of time when any university goes through difficult times, it’s a lot of listen- 

Meehan said after the vote. “It’s a very excit- 

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Board of Trustees Chairman Robert Man- 

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by Katie Lannan

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by Katie Lannan
Boston is finally getting its first pot shop. The Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) granted a final license to Pure Oasis last Thursday. The approval, which brings recreational marijuana to the state’s capital, comes nearly four years after voters legalized recreational marijuana.

Pure Oasis co-founder Katie Evans said last week that he is aiming to open for business next month, adding that he can’t wait to welcome customers into his Dorchester shop in the coming weeks. “It’s been a very long road. So, you know, to finally see daylight is beyond ecstatic. I don’t even know if we know, to finally see day,” Evans said.

Evans and his business partner, Kevin Hart, have been making plans to open a dispensary since recreational marijuana was legalized in Massachusetts in 2016. They hit up friends and family for funding. They secured a storefront. And grilled their way through all the paperwork, inspections, and permitting.

The business is located on Blue Hill Avenue, in the Grove Hall section of Dorchester. Inside, the shop is light and airy with crisp white walls, a shiny charcoal-colored floor, and several plants hanging in the windows. “The goal is to have a good cross-section of product and have a blend of superior products,” Evans said.

There’s a separate lobby area so customers can wait inside instead of on the street to enter the dispensary. As customers enter, they’ll see a large green sign on the wall that reads, “Welcome to Pure Oasis, Grove Hall. Boston’s First.”

“A little presumptuous, but if it didn’t work out, then we’d be putting up a new sign,” Evans said. “But, we’re happy to be in Grove Hall. We have deep roots in the neighborhood so we can celebrate that. And we’re excited to be Boston’s first.”

Pure Oasis is also the first marijuana business in the state to benefit from what’s known as Economic Empowerment status, which gives businesses a faster review of their applications. Those businesses must be owned by, employ or benefit people in communities disproportionately criminalized for marijuana. Pure Oasis is in the group because Evans lives in Dorchester and plans to employ people from the community.

“We’re very happy that Boston will be the first place for an economic empowerment designee,” said Alexis Tkachuk, the city of Boston’s director of emerging industries.

By law, state regulators are required to ensure that groups disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs are part of the new legal cannabis industry. But many economic empowerment applicants have struggled to get through the licensing process. Some applicants say the local process is slow, burdensome, and may not consider equity at all.

Tkachuk says the city of Boston is focused on equity in the industry. Mayor Marty Walsh recently signed to get through the licensing process.

The goal is to have a good cross-section of product and have a blend of superior products,” Evans said. “So, the frustrations are understood. However, it is not because of the city moving slowly. We send our applications up to the state and we’re being held to their decisions and their timeline in the process.”

State regulators, however, blame cities and towns for the delays some applicants are experiencing.

There are 122 businesses that have economic empowerment status, according to the CCC. Only 24 have completed license applications. For his part, Evans says it feels bittersweet to be the first — and only — economic empowerment applicant to come this far.

“We wanted to be the next generation of trailblazers to provide an example to the residents of the neighborhood, to the young people, to the budding entrepreneurs, that, you know, these things are possible.”

WBUR 90.9FM published this story on its website on Feb. 6. The Reporter and WBUR share content through a media partnership.
MBTA employees lauded for reporting on safety concerns

The T has made a new effort to praise employees who flag safety issues and has compiled all preventative maintenance inspection requirements into a single list. The work is underway, Poftak said.

MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak said shouting plans for 2020 will be far more sweeping than last year, with about five times the amount of work planned.

On the Red Line, trains will get more challenging this year, but officials promise passengers that it will all be worth it in the long run. All five main MBTA lines and parts of the commuter rail will now see shutdowns in 2020 in an expanded push to complete maintenance work more quickly.

Most of the effects will be additional overnight or weekend outages, but in an unprecedented move, large chunks of the Green Line’s C and E branches will each be taken offline for a full month. Gov. Baker, Transportation Secretary Stephanie Polack, and MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak said last Friday that the plan, which builds on a model launched last year, can lock truck replacement and station improvements up to eight years faster than with traditional methods.

The goal of all this work is to deliver a safer, modern, more reliable train faster,” Baker said at a press conference in a modern, more reliable station.

Every line will experience a new announcement of service disruptions in addition to previously scheduled closures as part of the accelerated maintenance effort. Shuttle buses will be provided for passengers during some overhauls, while the T will increase the frequency of trains on nearby lines during these closures. Poftak said MBTA officials are “actively discussing” setting aside dedicated roadways for buses to improve efficiency. The most dramatic change is on the Green Line. The branch between Kenmore and Cleveland Circle running through Brookline will be offline for 28 days in July, while the E branch from Prudential to Heath Street through Longwood Medical Center and Mission Hill will be offline for 28 days in August.

The MBTA gathered all of this information in one centralized place, Poftak said.

“Every line will experience a new announcement of service disruptions in addition to previously scheduled closures as part of the accelerated maintenance effort. Shuttle buses will be provided for passengers during some overhauls, while the T will increase the frequency of trains on nearby lines during these closures. Poftak said MBTA officials are “actively discussing” setting aside dedicated roadways for buses to improve efficiency.”

The most dramatic change is on the Orange Line. The Franklin Line from Sullivan Square to Tufts will be offline for 28 days in August.

Other Green Line branches will also see disruptions. The B branch between Boston College and Babcock Street will not run on weekends in May and June, and the D branch will not run on weekdays after 7 p.m.

Officials acknowledged that the plan will create headaches for commuters, but they said the tradeoff will result in a more reliable public transit system. Construction of new Green Line track in 2020, Pollack said, will allow the T to eliminate speed restrictions and improve travel time by four minutes.

“Right now, the most disruptive thing that happens on the T is the unplanned shutdown, the train that breaks in service, the mechanical failure that shuts down a train,” Pollack said.

The reason that we are asking our customers to tolerate these planned disruptions to their commute is to get to the end, and hopefully some point, over the horizon is seeking unplanned shutdowns that really have been the biggest complaint we hear on the T every day,” he said.

At Baker’s suggestion, the T launched an accelerated maintenance plan last year after a derailment and months of delays on the Red Line prompted scrutiny of the system’s aging infrastructure and frequent challenges. An outside panel later concluded that the T does not sufficiently prioritize safety.

“After last year’s $50 million allocation for maintenance work, but the Legislature ultimately approved only $32 million, amount that as the House debated raising long-term transportation revenues. The governor is seeking the remaining $18 million in a separate bill. The T already had 10 weekend shutdowns in the second half of 2019, but plans for 2020 are far more sweeping with about five times the amount of work planned,” Poftak said. Crews will replace 29 miles of track, including a quarter of the entire Green Line, over the course of the projects.

“We listened to our customers,” Poftak said. “Last year we heard them loud and clear: fixing the MBTA at our previous pace was not good enough. We needed to take a hard look and we needed to do nothing faster.”

Poftak told report- ers the MBTA already has the staffing it will need to accomplish the accelerated repair plan which is for the first half of 2019, and the second half of the year.

“We have been actively seeking the remaining $18 million sought by Baker, the money to pay for it,” Poftak said.

“We have been recently hiring,” he said. “The MBTA has hired almost 600 employees this fiscal year. We will continue to do that. In particular, we are seeking about 100 positions in the critical departments in engineering and main- tenance that will serve as support for this.”
PRESIDENTS’ DAY WEEK
at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

9th Annual Presidents’ Day Family Festival
Monday, February 17, 2020 ★ 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

In celebration of Presidents’ Day, the Kennedy Library will host its ninth annual Family Festival. Historic guests, creative activities, live musical performances as well as Museum hands-on programs will bring the Library to life in new ways for all ages. In honor of the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, special activities and performances will highlight the importance of voting and women’s contributions to American history. Visit jfklibrary.org/PresidentsDay, for more details.

Special Festival activities are free with paid admission, and children ages 17 and under are admitted free of charge on Festival Day.

Try Out Hands-on History Crafts
• Make your own suffragist sash and a protest poster for a cause you support today,
• create line sculptures of presidential homes,
• design maritime scrimshaw or engineer a space helmet,
• and make tricorn hats and colonial cravats to wear to meet our guest presidents.

Attend a Free Concert
Harvard’s Radcliffe Pitches perform anthems of the women’s suffrage movement and popular music from the early 1900s, the 1960s, and today.

Meet and Greet Historic Guests
Actors portray Presidents John Adams and James Madison with First Ladies Abigail Adams, Dolley Madison, and Eleanor Roosevelt as well as suffragists Sojourner Truth and Lucretia Mott.

Celebrate! Free Children’s Program
Valerie Tutson – Tales from African Traditions
Wednesday, February 19, 2020 • Black Heritage Month
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Drawing from her own travels, the internationally known storyteller brings to life myths, folktales, and historical accounts from the African continent and the African diaspora with beauty, humor, and wisdom. Come explore the diverse and ancient cultures of Africa. The Celebrate series is appropriate for family audiences and children ages 5 and up. In order to optimize your comfort and enjoyment, reservations are required for all visitors to this free program. Visit jfklibrary.org/celebrate or call 617-514-1644 and leave a message to make a reservation. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Make Your Own Sundae Bar
February 17, 2020 • 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Make-Your-Own-Sundae! Kids and adults alike can enjoy chocolate and vanilla ice cream with hot fudge, butterscotch sauce, whipped cream and a variety of toppings for $4 each. Yum!

2020 White House Christmas Ornament Presentation
February 17, 2020 • 3:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Attend a special presentation with the White House Historical Association for the unveiling of the Official 2020 White House Christmas Ornament honoring President John F. Kennedy. Visit store.jfklibrary.org to purchase items from home.

Museum Galleries
Museum galleries highlight President Kennedy’s 1960 campaign for the White House and features major initiatives including the “Race for Space” and the Peace Corps, as well as major strides in civil rights and more. Enjoy high definition videos of popular speeches and interactive exhibits.

Columbia Point, Boston ★ 617-514-1600 ★ www.jfklibrary.org
Children 12 and under are always free. Additional student, military, senior and EBT discounts available. General admission to the Museum is $14. Museum Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Red Line to JFK/UMass to Shuttle
This year, Boston Calling asks Notez to perform in its festival

By Daniel Sheehan

Area A of Downs;

Last year, local multi-dimensional artist Cliff Notez played a key role in organizing Boston An- swering, a concert hosted at the Strand Theatre designed as a response to Boston Calling and the festival’s omission of Boston-based talent, particularly hip-hop and R&B artists, on its bill.

In a turn of events, when Boston Calling announced its lineup for the 2020 edition of the festival — a year after Notez’s name was on the flyer — the rapper/filmmaker/producer from Dorches ter told the Reporter in an interview that while he was thrilled and grateful, his initial reaction to the news was “com- plicated.”

“At first, it was a shock when I got the phone call,” he said. “Sometimes I don’t realize what’s paying his attention and who’s looking at what I’m doing. Often it feels like I’m just working in a vacuum... But it kind of told me that maybe we’re doing something right.”

After earning honors for Best New Artist at the 2018 Boston Music Awards, Notez released his sophomore album, “Why the Wild Things Are,” in September of last year to critical acclaim. And with the success of Boston Answering, Bos- ton Calling organizers liked the idea but wanted to take this notice time around.

“I think we got our message across for sure, but I don’t think we’re done working,” he said. “There’s still a lot of work to do... And I think they really have a lot of work to do, too,” said Notez, who added that the experience at Boston Calling is “really hard to satisfy everybody.”

To the festival’s credit, the upcoming year, Boston Calling asks Notez to perform in its festival (2018 Boston Music Awards; 11 a.m. – Stories, Stories, Stories; 2 p.m. – Teen Resume Workshop; 2019 Boston Music Awards; 11 a.m. – Acrobatics with Li Liu; 5:30 p.m. – Tracing Our Roots Workshops). It was a Grammy for a hip-hop album despite his being anything but hip-hop. They’re doing kind of the same thing in terms of building the platform and pushing the dial on what you expect from a festival.

Seeing Boston’s vi- brant hip-hop scene bet- teR, and pushing the dial on the reality of sharing a stage with Brittany Howard and Foo Fighters, artiSts he’s admired for years. And while Notez said he wishes he could “bring the whole city” on stage with him, he knows his set is needed to be balanced to accommodate stage and time restrictions.

But his band will defi- nitely be there to back him, as well as saxo- phonist Tim Hall and other musicians from Hipstory, the record label/media company he founded.

“I’m excited to be in front of a lot of people performing songs I love, with people I love, and with people I love in the crowd,” he said.

Notez said that had had had an emotional roller coaster of a week, as an avid basketball player and Robie Bryant superfan, news of the NBA icon’s untimely death hit hard.

“I literally listened to him twice a week, watch- ing old interviews. I’ve been studying him since I was a kid.”

But Bryant’s passing has also imbued Notez with a revitalized sense of purpose, he said.

“One thing he left with me was the idea that the work is never done. I have so much more work to do, and I care about it. I have so much more to achieve [Boston Calling is] a great accomplishment.”

You have the right to obtain a copy of the record concerning you within a reasonable time, and to have any errors corrected. You also have the right to request that the information you provide be kept confidential. If you believe that you have been the victim of a cover-up, you may file a complaint with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office (Learn More).

Proposals are due by 4 pm on 6 March 2020

LEGAL NOTICE

KIPP Massachusetts invites written pro- posals from qualified companies for copier services for all of its schools. KIPP Massa- chusetts invites companies to submit bids for the copier contract to begin on July 1, 2020. KIPP facilities are located at 50 Wheelock St. & 90 High Rock St. in Lynn and 37 Babson St. in Boston. KIPP MA serves over 2,000 students from the Boston and Lynn communities. Interested companies may request the RFP from Emily Hegler at dhegler@kippma.org or find it at http://kippma.org/news.
Clap students get to practice safe routes on ‘Winter Walk’

Students and staff at Roger Clap Innovation School last week went on an annual “Winter Walk,” an initiative of MassDOT that works to increase safe biking and walking-to-school habits for elementary and middle school-aged students.

Students at the Harvest Street school practiced looking both ways before crossing, employed the “sneak and peek” method to make sure cars were coming as they walked the block around their school with teachers and staff.

Said City Councillor Annissa Essaibi-George, “I think that it’s such a wonderful way to talk to our kids about street smarts and safely crossing streets. It’s also a great way for our kids to explore their neighborhoods and school neighborhoods. It’s not just about walking to school and the benefits of that. It’s about getting kids out and exploring their school neighborhoods and communities.”

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program is a federally funded initiative of MassDOT that works to increase safe biking and walking among elementary and middle school students by using a collaborative, community-focused approach.

— KATIE TROJANO

All Saints choir alum stars in new ‘Wolf Play’ at BPL’s Rabb Hall

Minh-Anh Day, a Boston resident and actor who was a choirboy for ten years in All Saints Ashmont Choir, will star in the new production “Wolf Play” at Rabb Hall in Copley Boston Public Library over the next three weekends.

An original play written by Hansel Jung, and produced by Company One Theater, “Wolf Play” appeared in “Free Guy,” a movie starring Ryan Reynolds that will open in July.

Of “Wolf Hall,” Company One Theatre says that it is producing it “to amplify that every child deserves love and a fighting chance to heal themselves, to support the lived experiences of transracial and transnational adoptees, and accessible theatre that opens conversations for all, thanks to Pay-What-You-Want ticketing and the support of the Boston Public Library.”

— DANIEL SHEEHAN

Cake and recycling to celebrate Little Joe’s 27th birthday

It’s Little Joe’s 27th birthday on Feb. 17 and you’re invited to the party. The gorillas exhibit at Franklin Park Zoo will be festively decorated and the gorillas will enjoy treats made especially for them. (The gorillas will go on exhibit at 10:15 a.m.)

Guests will also have the opportunity to sign a giant birthday card for Little Joe and enjoy cake from Montilio’s Baking Company, available first come, first served. Stay around to explore the rest of the Tropical Forest, where there will be special zookeeper chats and crafts for February school vacation week.

In honor of Little Joe’s birthday, help the environment by recycling your own phone or tablet. Franklin Park Zoo has teamed up with Eco-Cell, a company that partners with zoos across the country, to collect your recycled cell phones and refurbish them for reuse.

Visit the gorilla exhibit in Franklin Park Zoo’s Tropical Forest, where you’ll see a large Eco-Cell collection box in which you can drop off any used electronics listed at franklinparkzoo.org.

Clap students head out on their winter walk. Roger Clap School photo middle school students by using a collaborative, community-focused approach.

— KATIE TROJANO

YESTERYEAR ARCHIVE

Dorchester Historical Society

The Clap students head out on their winter walk.

In 1872, the Old Colony & Newport Railroad Corp built the Shawmut Branch Railroad as a connection between the Dorchester and Milton Branch and the main line to Boston. The new branch spread off from the Old Colony at Harrison Square at Clam Point to Fields Corner, Shawmut Station, and Ashmont, and the rails continued on to meet the Dorchester and Milton Branch Railroad after running through Cedar Grove Cemetery. This was a railroad suburb before Dorchester was a streetcar suburb. Construction of substantial houses both east and west of Peabody Square soon followed.

Until 1895, the station house for Ashmont was located at the north side of Peabody Square. The elaborate towered building is shown in an image from an 1895 calendar issued by the Dorchester Mutual Fire Insurance Company. A new station was built that year on the south side of the intersection between the tracks and Dorchester Avenue. The second image among is a real-photo postcard that shows the news station, and the third image is real-photo postcard showing the brick station house that was built in the 1920s, when the line became electrified.

The archives of these historical posts can be viewed on the blog at dorchesterhistorical-society.org. The Dorchester Historical Society’s historic houses are open on different dates. The Lemuel Clap House (1712 and remodeled 1785) at 199 Boston Street is open on the third Saturday of each month. The James Blake House, 730 Columbia Road (1661) and the James Clap House, 185 Boston Street (1806) are open on the third Sunday of each month. Open hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Move the first one to Massachusetts

In the wake of the first two presidential election events — in Iowa and New Hampshire — the clamor has been building for a change in the primary election cycle in the years to come. Both states, critics argue, like change is afoot.

But Lawrence O’Donnell at St. Brendan’s, would be very proud of O’Donnell’s pitch for the hometown brand.

But Lawrence is onto something here, no? One thing about taking New Hampshire out of the pole position it now holds is that our own state — which is geographically small so the candidates can get around the whole state, preferably within one day, and the news media can follow them. But that state must also be a state that has a history. It has to have major league baseball, it has to have black people, it has to have rural communities, it has to have farms, it has to have everything that America has. Massachusetts is one of those states.

And it will ultimately make our roads safer for everyone who uses them. It requires that all drivers receive training, according to a recent study, since implementing this in Massachusetts. They run small businesses, work in our industries and live in our communities. They have been the subject of controversy over the years, for years, these efforts have come up short, but now, they've started to pay off. The new driver's license bill has been passed in Massachusetts. They run small businesses, work in our industries and live in our communities.

We propose a citywide discussion – with politicians, business owners, concerned parents and other community groups – about how to break down those barriers. At what age should we begin to teach the 21st century skills to our children? How can they aspire to professional preparation for the jobs of the future?
(Continued from page 1)

to the people of the 12th Suffolk District by finishing the full term I was elected to serve."

Cullinane’s announcement is likely to trigger a new wave of interest in what will be a wide-open contest for the seat, which was last up for grabs in 2013 following the departure of Linda Dorcena Forry, who vacated the 12th Suffolk seat when she was elected to the State Senate that year. Cullinane then beat two other candidates to secure the House seat. He has since beaten back consecutive challenges in the last two election cycles from Jovan Lacet, a Mattapan-based attorney who last year indicated that he planned to mount a third challenge against Cullinane this year. A potential new candidate — Donovan Birch, Jr., — has also been mounting a campaign for the seat.

Cullinane has been an outspoken advocate for his district, particularly on matters impacting transit equity. He championed the preservation of the Mattapan High Speed Trolley line and fought successfully to persuade MBTA leaders to allow Fairmount Line commuters to use Charlie Cards on the line. On his watch, the state completed a “missing link” connection on the Neponset Greenway and added a long-awaited Blue Hill Avenue station to the Fairmount line. Mayor Martin J. Walsh called Cullinane’s departure “a big loss for the Boston delegation and for Dorchester and Mattapan. Dan worked for me as an intern, right out of college. He has always had a passion for public service and he is a great elected official, because he just wanted to do the job. I commend him for all the great work he’s done.”

State Rep. Daniel J. Hunt, who represents Dorchester and Quincy in the Legislature’s neighboring 13th Suffolk district, said that Cullinane’s departure will leave a significant hole in the neighborhood’s delegation. "Rep. Dan Cullinane is a great colleague and has become an even better friend," said Hunt. "He has quickly risen in leadership in the House while showing laser focus on improving the lives of his constituents in Dorchester, Mattapan and Milton. He immediately took the baton from his predecessors and helped shepherd many projects through completion, including the ‘missing Mattapan link’ of the Neponset Greenway project."

Cullinane’s House colleague in Milton, Rep. Bill Driscoll, said that “the wealth of experience he amassed in a short time will be missed in his district and at the State House. I could not have asked for a better partner in representing Milton. Dan helped me get my bearings after I was elected and for that I will always be grateful.”

Driscoll noted that Cullinane’s “hard-work for the district will be felt for many years to come, particularly as the trolley line is set for more than $100 million in investments in the coming years.” According to a statement from his office, Cullinane missed only one formal session in the House of Representatives over a six-year period, and he planned to be on hand for the birth of his daughter.

“I am proud of what we have accomplished together and proud of the legacy of results and progress we will be leaving behind to be built upon by whoever should follow,” the representative said.

Leon David, who has worked as Cullinane’s top aide since 2013, said he is proud of the accomplishments that he and the representative can point to.

“Whoever takes the position next needs to be able to see the human in each person in this district, from those most in need to those in the most expensive properties,” said David. “That’s what Dan and his volunteers and staff had as our goal — that all were treated equally. I feel proud that we lived up to that challenge.”

Katie Trojano contributed to this report. Reporter editor Bill Forry is married to former state Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry, who is referenced in this story.
RESIDENT PARKING RESTRICTIONS BEGIN IN FEBRUARY IN SAVIN HILL
The city of Boston’s Transportation Dept. will begin enforcement of new resident permit parking on select streets in Savin Hill next month. Residents are urged to get their stickers as soon as possible. Signage will be installed in early-mid Feb with enforcement to begin within two weeks. Impacted streets include Savin Hill Avenue, Granway Way, Southview Street, Evendale Terrace, Wave Avenue and Hubbardston Road (Mon-Fri, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.). Existing resident parking signage will not change on Playstead Road, Denny Street, Bayside Road and Davitt Street. For more info on how to apply for a sticker, go to boston.gov/transportation/resident-parking-permits.

PUBLIC MEETING ON ‘THE FUTURE OF MATTAPAN’S CORRIDORS’
The BPDA will host a public meeting on Wed., Feb. 26 at 6 p.m. to explore “The Future of Mattapan’s Corridors” as part of the ongoing PLAN: Mattapan initiative. The meeting will be held in the KIPP Academy cafeteria, 37 Babson St., Mattapan. Contact Mughe Undemir at 617-918-4488 or mughe.undemir@boston.gov with any questions.

WARD 17 DEMS TO CAUCUS ON FEB. 25
The Ward 17 Democratic Committee, which includes parts of Dorchester and Mattapan, will hold its caucus on Tues., Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. at the Sheet Metal Union Hall, 1157 Adams St., Dorchester. At this caucus, Democrats will elect 23 delegates and 5 alternates to the Democratic State convention to be held on May 30, 2020 in Lowell. Any registered Democrat living in Ward 17 can vote for delegates, provided they are present at the caucus and have signed in before registration closes. Residents of Ward 17 who are eligible to vote may register at the caucus during the registration period. Doors will open by 6:30, and will be locked at 7:15, when registration will close. For more information, email Joyce Linehan at Joyce@ashmontmedia.com or visit massdems.org.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR DORCHESTER BASEBALL
Registration is now underway online for Dorchester Baseball, open to kids and teens ages 4-16. Sign up at dorchesterlittleleague.org or dorchesterbaberuth.org. Financial assistance available upon request.

DORCHESTER’S JANE RICHARD SANG AT A FENWAY PARK EVENT
Dorchester’s Jane Richard sang at a Fenway Park event held on Jan. 31 to celebrate the Martin Richard Foundation’s Team MR8 runners who will participate in April’s BAA Boston Marathon and raise funds for the Dorchester-based foundation, which is named for Jane’s late brother Martin. This will be the final year that the foundation fields a team to run the marathon. For more information, see teammr8.org.

A NEW PHARMACY WITH ALL YOUR NEEDS UNDER ONE ROOF, RIGHT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!
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Codicman and BMC Pharmacy Better Together!
Brothers pitch a pot shop at Freeport Street property

(Continued from page 1)

Clam Point Civic Association members voted to approve MCSE’s initial proposal as it was presented at the meeting. The next steps for the team are to develop and file site plans with the city, establish a formal community process, and complete a community host agreement.

Some residents at the meeting did raise concerns about a different proposal to open a cannabis testing facility — run by Assured Testing Laboratory — on the third floor of the same building. Chavez said that the team wasn’t concerned about any conflicts, as the businesses would be completely separate and serve different purposes.

Desiree Franjul, who has partnered with the Chavez brothers to plan the store, said the proposal would be considered under the city’s Cannabis Control Commission’s (CCC) Economic Empowerment program, which categorizes municipal “equity applicants.”

Some concerns were raised over potential negative traffic impacts along Freeport Street and Dorchester Avenue, which are already heavily congested during peak hours. Chavez and Franjul said their team would commit to completing a traffic study as the process moves along.

“We don’t expect to have a traffic issue because (eventually) every neighborhood will have a dispensary. Right now, when you look at dispensaries and see long lines, it’s because those are among the first in the state,” said Franjul.

Another issue that residents brought up was whether or not the site, even with 24 parking spaces, will have adequate parking to accommodate customers. Some noted that the second and third floors of the building would likely also be rented out.

“I don’t think that there will be an effect on other businesses or in the neighborhood with those 24 spaces,” said Chavez. “That’s a lot more space than most of these types of businesses usually have for parking.”

Gregory Sullivan, a civic association member, recommended that the team seek direction from the property owners and come back with some more detailed parking information at the next meeting.

“It would be smart to also plan around how many spaces have been promised to the landlord to potential second and third floor tenants, because any type of ‘You take six spaces, I take six spaces’ could create conflict,” he said. “These cars have got to be parked somewhere. That should be addressed at the next meeting.”
Who’s backing who for president among local electeds?

(Continued from page 1)  

At-large Boston City Councillor Annissa Essaib-George also said Warren’s potential to “get new voters engaged” makes her the best Democrat for the nomination. “National elections are a way to get people engaged because unfortunately, compared to local elections, the turnout is much higher in these presidential primaries and elections,” said Essaib-George. “This is an opportunity to spread the word and engage new voters and those who aren’t regularly involved in the local elections. I’m hopeful and excited about the next couple of weeks.” 

Pressey and Essaib-George have been joined in their support for Warren by Suffolk County Sheriff Steve Tompkins, who called Warren a “champion and leader” for the Democratic party. Tompkins said his decision was influenced by his work on her 2012 Senate campaign. “There were a lot of women and folk of color in leadership positions who had some decisive say in what was going on—and that appealed to me greatly,” said Tompkins. “And that’s the case with this campaign—she’s done it again.” 

Tompkins said that voters are frustrated by conversations that doubt the electability of a woman in a national race. “People do believe that we need to stop this conversation about electability, about a woman being elected president. It’s really a nonsensical conversation, frankly. Elizabeth is just as sharp, just as smart, just as forthright in what she is trying to accomplish as any male that’s in the race,” said Tompkins. “People have shared with me that they think this is ridiculous, and I share that. It’s ridiculous.”

State Rep. Dan Cullinane, who represents parts of Dorchester and Mattapan in the 12th Suffolk district, has also been with Warren “since day one,” he said. 

Warren finished fourth in the nation’s first primary on Tuesday in New Hampshire, a result that the candidate herself has termed “disappointing.” Sen. Sanders topped the Democratic field in NH, followed by Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar.

State Rep. Dan Hunt said his support for Patrick, adding that after Iowa he isn’t convinced that there’s a clear front-runner in the Democratic race. “I believe Deval Patrick is the best candidate with the ability to bring our country together and get our federal government back to the task of solving problems for all of the people in one country. I am all in, and I will marsh all the support I can for Deval Patrick,” said Hunt.

In a statement, Patrick said he was “honored to have Dan’s support in this election.” “Dan was an invaluable member of my administration and continues to serve the Commonwealth in a way that should make all of his constituents feel proud and seen,” said Patrick. “Dan knows that politics at every level is about delivering results for your constituents, and that’s what he has done as a representative for the 13th Suffolk District.”

Former vice-president Joe Biden has earned the public endorsement of City Councillor Frank Baker, according to a statement from the Biden campaign released on Jan. 31. US Rep. Steven Lynch backed Biden last December and has been on the stump for him in New Hampshire.

“Biden appeals to many different types of voters,” Lynch explained in an interview with Boston 25. “He’s a moderate Democrat. I think he brings a lot of independence to the campaign, this is a big tent Democratic Party. And I think Joe Biden does that. I think he’s blue collar, that’s been his character. That’s his priority.”

Other local elected officials—notably Mayor Martin Walsh, Sen. Nick Collins, At-Large Boston City Councillor Julia Mejia of Dorchester, Councilor Andrea Campbell—have not weighed in on the presidential race.

State Rep. Russell Holmes is also holding off on making an endorsement, he said. “I haven’t landed yet on who I’m going to support,” Holmes told the Reporter last week. “I have two friends running—Patrick and Warren—but neither has come to the polls where I’m ready to get involved.”

Holmes expects many of his constituents will likely support Warren, seneck or Joe Biden. But, he added, many are also “waiting to see results in early states before Super Tuesday.”

“Areal sentiment that I’ve heard is that many folks in the neighborhood are frustrated by what happened in Iowa, and (see) the process as not being democratic. That motivated my neighborhood, it was a civic lesson. They want to move away from the current system in the way that Iowa and New Hampshire are clearly not inclusive enough,” he said—although he added—at least publicly, is Governor Charlie Baker, who did not make an endorsement ahead of Tuesday’s primaries in New Hampshire. Baker learned the ropes of state government while serving under former Gov. William Weld, who is the lone Republican challenging the incumbent president, Donald J. Trump.

The Democratic ballot in Massachusetts on March 3 will feature 15 candidates, in this order: Deval Patrick, Amy Klobuchar, Elizabeth Warren, Michael Bennet, Michael R. Bloomberg, Tulsi Gabbard, Cory Booker, Julian Castro, Tom Steyer, Bernie Sanders, Joseph R. Biden, John K. Delaney, Andrew Yang, Pete Buttigieg, Marianne Williamson. In Boston, registered voters who wish to vote before March 3 can do so beginning on Feb. 24 at Boston City Hall and at several satellite locations in the neighborhoods beginning on Feb. 25.

In Dorchester, early voting will be available on Thurs., Feb. 27 from 12-8 p.m. at First Parish Church, 10 Parish St. In Mattapan, voters can fill in their ballot early on Thurs., Feb. 27 at Palm Tree Mil- dred Ave. Community Center, 5 Mildred Ave. More info is available online at boston.gov/ elections.
Bill seeks parity between care for mental, physical ailments

BY STEVE LEBLANC

The Massachusetts Senate unveiled a sweeping bill last week aimed at making good on the state’s long-held pledge to provide mental health care on a par with care for physical ailments like heart disease or a broken leg.

Supporters say the bill help remove barriers to timely care, provide the state with better tools to enforce its existing mental health parity laws, and create a more diverse workforce of mental health clinicians.

The bill aims to build on mental health parity laws passed in 2000 and 2008.

Democratic Senate President Karen Spilka said the bill was a personal priority.

Spilka said her father experienced trauma as a soldier in World War II — having been injured by a land mine and been on hand during the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp — and struggled with mental illness most of his life.

“My father never sought attention, never sought help,” she said.

“There was a stigma attached that he could never get over.”

The bill takes several steps designed to put mental health care on an equal footing with other forms of medical care, including eliminating the need for patients experiencing acute mental health crises to get prior authorization from insurers before receiving care and prohibiting insurers from denying coverage for mental health services and primary care services solely because they were delivered on the same day in the same facility.

The legislation would also create a special commission charged with recommending a common set of medical necessity criteria to be used by health care providers and insurers for mental health services.

Part of the problem in Massachusetts is that many mental health professionals are independent and don’t accept insurance. Those seeking care have to pay out of pocket and then see if they can get reimbursed by their insurer.

The bill also seeks to expand mental health access to underserved cultural, ethnic and linguistic populations and the LGBTQ community.

Currently about 90% of mental health clinicians in Massachusetts are non-Latino whites.

“Language barriers and lack of a cultural background can be a real barrier to care,” said Democratic Sen. Julian Cyr, one of the bill’s backers.

Other elements of the bill include: requiring emergency departments to have the capacity to evaluate and stabilize a person admitted with a mental health problem; increasing access to mental health care in geographically isolated areas in the state; and creating tele-behavioral health service pilot programs in public high schools.

Danna Mauch, president of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, said advocates have been fighting for mental health parity since the 1970s, and the Senate bill — combined with parallel provisions in a health care bill filed by Republican Gov. Charlie Baker — will help bring the state closer to a true level playing field for mental and physical health.

“People have been waiting years and years for some kind of equitable arrangement,” Mauch said. “I think everyone is in agreement that this is a step forward.”

Sunday, February 16, 2 pm at the William Clapp House

All About Chocolate: Local History, Global Perspective, and a Sampling

Dorchester, Boston, and Massachusetts have many historical connections to chocolate. There’s also much to learn from a broader perspective: its origins and modern cultivation, how it is grown and marketed, and what is being done to assure it is ethically and sustainably sourced.

Gain insights and sample two different chocolates.

Speaker: Victoria Kichuk, Owner/Founder Cocoa Beantown Tours and Tastings

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A Celebrate! series presentation of Tales from African cancellations follow @BCYFCenters.

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum will offer several family-oriented activities and programs throughout President's Day week, including its signature Presidents’ Day Family Festival on February 17 featuring presidential storytelling, activities, and in-person performances. In honor of the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, the Festival will highlight presentations by actors portraying Arizona Senator Truth and Lucretia Mott. A Celebrate! series presentation of Tales from African

For updated information or program large group play. For updated information or program cancellations follow @BCYFCenters.

Boston Public Library’s Free Homework Help program is underway offering free after-school help and mentorship provided by high-achieving high school students. The program, offered Monday through Thursday from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. is open to students in grades K-8; no registration required. Boston Teacher’s Union tutors are also available during select weekday sessions from 4:46 p.m. for students in grades K-12. Visit bpl.org/homeworkhelp.

Police District C-11

Non-emergency line for seniors: 617-343-5649. The Party line phone number, where you can report loud parties, is 617-343-5500, 24 hours/7 days per week.

Police District B-8 News

For info, call B-3’s Community Service Office at 617-343-4711.

Hancock Street Civic Association

The Hancock Street Civic Association meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month. For more information, call 866-JFK-1960 or visit jfklibrary.org.

Ashmont Valley Neighborhood Association

Meetings are usually the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at 776 Washington St., Dorchester.

Cedar Grove Civic Association

Cedar Grove Civic Association meets at 7 p.m. at Fr. Lane Hall, St. Brendan Church, 15 Rita Rd. Info: cedargrovewc@gmail.com or 617-285-1402.

Claim Point Civic Association

The meetings are usually held on the second Monday of the month (unless it’s a holiday) in the Codman Square Health Center, 6 Norfolk St. Info: call 617-265-4189.

Columbia-Savin Hill Civic

Columbia-Savin Hill Civic meets the first Monday of each month, 7 p.m., at the Little House, 275 East Cottage St. For info: columbia-savinhillcivic.org.

Dorchester North Neighborhood Association

The Dorchester North Neighborhood Association (formerly the Annapolis Street Neighborhood Association) generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the meeting room of the Annapolis Street. Please see our Facebook page (search Dorchester North) for updates and announcements. Send questions and agenda items to: dorchester-north@gmail.com.

Fields Corner Civic Association

The FCCA meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 at the Kit Clark Center, 1500 Dorchester Ave. For more information contact V. Girard, chair, at: vivanis120@gmail.com.

Woodrow Avenue Neighborhood Association

WANA meets on the third Thursday of every month from 6-8 p.m. at VFV Post #772, 54 Woodrow Ave., Dorchester. Nina Johnson is the president. Email woodrowaveassoc@gmail.com or visit wabanontheforweb.com.

Jones Hill Association

The Jones Hill Association meets every month on the Wednesday at 7 p.m. at St. Mary’s Center for Women and Children in the Executive Board Room. All are welcome. Developers wishing to inquire or present should contact officers@joneshill.com. Information, events, and voting membership can be found on joneshill.com.

Eastman-Elder Association

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February 13, 2020

THE REPORTER

‘Aloneness’ drives this artist to study strangers living life

(Continued from page 1) usually one person I’m thinking insurance.

Your car. Your home. Your business. They’re all in the area. Wouldn’t it be nice to work with an insurance company that is, too? We’ve been in Dorchester since 1923. So at this point, we’re not only insurance experts, we’re local experts. Call us to get the policy that’s right (really right) for you.

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‘Aloneness’ drives this artist to study strangers living life

As a freshman at Bates College, he decided photography was what he wanted to do in life, and chose it as his major.

Christopher realized he’d “been doing street photography the wrong way – trying to be invisible and make images in Dorchester” for a long time, the way I fell dormant recently by pulling some other street photographers into the project and approaching the concept with fresh eyes.

What’s weird is that for a time, the way I had felt about “Strangers in Boston” is that they’re not the strangers; I’m the stranger,” he said. “When I started shooting in Dorchester in 2016, I bought a camera day on his walk home, he began to cause tension at work. He recounted how once his boss chastised him for editing photos on his lunch break. One day, after registering the third of “three strikes of racist macro-aggressions” from a co-worker, Christopher packed his things and walked out.

Two years had already gone by in the blink of an eye, but when I walked out that day, I was a photographer,” he said. “What did I have? I had knowledge of living. It’s figuring out how to take an environment that’s completely foreign and remove myself from the equation; just be an anonymous observer.”

He found that he enjoyed shooting commuters in transit, a time when people tend to subconsciously put their guard down. But being an anonymous observer is difficult in tight spaces like a Green Line train, trying to take images from a stranger’s eye, but when I walked out that day, I was a photographer,” he said. “What did I have? I had a camera in my hand and shooting as many different things as I could,” he said. “Then I started sharing photos on my Instagram page, and people started re-sharing them. So I just kept shooting.”

After a while, Christopher began to see street photography as “a way of living.”

After graduation, Christopher moved to Boston and took a corporate sales job selling software. He soon learned to hate what he was doing. Frustrated and feeling lost, he regularly would walk all the way home to Brighton from the Back Bay just to blow off steam. One day on his walk home, he bought a camera “because that was the last time I remembered being happy.” Soon his lunch breaks became creative sessions and his walks home turned into photowalks.

“I started re-teaching myself photography, just by having a camera in my hand and shooting as many different things as I could,” he said. “Then I started sharing photos on my Instagram page, and people started re-sharing them. So I just kept shooting.”

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Walsh wants $69.2m for affordable housing push

By Katie Troiano

Revealing what he called a “monumental investment,” Mayor Martin Walsh announced $69.2 million in new and recommended affordable housing funding from the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), the Neighborhood Housing Trust (NHT), and the Community Preservation Fund on Friday at Roxbury’s Urban Edge.

The projects, two of which will provide affordable housing units in Dorchester and Mattapan, will be submitted to the City Council for approval with an anticipated hearing and vote in the coming weeks.

“Today we are announcing a monumental investment. We fund affordable housing every year, but this is the most we’ve ever done in the city of Boston,” the mayor said. “We are harnessing our city’s incredible economic strength to invest in all the things working people need. This will help build a strong middle class and make a difference for years and generations to come.”

Per the recommendations of Dorchester Bay EDC, the city would receive $2.6 million for its development of a project at 9 Leyland St., that would revitalize a vacant lot by building 43 affordable senior housing units, including five set aside for formerly homeless individuals, and incorporate energy efficient design standards for sustainability.

In Mattapan, $1.86 million was recommended for a team from the city’s Planning Office of Urban Affairs and the Caribbean Integration Community Development for an affordable senior housing development at 150 River St., of 20 affordable units for seniors, with 6 reserved for formerly homeless individuals.

DND Director Sheila Dillon said that “housing is a passion for many in the room,” and added: “For those that are following this closely, this administration is working really hard trying to solve our housing issues.”

District 1 Councillor Lydia Edwards, the chair of the Housing Committee and the council’s representative on the NHT, said that “all hands are on deck” and working through a process to make housing a real opportunity in the city.

“I look at this and I’m inspired and excited and I know that we’re going to be able to accomplish big things,” the councillor said. “We are completely dedicated to making sure that projects are not only affordable, but we ask the hard questions: Who is going to live there? Why would they want to come there? Where are your homeless set-asides units? It’s not just enough to call it affordable; we get into the details of who will afford it.”

Citywide, the funds would create or preserve a total of 1,079 units of affordable housing. 367 units were already 161 preserved — of which a majority would serve seniors, with 56 at or below 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) and 57 for a family of four.

New residential units would include a combination of homeownership and rental options and see the enrollment of formerly homeless households, youth aging out of foster care, seniors, and artists.

This is an important aspect of the work that Urban Edge does. This is a focus on African American and Latinx communities that are growing in linkage funding from the Neighborhood Housing Trust (NHT); and the City’s Planning Office of Urban Affairs and the Caribbean Integration Community Development at 150 River St., of 20 affordable units for seniors, with 6 reserved for formerly homeless individuals.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) applauding for once again making affordable housing a priority.

“Recognizing the housing crisis facing Boston, the CPC chose to allocate 65 percent of available funds to affordable housing initiatives, led by Madeline Tena. In "thinking about how to allocate funds, we need in need, our priorities included rental housing for the lowest-income residents and affordable homeownership for households under 100 percent of AMI."

The amount, William A. James, executive director of 2Life Communities, which provides affordable housing to seniors at multiple campuses across the city, spoke about how securing affordable housing improved people’s lives.

“This is an exciting day for Boston and for people like me. I want to thank the mayor, as well as the partners and elected officials too, for their commitment to creating affordable housing in Boston. This will help people who are the most in need — and I used to be one," he said. "Funding like this helps people like me have a safe and call home right today.”

Walsh encouraged housing advocates to celebrate: “Let me just say this: There have been a lot of challenges with housing over the last 30 years, and things have intensified over the last four or five years. As I look out the crowd, I see faces here that have been doing this work for a long time. I don’t think enough of you and us take a step back to celebrate the victories — and today is a victory.”

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

www.tevnvan.com

CHENEY, Thomas F. born in 1924 in South Boston, MA. Husband of 70 years to Barbara Cheney (nee Sim) and daughter-in-law Ann of Kissimmee, Florida, Michael of Quincy, Mary and son-in-law Dan O'Neill of Stoughton, Maureen and son-in-law Rob Giffin of Surf- ry, Maine, Kathleen of Quincy, Barbara and son-in-law Scott Bro- dner of Northampton, Diane and son-in-law Stephen Bird of Hop- kin and the late Thomas. He was the proud grandfather of 15 grandchildren and countless great-grandchildren. Tom was the brother to the deceased Ste- phen Cheney and sister-in-law Louise, Joseph and sister-in-law Ev- elyn, Daniel and sister-in- law Ann, Leo and Paul and sister-in-law Eleanor. Son of the late Stephen Cheney and Ethel Gearin of South Boston, Tom grew up in Dorchester where he attended Dorchester High for Boys. He served as a United States Marine in World War II. Tom raised his family while working in the MBTA for 34 years. He was also a longtime member of the Church of the Good Shepherd and a business agent for Local District 38. In the MBTA, Tom represented a maintenance department. He went on to serve in a similar role for SEPTA in Philadelphia and then later for the New York/New Jersey Authority in Staten Is- land, New York. Uncle Tom is survived by nieces and nephews and Pa to just about everybody else, Tom was known for sparkling laughter and warmth. He was known for sparking laughter and warmth.

McDIASCO, Gilda Ida Carmela (DiMas- coco), 90, a lifelong resident of Braintree. Gilda was born in Pet- towis, Italy, daughter of Domenico and Francesca (Aquino) Delia, in 1931. Rano sul Passegio, province of L'Aquila, region of Abruzzo, Italy. She immigrated to the U.S. in 1948 at the age of 16 with her parents. Gilda lived in Braintree for fifty years, previously in Abington. Gilda was employed as a seamstress in the garment industry for many years.

THOMAS, Ellen


McRAE, Linda M.

William Quigley, Jr. of Medford, MA 02155.

PANEK, Linda M. (Quigley) of Norton, MA 02766, 7 grandsons: Ryan McRae, Carrig Castle, Dorchester, 65. Wife of Thomas Panek of Norton, MA 02766. Their daughter: the late Eleanor Delaney of Roslindale, MA 02131, wife of Stephen G. Delaney, stepdaughter of the late Walter Delaney; mother of Jennifer Delaney of Roslindale, MA 02131, the late Beverly Delaney of Roslindale, MA 02131, wife of Ryan McRae of Medford, MA 02155; and the late John Delaney of Roslindale, MA 02131, husband of Patricia Delaney of Roslindale, MA 02131. Also survived by many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court.

The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for AUDIT OF ESTATE by: Delaney, Rev. Thomas G. Ryan Sharp of Quincy, MA 02169; Sarah Garceau and husband Edward of Sudbury, and son Eric Garceau and wife Lisa of Walpole, MA 02081.

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Citing ‘misapplication’ of methods by BPS, exam-school test-giver parts way with system

By Max Larkin
WBUR Reporter

The Independent School Entrance Examination, or ISSE, has been the gatekeeper test for Boston’s three public exam schools for more than two decades. But it won’t play that role going forward after the apparent disintegration of trust between the BPS and the Education Records Bureau, or ERB, the not-for-profit group that administers the test.

The ISSE is predominantly used for admissions to nearly 2,000 private schools. And activists have long argued that the test, which does not closely track BPS’s curriculum, may contribute to the considerable demographic disparity between the school system at large and its three well-regarded exam schools.

But the ISSE’s creators are defending it against claims of particular bias. ERB President Tom Rohon wrote to member schools saying that the relationship will end, instead citing the district’s “misapplication” of the test “as one factor in perpetuating admissions outcomes that disproportionately affect students belonging to underrepresented groups.”

In an interview with WBUR, Rohon explained that the ISEE comprises four sections. Alongside tests of mathematics achievement and reading comprehension — sections that do not closely correspond to BPS’s curriculum — are two tests of students’ capacity for “reasoning.” Rather than treating those scores separately, which, Rohon said, might have surfaced what he called “diamonds in the rough,” BPS has historically added the four scores together as they made admissions decisions. In so doing, he added, “you completely lose lots of information.”

Rohon has only run ERB for the past two years, but he said that the department’s work.

BPS Superintendent Brenda Cassellius, who will be spread out over the next five years.

“Just felt like we couldn’t bring much to the relationship any more,” Rohon said.

Citing “misapplication” of methods by BPS, exam-school test-giver parts way with system

By Carrie Jung
WBUR Reporter

Boston Public Schools Superintendent Brenda Cassellius wants some $1.26 billion to run the city’s 33 low-performing schools. She noted that most of what she called a “historic and unprecedented” budget to the school committee last week.

Cassellius revealed what she called a “historic and unprecedented” budget to the school committee last week.

The proposal follows the release last month of her strategic plan, which laid out her goals for the district over the next five years.

“We all know that a strategic plan doesn’t mean anything if it’s not implemented well,” she said last week. “And part of implementing something well is making sure that it’s properly resourced both on the human capital side and the financial side.”

She noted that most of the additional financial support will be focused on the city’s 33 low-performing schools. Increasing the number of licensed mental health providers was a provision in the Boston Teachers Union new contract with the district.

Cassellius also hopes to expand the family liaison system. Her budget proposal includes $32.5 million to support a system of 56 family liaisons who will be spread out among 33 schools. Custodial staff will be getting a boost.

The district plans to hire 25 new custodians for next school year and invest in a project tracking system to support that department’s work.

And Cassellius hopes to add about 17 art and music teachers to district schools. The $36 million mentioned above is part of the extra funding promised by Mayor Martin Walsh in his State of the City address — $100 million in new school funding over the next three years.

WBUR 90.9FM first published this article on Feb. 5. The Reporter and WBUR share content through a media partnership.
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